State Of Maine

Volunteer Maine,
The Commission For Community Service

RFP # 202010156



Maine AmeriCorps State Competitive Grants

Application Instructions and Guidelines

Relevant for New Grant Proposals in these categories:

* Cost Reimbursement
* Full-cost Fixed amount

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RFP Coordinator** | *All communication regarding this RFP must be made through the RFP Coordinator identified below*.**Name:** Maryalice Crofton **Title:** Proposal Coordinator**Contact Information:** service.commission@maine.gov19 Elkins Lane, 105 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-1005207-624-7792 |
| **Submitted Questions Due** | *All questions must be received by the RFP Coordinator identified above by:***Date:** November 5, 2020, no later than 4:00 p.m., local time |
| **Proposal Submission** | *Proposals must be received by the Division of Procurement Services by:***Submission Deadline:** November 19, 2020, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time.*Proposals must be submitted electronically in the federal eGrants system* ***and*** *additional documents emailed to the following address:***Electronic (email) Submission Address:** Proposals@maine.gov |

From the time this RFP is issued until proposal selection is made, all contact with the State regarding this RFP must be made through the RFP Coordinator listed above. No other person/State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFP. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the bidding process, at the State’s discretion.

Highlights for Potential Applicants

1. Volunteer Maine is the new identity for the Maine Commission for Community Service. The Commission remains the state service commission described in state and federal law.
2. The federal agency responsible for AmeriCorps grants has also changed its public identity. Formerly known as the Corporation for National and Community Service, the federal agency is now doing business as AmeriCorps and operates all funding programs (Foster Grandparents, Volunteer Generation, etc.) under that name.
3. The information contained in this document is drawn from the federal NOFO for AmeriCorps State Competitive proposals, the sections of the Code of Federal Regulations pertaining to AmeriCorps, CNCS policies and grant conditions governing the design and operation of AmeriCorps State programs.
4. This document contains program design guidance and funding application instructions for very different categories of AmeriCorps grants. Pay close attention to the requirements specific to your grant proposal category. Note that applicants with no experience managing AmeriCorps grants may not apply for Full-cost Fixed amount grants. The sole exception is for existing AmeriCorps host sites with a solid history of success with AmeriCorps efforts and demonstrable capacity to manage a full program grant.
5. A complete proposal consists of the application sections in the federal grant management system, eGrants, ***plus*** the required additional documents submitted to the Division of Procurement Services at the email address specified on the cover and page 11.
6. This document has three types of information:
	1. an introduction to AmeriCorps and its service culture;
	2. guidance on designing an AmeriCorps program; and,
	3. directions for writing a grant proposal.
7. Links to all external resources noted in this Request for Proposals are consolidated in Attachment K, page 87 for easy use. Take care not to lose sight of the context in which the link was provided.
8. Proposals submitted in this competition must have sufficient work to account for ***at least*** 13,600 hours of service by AmeriCorps members in ***each*** of three years. These grants do not support placement of just one AmeriCorps member.
9. Proposals submitted in this competition **must** fit within the **federal focus areas** which are described on page 8. CNCS has identified funding priorities (activities of greater interest than the full scope of allowable activities) but also clearly states it will consider complete applications for any permitted effort.
10. Note that, as of 1 October 2010, AmeriCorps members starting service at age 55 or older, who successfully complete a term of service and qualify for an education award, may transfer use of that education award to a child, grandchild, or foster child.

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# A. Federal & State Partners in AmeriCorps State Grant-making

## I. Volunteer Maine (The Maine Commission for Community Service)

Volunteer Maine builds capacity and sustainability in Maine’s volunteer and service communities by funding programs, developing volunteer managers, fostering adoption of high-quality volunteer management practices, raising awareness of sector issues, and promoting service as a strategy.

Established in 1994, the agency was known as the Maine Commission for Community Service, the statutory name. In 2002, the Commission launched Volunteer Maine as its outreach to volunteer programs that were not part of National Service. In 2019, the two identities merged, and Volunteer Maine became the Commission’s primary identity. The mission did not change: foster and inspire community service and volunteerism to address critical needs in the State of Maine.

Volunteer Maine is the State Service Commission described in the National and Community Service Trust Act. It has several specific legal responsibilities related to AmeriCorps and National Service. These include:

* providing training and technical assistance to local nonprofit organizations and other entities that want to plan and apply for funding to implement national service programs;
* selecting programs to be funded under the National and Community Service Act;
* pre-selecting programs to compete for funding under AmeriCorps State Competitive grant program;
* providing training and technical assistance to National Service programs in Maine;
* evaluating, monitoring, and administering grant programs.

All the Commission activities and its funding priorities flow from its Strategic Plan. To learn more about the business side of Commission work, visit [www.MaineServiceCommission.gov](http://www.MaineServiceCommission.gov) .

## II. The Corporation for National and Community Service

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) was established in 1993. At its inception, the Corporation was directed to manage:

* Foster Grandparents, RSVP, and Senior Companion Program; and
* AmeriCorps VISTA, the National Civilian Community Corps, and AmeriCorps State/National.

The federal agency changed its public identity on October 1, 2020. It continues to oversee all the funding programs but will do business as AmeriCorps. Its mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities and fortify the civic health of the United States.

The agency:

* Acts as a catalyst by providing strategic critical support to volunteer organizations that, in turn, deliver much-needed services to communities.
* Promotes a healthy, vibrant non-profit volunteer sector that can deliver effective community services efficiently.
* Builds character and creates career and educational opportunities through the volunteer experience.
* Develops and cultivates knowledge that enhances the overall success of volunteer and service programs.
* Cultivates the growth of a culture of citizenship and service to communities.

To accomplish these goals, AmeriCorps provides grants as well as training and technical assistance to state service commissions and national volunteer organizations. It explores, develops, and models effective approaches for using volunteers to meet the nation's human needs and conducts and disseminates research that helps develop and cultivate knowledge that will enhance the overall effectiveness of national and community service programs. For more information on AmeriCorps, visit [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov).

# B. AmeriCorps State Program Proposals

The AmeriCorps State program is referred to as the “Domestic Peace Corps.” Grants are awarded to eligible organizations to implement evidence-based direct service programs in which AmeriCorps members provide the human resources. The service activities target high priority, critical needs in specific communities to bring about change. Given the goal of meaningful and measurable improvement and change, the federal agency refers to the service activities as “the intervention.”

Organizations that operate local AmeriCorps programs identify solutions proven to impact the need selected and then design how a team of members will implement the program as they serve full- or part-time for one year or during a season. The activities must require at least 13,600 hours of service each year by the team of at least 8 AmeriCorps members. A Member Service Year (MSY) is to the AmeriCorps world what a Fulltime Equivalent (FTE) is to the employment world. MSYs can be divided into multiple positions.

An AmeriCorps member is an individual who is enrolled in an approved national service position and engages in community service. Members serving at a full-time rate each week may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. The number of hours defined as full-time is typically 35-40 hours/week and aligns with the organization’s definition of full-time for employees. Members who serve part-time typically do not receive living allowances but do qualify for education awards if they complete service successfully.

The organizations that receive grants are responsible for recruiting, selecting, and supervising AmeriCorps members to serve in their programs. They help members acquire skills, training, education, and experience which they can carry into the workforce and future service to their communities. The organizations also ensure members are clearly identified as AmeriCorps through use of insignia on program uniforms and site logo.

As AmeriCorps members carry out their direct service, they enlist community members to serve along with them, building the communities’ capacity to meet the local need over the long term. Developing community ability to sustain the effort is the reason AmeriCorps is designed as a public-private partnership that requires matching resources from outside parties.

Thus, AmeriCorps represents a “triple bottom line” because, done right, those who benefit from the services are changed; the community is changed; and the AmeriCorps member who served is changed.

## I. What do AmeriCorps State Grants Cover?

AmeriCorps grants award two types of resources to address the local need: member positions (also called slots) and funds to support AmeriCorps members filling these slots during their service terms.

Grantees use the funding to support AmeriCorps members performing service. In other words, AmeriCorps grants *partially* cover the expense of operating an AmeriCorps program and do not cover general organizational expenses. Local cash and in-kind resources are required to cover the full implementation of the program.

## II. Proposal Categories

Proposals submitted under this competition are classified as either “New” or “Re-competing.”

“New” proposals fit one of the following AmeriCorps criteria for “new”:

* Applicant is applying for the first time OR has only received formula funding in the past.
* Applicant has operated grants from CNCS under another funding type (e.g., Senior Corps)
* Applicant has hosted AmeriCorps members through another organization’s grant only.

Existing AmeriCorps grantees seeking to submit a proposal for a program model that addresses a different issue area with different priorities and different objectives must obtain prior permission from MCCS and CNCS.

“Re-competing Proposals” come from applicants who have received AmeriCorps State funds within the last five years and propose to operate substantially the same program model.

If a program is currently in its final year of a grant period, the sponsor must submit a full application as a re-competing program following the current guidelines in order to be considered for another round of AmeriCorps funding.

## III. Number of Awards, Size, and Grant Types

Volunteer Maine receives AmeriCorps funds through two federal award processes. The first allocates funds to Maine based on the percent of the national population residing in the state. These “formula” funds will be awarded in separate competition and are *not* part of this competition.

The second process by which AmeriCorps State funds come to Maine is this one, the State Competitive. AmeriCorps State Competitive funds are awarded to states through a 2-tiered competition. In the first phase, applications are reviewed at the state level by the Commission, selected for entry in the nationwide competition, and ranked according to their strength as directed by the AmeriCorps rules. Only proposals that are high quality and likely to succeed in the national competition are submitted to the federal agency.

This Request for Proposals is the first phase.

***All proposals must plan for at least 17,000 hours of service activity which is the equivalent of 10 AmeriCorps Member Service Years (MSYs).[[1]](#footnote-1)*** In planning the number and types of slots needed based on the program design, new applicants should keep in mind that generally limits awards for new AmeriCorps grantees (those with no experience operating a program)to no more than 50 member positions. Remember, a MSY in the AmeriCorps world what a Fulltime Equivalent (FTE) is in the employment world. ***MSYs can be divided into multiple positions.***

**A. NUMBER OF AWARDS AND SIZE.** Applications submitted by Volunteer Maine to the national competition undergo a review and selection process managed by the federal agency. The number of proposals funded is determined at the federal level by their competitive selection process.

Although recent grants in Maine have ranged from $180,000 to $700,000, AmeriCorps has instituted a new practice of determining a cost-per-member it wants to support for various program models *after* the deadline for federal submission. This cannot be predicted because it is based on the median cost-per-member of other similar proposals under consideration. Given this recent practice, applicants are strongly urged to pay as much attention to cost-per-member as they do to the level of match/local share. Lower cost-per-member proposals do garner more points under “Cost Effectiveness.”

Funding decisions on all grants are not final until early summer of any year and grant awards are issued mid-summer. Programs are expected to begin soon thereafter – between mid-August and September 1.

**B. GRANT TYPES:** There are two options for grants in this competition: **Cost Reimbursement** and **Fixed-amount Grants.** Each grant type supports operation of an AmeriCorps program including member recruitment, selection, training, supervision, and performance of evidence-based services that positively change a community condition or need.

The usual grant project period is three years with 12-month annual budget periods serving as the basis for adding funds to the initial one-year budget award. Proposals submitted in this competition *only include the budget for the first year*.

In all cases, the amount and duration of any grant, as well as the final decision to issue a grant agreement, is subject to the availability of funds as determined by Congressional appropriations, grantee compliance with program regulations and fund management, as well as grantee performance of work. Generally, the federal agency negotiates funding with state service commissions each budget period after annual federal appropriations have been enacted. Funding for years two and three is determined by federal appropriations and by performance of the grantee.

A typical program year is September 1 through August 31 although school-based programs frequently start around August 15. After a proposal is selected and a multi-year grant authorized, only the initial year of funding will be provided. AmeriCorps members may not start service or be enrolled prior to the grant award start date.

 **Cost Reimbursement Grant.** AmeriCorps programs with various terms of service for members (full-time, seasonal, part-time, etc.) can apply for *up to* $16,300 per Member Service Year (the equivalent of 1700 hours of service by one person) and distribute these AmeriCorps funds across all sections of the budget as needed. New grantees must provide at least 30% local share from public and/or private cash or in-kind sources. Over the life of the grant, the legal applicant will be required to comply with financial tracking requirements for federal awards and report the amount and source of any federal dollars from other agencies (Interior, HUD, VA, USDOL, etc.) used for local share.

 **Full-cost** **Fixed amount Grants.** Under CNCS policy, this grant type is ***not*** open to new applicants. The AmeriCorps proposal can incorporate any term of service that is needed by the program design. The proposal can also request up to $16,300 per Member Service Year.

 The advantages of this type of grant are 1) the applicant does not submit a full project budget as part of the proposal; 2) the award recipient is not bound to federal financial tracking requirements and is not required to report match (the local resources used to operate the program). Grant recipients receive reimbursement based on their recruitment and retention rates. If grantees do not achieve full enrollment, the reimbursed funds decrease proportionally.

 In this type of grant, the focus of monitoring and quality assessment is the program’s ability to meet performance targets, achieve the desired community change, engage the community as volunteers, and fully enroll as well as retain AmeriCorps members. In other words, the program’s evidence of performance is more critical since it becomes evidence that additional local resources are used to carry out the program.

C. National Service Focus Areas. In the 2009 reauthorization of National Service programs, Congress directed the federal agency to focus on some specific areas of need. These categories encompass a broad range of service activities. Applicants may submit proposals that fall under any of these permitted activities but should be aware AmeriCorps *has identified a set of funding priorities for this competition*. The funding priorities are noted on page 9. The focus areas below describe *all permitted* service activities.

a. **Economic Opportunity Focus Area.** Grants support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people; help economically disadvantaged people to have improved access to services that enhance financial literacy; transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable housing; and/or have improved employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.

b. **Education Focus Area.** Grants support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children; improved school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children; improved educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools; and/or support economically disadvantaged students prepare for success in post-secondary educational institutions.

c. **Environmental Stewardship Focus Area.** Grants support responsible stewardship of the environment, while preparing communities for challenging circumstances and helping Americans respond to and recover from disruptive life events: programs that conserve natural habitats; protect clean air and water; maintain public lands; support wildland fire mitigation; cultivate individual and community self-sufficiency; and provide reforestation services after floods or fires.

d. **Healthy Futures Focus Area.** Grants will provide support for activities that will address the opioid crisis; increase seniors’ ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible; and/or increase physical activity and improve nutrition in youth with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity.

e. **Veterans and Military Families Focus Area.** Grants will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength; increase the number of veterans, wounded warriors, military service members, and their families served by CNCS-supported programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS-supported programs.

f. **Disaster Services.** Although this is not a focus area in the law, National Service plays a large role in preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.Grant activities support increased preparedness of individuals for disasters, improved individuals’ readiness to respond to disasters, help individuals recover from disasters, and/or help individuals mitigate disasters.

## IV. Funding Priorities for This Competition

In each competitive round, AmeriCorps identifies funding priorities for support. Proposals that address the funding priorities receive 3 points during the technical review in the state commission review process. In order to receive priority consideration, applicants must demonstrate that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus, the intended outcomes expressed in the logic model, and must include a high-quality program design.

**A.** **FEDERAL PRIORITIES**. For 2021, CNCS seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in:

* Efforts to help communities recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Applicants may propose programming in any focus area to aid communities as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.
* Programs that actively engage in removing structural racial inequities, advancing racial equality, and increasing opportunity in order to achieve sustainable change in communities.
* Economic Opportunity – a program model that increases economic opportunities for communities by preparing people for the workforce.
* Education - evidence-based interventions on the AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange that are assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence by the reviewers. (See <https://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/evidence-exchange>)
* Healthy Futures – a program model that reduces and/or prevents prescription drug and opioid abuse.
* Evidence-based interventions on the AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange that are assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence by the reviewers. (See <https://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/evidence-exchange>)
* Veterans and Military Families - positively impacting the quality of life of veterans and improving military family strength.
* Faith-based organizations.
* Programs that reduce child poverty
* Environmental stewardship
* Economic Mobility Corps – a joint initiative with the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund to place national service members at Certified Community Development Financial Institutions to enhance their capacity to provide financial literacy, financial planning, budgeting, saving, and other financial counseling activities in distressed and underserved areas. (For more information, see Attachment J- Terms and Definitions.)

**B. OTHER PROPOSAL TYPES**. Although the federal agency is very interested in program proposals in its priority areas, the agency has made it abundantly clear that it welcomes and funds high quality proposals that fit within any of the focus areas including Capacity Building.

## V. Submission Deadline, Instructions, and Compliance Requirements

All proposals must be submitted **no later than 11:59 p.m. local time on November 19, 2020.**  Receipt time will be established by the date/time stamp electronically recorded at the time of submission.

1. **Proposals Due:** Complete proposals must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of this RFP. Proposals received **after** the 11:59 p.m. deadline will be **rejected** without exception.
2. **Complete means** the proposal is submitted in eGrants (http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/) **and** all required additional documents listed on page 42 are submitted by **email** to the email address provided on the RFP Cover Page.
3. Only proposals received through eGrants *and* email will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
4. Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their email submission:

“**RFP# 202010156 Proposal Submission**”

1. Applicant submissions are to be broken down into multiple files, with each file named as it is titled in bold below, and include:

- **File #1 – Bidder Name** *PDF format preferred*

 Completed - Proposal Cover Page (SF424) printed out from eGrants proposal

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 Organizational Chart

 Labor Union Concurrence or statement of explanation why it is not needed AmeriCorps Readiness Assessment

 Research studies or evaluations (if applicable)

 Independent or Internal Program Evaluation (if applicable)

- **File #2 – Bidder Name** *PDF format preferred*

 Audit PLUS Management Letters and all findings

 Organization’s most recently filed Form 990

 Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate

- **File #3 – Bidder Name** *Word format required per federal instructions*

 Operational and Financial Management Survey

 Explanation if delinquent on Federal Dept (if applicable)

## VI. Questions Regarding This RFP

Questions about this RFP must be submitted by email to Service.Commission@maine.gov ***with the subject line***: “AmeriCorps State Competitive RFP #202010156. The deadline for written questions is November 5, 2020. Responses will be posted under "Submitted Questions: RFP # 202010156\*" on the same page as the RFP https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants and at <http://www.maineservicecommission.gov/grants/>.

## VII. Applicant Resource Page

Attachment K contains a compilation of links to documents referenced in the RFP.

# C. Eligible Applicants and Selection Processes

## I. Who Is Eligible to Apply?

Maine public or private non-profits, State/county/local units of government, higher education institutions, faith-based organizations, labor organizations, federally recognized Tribes, and national or regional organizations intending to operate an AmeriCorps program entirely within Maine may apply.

Not Eligible: Organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime are disqualified from receiving assistance under an AmeriCorps grant. Pursuant to the Lobbying disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Sections 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 USC 501(c)(4), which engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

Note that under section 745 of Title VII, Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, if CNCS is aware that any corporation has any unpaid Federal tax liability which—

* has been assessed
* for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and
* is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, that corporation is not eligible for an award under this RFP/Notice.[[2]](#footnote-2) A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this RFP/Notice.

Preference: Volunteer Maine will give preference points under program model to applications from partnerships or coalitions whose members represent local organizations working together to implement a common evidence-based approach to a community problem. Partnerships are expected to either build on existing cooperative efforts or draw new partners together in ways that do not duplicate existing community efforts.

One member of the coalition must serve as the legal applicant and lead sponsor for the program. It must be evident in the proposal that the skills and resources needed to implement the project (fiscal, volunteer management, documentation, connection to customers, grant management, evaluation, and stakeholder participation) exist among the partners and that each partner has a defined role in implementation.

**Special Note About Proposals Submitted to Both AmeriCorps National and AmeriCorps State Competitions.** Volunteer Maine will not entertain proposals for the same project if an applicant submits to both the AmeriCorps National and AmeriCorps State competition since both competitions occur simultaneously and a project may not be funded from both sources for concurrent operation.

Two proposals will be considered the same if they:

* Address the same issue areas.
* Address the same priorities.
* Propose the same outcomes.
* Serve the same target communities and population.
* Utilize the same sites.
* Use the same program staff and members.

## II. Review Process for AmeriCorps Proposals

### State Review.

Volunteer Maine uses selection criteria and a process that incorporates the mandatory AmeriCorps weighting and scoring of various criteria published in the [Code of Federal Regulations](https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/CFR-2010-title45-vol4/CFR-2010-title45-vol4-part2520) as well as its own policies on funding and performance, and the requirements of state contract selection rules.

All AmeriCorps State proposals are assessed by the Commission’s Grant Selection and Performance Task Force using a multi-step review process.

1. External Peer Review of application narrative components including logic model, hard copy supports of strong or moderate evidence-based models, and (for re-competing applicants) evaluations of programs.
2. Task Force assessment of applicant’s financial plan, fiscal capacity, alignment of proposed target need with funding priorities as well as proposed performance measures, program model, and past performance in this or other grant programs, including those funded by foundations or other government agencies (if applicable).

**Peer Review.** Reviewers are community service practitioners, educators, administrators, and specialists in the areas of environment, public safety, education, and other human needs who evaluate the quality of the proposals.

The Commission uses the mandated CNCS weighting and selection criteria during this phase: 50% for Program Design, 25% for Organizational Capability, and 25% for Budget Adequacy and Cost Effectiveness for a possible total score of 100 Peer Reviewer points.

Peer Reviewers will express their consensus recommendations to the Commission’s Grant Selection and Performance Task Force by assigning each proposal to one of the following categories:

* Strongly Recommend for Further Review (A comprehensive and thorough proposal of exceptional merit with numerous strengths; total score between 90 and 100)
* Recommend for Further Review (A proposal that demonstrates overall competence and is worthy of support; it has some weaknesses. Total score between 80 and 89)
* Recommend for Further Review with Hesitation (A proposal with approximately equal strengths and weaknesses. However, the weaknesses are not offset by strengths. Total score between 60 and 79.)
* Do Not Recommend for Further Review (A proposal with serious shortcomings. There are numerous weaknesses and few strengths. Total score 59 or below)

Applications not recommended for further review will not be submitted to the Task Force for consideration.

**Task Force Review.** Applications recommended for some level of review will undergo further assessment by the Grants Selection and Performance Task Force. The Task Force will include in its review documents submitted as part of this competition plus prior grant performance information and data from information systems including:

* Public registries such as the Excluded Parties List (debarment) and other publicly available materials.
* For re-competing applicants:
* AmeriCorps member enrollment and retention rates, impact data and prior outcomes, as well as submitted evaluations;
* results of grant monitoring, reporting, and compliance with regulations;
* history of meeting performance targets, financial performance and match history.

Prior performance by new grantees will be based on documents submitted as part of the application plus interviews of the foundation or public agency program officers listed on the submitted documents.

The Task Force will use the following weighting and selection criteria during this phase: 10 points Financial Plan, 10 points Fiscal Systems, 15 points Program Alignment and Model, 15 points Past Performance (in other grant programs) for a possible total of 50 points.

Upon completion of the Task Force review, the Peer Reviewer and Task Force Review scores will be combined to produce a single review score.

The Grant Selection and Performance Task Force will then make its final recommendations for competitive submissions to the full Commission. The Task Force is not obligated to recommend submission of any proposals to the national competition and may recommend that no proposals be forwarded.

**Commission Vote On Applications For Federal Competition**

The Commission will authorize submitting the applications recommended as Maine entries in the federal competition at the regular December 2020 business meeting.

### National Review Process For Competitive Proposals.

AmeriCorps (formerly known as the Corporation for National and Community Service) has provided an extensive description of their criteria and review process. The criteria were revised through federal rule making that became effective August 2010.

The weighted selection criteria are 50% for Program Design, 25% for Organizational Capacity, and 25% for Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

The major stages of review are compliance and eligibility, external review, internal review, post-review quality control, risk assessment, consideration of integrity and performance system information, and selection.

Attachment I, page 78, has the text from the federal NOFO that describes in detail the process CNCS intends to use. The CNCS selection process typically concludes in late spring and grant awards are announced in May.

### Proposal Contents Available to the Public

Once the selection process at the Commission level is complete, all submissions in response to this RFP will be considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) (1 M.R.S. §§ 401 *et seq.*).

At the federal level,  the following information for new and recompeting applications will be published on “CNCS Results of Grant Competitions” within 90 business days of grant awards: a list of all compliant applications submitted; executive summaries of all compliant applications; data extracted from the SF-424 Face Sheet; a blank template of the external review worksheet; a list of all external reviewers who completed the review process; and a summary of external reviewer comments for successful applications. Program narratives for successful applicants will be available on request.

## III. Unauthorized Applicant Contact with Peer Reviewer or Grants Selection and Performance Task Force Members

During the review period, applicants may not directly contact either Peer Reviewers or Grants Selection and Performance Task Force Reviewers, regarding this AmeriCorps Grant competition. The review period begins at the submission deadline and ends when the Task Force presents its decision to the Commission.

Applicants may only contact the designated proposal coordinator at the Volunteer Maine with questions or comments regarding this competition. If an applicant initiates or attempts direct contact with reviewers, this will result in disqualification of their proposal.

## IV. Appeal of Grant Decisions

Any person aggrieved by Volunteer Maine’s decisions under this RFP may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in 5 MRSA § 1825-E and 18-554 Code of Maine Rules, Chapter 120 (found here: https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-120).  The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of contract award.

# D. AmeriCorps Program Details

 AmeriCorps is a national service program with three distinct branches:

* AmeriCorps State and National (team-based programs),
* AmeriCorps VISTA, and
* the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC).

These instructions focus on the **AmeriCorps State** program since that is the grant program administered by Volunteer Maine, the State Service Commission. AmeriCorps National programs are multi-state or national nonprofit organizations that submit proposals directly to CNCS.

The following chart shows a comparison of major program traits.

| **Comparison of AmeriCorps program types and grants (examples; not complete)** | AmeriCorps State/National | AmeriCorps VISTA | AmeriCorps NCCC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **AC State/National Grant types:****CR**= Cost Reimbursement Grant; **FA**= Fixed-amount Grant;  | CR | FA |  |  |
| Grant $$ are awarded to local or national agencies | X | X |  |  |
| Grants consist of 1) authorization of AmeriCorps positions at levels needed to achieve targets set in performance measures and 2) federal funds to support members in the positions  | X | X |  |  |
| Grant requires that local cash and in-kind resources used to carry out program services be reported as match in order to qualify for and receive the funds. | X |  |  |  |
| Grant relieves program of financial reporting requirements, ties reimbursement to enrollment, and limits AmeriCorps member terms to full-time (40 hours/week) no matter what the duration of the term |  | X |  |  |
| Categories of community needs addressed include Healthy Futures, Education, Veterans and Military Families, Economic Opportunity, Disaster Services, Environmental Stewardship, Capacity Building | X | X | X |  |
| Grantees are required to mobilize local volunteers who become the future providers of the service | X | X |  |  |
| Program is required to use at least one of the standardized national performance measures. | X | X |  |  |
| Members serve in teams | X | X |  | X |
| Members can serve terms of less than 1700 hours over a 12-month period | X | X[[3]](#footnote-3) |  |  |
| Members who successfully complete service always qualify for an education award | X | X | may choose end of term cash stipend | X |
| Members may have other employment or be in college if it does not interfere with their service term | X | X | X |  |
| Members must be at least 17 years of age and out of school. [[4]](#footnote-4) There is no upper age limit. | X | X |  |  |
| Members who are 55 years of age or older and successfully complete a term of service may transfer the use of the Education Award to a child, grandchild, or foster child. | X | X |  |  |
| Grants include only authorization (allocation) of AmeriCorps positions at levels needed to achieve targets set in performance measures. Grantees may be required to reimburse the federal agency for living allowance expense of several AmeriCorps positions. |  |  | X |  |
| Payment of AmeriCorps member stipends and benefits is handled directly by the federal agency  |  |  | X | X |
| Primary mission is poverty alleviation |  |  | X |  |
| Primary mission is disaster response and recovery |  |  |  | X |
| Members must be between 18 and 24 years of age |  |  |  | X |
| Members generally need some college or a degree  |  |  | X |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

## I. National Reference Materials

There are four sources of critical background information; all can be found online.

1. **The Code of Federal Regulations** sections on AmeriCorps (<https://ecfr.federalregister.gov/>). The table below highlights sections that are useful in designing a program; however, applicants are urged to review the full text of 45 CFR §2520, §2521, §2522 to acquire a full understanding of AmeriCorps regulations.

**Key to Selected Program Elements in the AmeriCorps Regulations[[5]](#footnote-5)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Requirements and Selection*  | *Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations* |
| Member Service Activities | §2520.20 - §2520.55 |
| Prohibited Activities | §2520.65 |
| Minimum Requirements for Every AmeriCorps Program Type | §2522.100 |
| Types of AmeriCorps Programs | §2522.110 |
| Tutoring Programs | §2522.900-2522.950 |
| Matching Funds | §2521.35-2521.90 |
| Member Benefits | §2522.240-2522.250 |
| Calculating Cost Per Member Service Year (MSY) | §2522.485 |
| Performance Measures | §2522.500-2522.650 |
| Evaluation | §2522.500-2522.540 and §2522.700-2522.740  |
| Selection Criteria and Selection Process | §2522.400-2522.475 |
| Standards for Financial Management Systems. | §2541.200    |

1. **CNCS policies on AmeriCorps** provide insight on what will be required to operate a program. CNCS refers to AmeriCorps policies as “FAQs” although they are not answers to frequently asked questions. The policies can be found at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/upload/policy%20FAQs%207.31.14%20final.pdf> .
2. **Key Concepts of Cash and In-Kind Match**
Learn about the fundamentals of cash and in-kind matching for programs funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). Because match is a requirement for most CNCS-funded grants it is a critical issue to understand. This learning material was created through the cooperation of the Corporation for National and Community Service; Walker & Company, LLP; and ETR Associates. <http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/olc/moodle/fm_key_concepts_of_cash_and_in_kind_match/view1c03.html?id=3213>
3. **The National Performance Measures**CNCS maintains a website with training and reference materials for the grant programs it administers. In order to complete a proposal, applicants **must** review the materials below.

For an overview of how CNCS distinguishes performance measurement from theory of change and continuous improvement, view the core curriculum materials at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement> .

To use an online tool that connects CNCS performance measures with definitions of terms and data collection guidance, go to the links under “Training and Resources on Performance Measurement:” at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/americorps> .

A text document version of the information can be downloaded using this link:
 <https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/3%20ASN_FY2021_PerformanceMeasuresInstructions_FINAL_508.pdf>

To understand how performance measures are entered into the Performance Measurement section of eGrants, go through the online tutorial for eGrants Performance Measures Module for AmeriCorps at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/egrants-performance-measures-module-americorps>

## II. Program Elements

AmeriCorps strengthens communities by mobilizing local resources to address one or more critical issues in one of the identified focus areas. One of the most important roles AmeriCorps plays for an organization is expanding the number of volunteers. On average, each AmeriCorps member recruits and manages twelve community volunteers who devote 4-10 hours a month to the same community need. In other words, AmeriCorps is a “force multiplier.”[[6]](#footnote-6)

Members help nonprofit, public, charitable, faith-based, and community organizations by serving in ways that improve and expand critical services in one of three ways:

1. Increasing the amount of service provided through an evidence-based program in order to overcome unusual demand or delay in accessing the service.
2. Providing new services to an organization’s clients/customers through an evidence-based program in order to address a new need or issue.
3. Extending to a new population or region a proven program model that addresses a critical need.

In rural states, AmeriCorps programs often partner with near-by organizations whose mission and service interests are closely aligned with that of the AmeriCorps grantee. Partners commit to addressing the problem targeted in the grant by implementing *the same evidence-based AmeriCorps program model* under the direction of the grantee organization. The AmeriCorps members serve at partner/host sites under formal agreements (including member work plans) with the AmeriCorps grantee.

Partners that serve host sites must be selected in a manner that reflects the criteria outlined in 45 CFR 2522.475:

1. The quality of the national service program proposed to be supported by a grant
2. The innovative aspects of the national service program, and the feasibility of replicating the program.
3. The sustainability of the national service program.
4. The quality of the leadership, the past performance, and the extent to which the program builds on existing programs.
5. The extent to which participants of the national service program are recruited from among residents of the communities in which projects are to be conducted, and the extent to which participants and community residents are involved in the design, leadership, and operation of the program.
6. The extent to which projects would be conducted in one of the areas listed in §2522.450(c)(1) through (5) of this subpart.
7. The extent to which the application is consistent with the application [approved by] the State in which the projects would be conducted.
8. (h) Such other criteria as the Corporation considers to be appropriate

Organizations that are awarded AmeriCorps grants are responsible for recruiting the AmeriCorps members to serve in their program. Programs are required to develop separate role descriptions for each service position category in their program design (e.g., tutor, health educator, coach) so applicants understand what their duties will be, what is expected of them, and what training as well as supervision they will receive.

The federal agency has created a central recruiting site for AmeriCorps (see <http://www.americorps.gov/for_individuals/ready/index.asp>). Funded grantees are able to establish accounts and receive applications from potential members directly through this portal *after* awards are final.

There is also a nationwide site, ServiceYear.org, that specializes in connecting young adults with extended (full year or half) service opportunities. Maine AmeriCorps programs have had success there as well as on Idealist.org, Craigslist, and job sites that permit volunteer listings.

AmeriCorps grants *partially* cover the expense of operating an AmeriCorps program and *do not* cover general organizational expenses. Additional cash and in-kind resources are required and, for Cost-Reimbursement grants, need to be reported as local share (aka “match”). The match rate and requirements for Cost-Reimbursement grants are described on page 32 in this document.

In AmeriCorps, the term “in-kind” is restricted to non-cash resources provided to the program by partners, host sites, or supporters. Resources paid by the applicant organization from unrestricted funds (space, office supplies, etc.) are considered cash support for the program because these can be identified in the agency accounting system. Both in-kind and cash typically make up the local share (match).

AmeriCorps programs must raise some non-federal cash as part of the local share. As has always been the case, state or municipal public funds as well as private donations from corporate, philanthropic, nonprofit, or individuals can be used as match. *Under certain conditions*, AmeriCorps programs may operate on a fee-for-service basis. These fees, called program income, are subject to very specific uses and reporting requirements. See 42 CFR 2541.250 for more information.

Some federal agencies have agreed that their funds may be used as part of AmeriCorps match under certain conditions. Because the allowable funds vary by program within each agency (HUD, OJJDP, Interior, Education, FEMA, etc.) please discuss your desire to use other federal funds with the federal agency that awards those funds prior to submitting your AmeriCorps application. Have the agency document permission or concurrence in writing. Be sure that funds coming to you from state agencies using federal dollars to award contracts or grants are part of your conversation.

Grantees that use other federal funds as local share should be aware that Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Trust Act (42 USC 12571(e)) requires AmeriCorps grantees to report the amount and source of other federal funds on financial reports. Grantees must track and be prepared to report separately on this source of local share each year.

In-kind match is often the most readily available source of match for AmeriCorps programs since the support, training, supervision, and other contributions of effort, space, or materials provided by partners usually qualifies for inclusion in the budget.

Under National Service laws, the time of community volunteers may *not* be counted as in-kind match; however, pro-bono professional services contributed to the program (training members, accounting, marketing, evaluation, etc.) may be included. The in-kind value of volunteer time for Maine can be found at <https://independentsector.org/resource/vovt_details/>.

In developing in-kind local share or match, the applicant organization should bear in mind that these resources will have to be documented as they are used, valued at market rate, and recorded in the organization’s accounting system.

*NOTE: Because Full-cost Fixed amount grants are not required to match AmeriCorps funds and, therefore, are relieved of reporting the sources and amounts of local resources used to operate the program, there is no restriction on the mix or type of federal, state, public, private, cash or in-kind support used to operate the program.*

There are six options for AmeriCorps members’ terms of service. These terms of service must be completed within 12 months. The duration and intensity of their effort (a few hours a week or 40 hours per week) is determined by the amount and type of activity that needs to be done. Some projects have a few people who serve 10-12 months and add many part-time AmeriCorps members for a “high activity” period. Examples would be weather-dependent service such as housing rehab or the hours after school when youth programs are in full operation.

A single Member Service Year (MSY) is at least 1700 hours which a person serving full-time completes within 12 months (52 weeks). Many programs do not have sufficient work to keep 8 people fully occupied for 1700 hours each year. That is where the other levels of service (terms of service) become useful.

A single Member Service Year can be split into multiple positions. See the following chart for service term options and MSY equivalents. Note that the Abbreviated time position of 100 hours is recommended for seasonal programs through which 100-hour terms of service would be focused on 3-4 months.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SERVICE TERM OPTIONS FOR MEMBERS** | **Service term minimum hours**  | **MSYValue** | **1 MSY converts to no more than...** | **MSY equivalent** | **# of weeks needed to complete term if serving 40 hrs/wk** | **# hours/week required if term of service is 1 yr (52 wks)** |
| Full-time | 1,700 | 1.00 | -------------- | --------------- | 42.5 weeks | 33 hrs/wk |
| Three Quarter time | 1,200 | 0.70 | No conversion | 0.7 MSY | 30.0 weeks | 23.1 hrs/wk |
| Half-Time |  900 | 0.50 | 2 slots | 0.5 MSY | 22.5 weeks | 17.5 hrs/wk |
| Reduced Half-Time |  675 | 0.381 | 2 slots | 0.381 MSY | 17 weeks | 13 hrs/wk |
| Quarter-Time |  450 | 0.265 | 3 slots | 0.265 MSY | 11.25 weeks | 9 hrs/wk |
| Minimum-Time |  300 | 0.212 | 4 slots | 0.212 MSY | 7.25 weeks | 6 hrs/wk |
| Abbreviated time |  100 | 0.06  | 16 slots | 0.06 MSY | 2.5 weeks | not recommended |

**All operating proposals must accommodate at least the equivalent of 8 AmeriCorps Member Service Years (MSYs) or 13,600 hours of volunteer time within a twelve-month period**. Although there is no maximum number of AmeriCorps members or MSYs that can be requested, CNCS has stated it will award no more than 50 member positions (slots) to *new* grantees.

Service benefits those who serve, as well. Research shows AmeriCorps members develop an ethic of service and the leadership skills needed for active, productive citizenship if the program in which they serve actively cultivates these as part of Member development.

The degree to which AmeriCorps members are successful is directly related to the program plans for recruiting, selecting, training (initial and on-going), supervising, and giving feedback to the members. Something to keep in mind is that a strong AmeriCorps program design relies on implementation of all the essential practices in volunteer management from “day one” of operations. For a list of these see the third page of Attachment G (page 70).

Examples of the essential volunteer program practices that flow into AmeriCorps include

* a selection process that is consistent with the published role description and includes a background check;
* pre-service orientation to the program purpose and goals;
* a service agreement specifying the responsibilities, expectations, length of service, causes for dismissal and so forth;
* skill training before and during the term that assures quality service;
* documentation of hours served and the work accomplished;
* assignment to a supervisor; and
* orientation of the supervisor to the program goals and expectations.

In other words, a well-organized volunteer program plan is a strong foundation for an AmeriCorps proposal.

## III. Other Program Requirements

* An applicant for an operating grant has done sufficient planning such that all is ready to implement the required program elements for AmeriCorps.

45 CFR § 2522.100 (“What are the minimum requirements that every AmeriCorps program, regardless of type, must meet?”) has the complete text describing these requirements.
* Applicants must propose program designs that are either evidence-based or evidence-informed. Applicants assessed s lower than the Preliminary evidence tier (i.e., Pre-preliminary) must provide adequate responses to the Evidence Quality review criteria in order to be considered for funding.
* AmeriCorps Members are to perform direct service activities and may perform limited capacity-building activities.
* Members are prohibited by law from doing any of the following:

(a) while charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

(1) attempting to influence legislation;

(2) organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;

(3) assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;

(4) impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;

(5) engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;

(6) participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that is likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;

(7) engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;

(8) providing a direct benefit to--

(i) a business organized for profit;

(ii) a labor union;

(iii) a partisan political organization;

(iv) a nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and

(v) an organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (g) of this section, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities; and

(9) conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
(10) providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and

(11) such other activities as the Corporation may prohibit.

(b) AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above.

Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-Corporation funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

* Members may spend up to 10% of their direct service time raising funds in support of the AmeriCorps program activities so long as the funds do not support:
	+ Any portion of the match for AmeriCorps member living allowances or benefits;
	+ The sponsor’s general operating expenses or an endowment;
	+ Any facet of preparing grant application for funding by CNCS or any other federal agency.
* Programs are required to recruit and support community volunteers as an integral part of the program. Note there is a clear prohibition against AmeriCorps members displacing any unpaid volunteers.[[7]](#footnote-7) Programs may recruit and enroll AmeriCorps members from their current volunteers.
* Under the Serve America Act (SAA), all grantees must conduct criminal history checks on individuals receiving a living allowance, stipend, national service education award, or all or part of a salary through a program receiving assistance under national service grants, even if the activities don’t involve service with vulnerable populations. This requirement also applies to positions used as in-kind match and listed in the budget under personnel. The requirements took effect on October 1, 2009. As of April 2011, programs are required to conduct FBI background checks on covered individuals who will be working with vulnerable populations.

See Criminal History Record Check requirements outlined on page 32.

* Programs are expected to fill (enroll) all the member slots awarded in the grant. Enrollment rates have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in continuation (budget years 2 and 3) as well as in recompetition. Continuation and recompeting grantees that have not achieved full enrollment in the prior year must provide an explanation and corrective action plan. Grantees with a history of under-enrollment are likely to receive a funding decrease in subsequent years. Full-cost Fixed amount grantees are not reimbursed for unfilled positions.
* The project start date is proposed by the applicant and is typically September 1. The project start date may not occur prior to the date of the grant award. AmeriCorps members may not enroll prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period stated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.
* Programs are expected to pursue very high retention rates. These will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and recompete processes. Successful applicants that do not retain their members are likely to receive a decrease in funding in subsequent years. They will also be required to submit an explanation and corrective action plan with continuation or recompete applications. Under-enrolled Full-cost Fixed amount grantees do not receive their entire award.
* Programs may institute “fee for service” practices so long as the service activities relate to the program performance measures and the fees collected are used only to finance the match share of the AmeriCorps program costs (See 45 CFR §2541.250).
* *Cost or contributions counted towards other Federal costs-sharing requirements.* Neither costs nor the values of third party in-kind contributions may count towards satisfying a cost sharing or matching requirement of a grant agreement if they have been or will be counted towards satisfying a cost sharing or matching requirement of another Federal grant agreement, a Federal procurement contract, or any other award of Federal funds.
* Costs financed by program income, as defined in 45 CFR §2541.250, shall not count towards satisfying a cost sharing or matching requirement unless they are expressly permitted in the terms of the grant award. (This use of general program income is described in 45 CFR §2541.250(g).)
* Up to 20% of a program’s aggregate member service hours may be spent in training related to the skills, knowledge, and abilities essential to their assignment.
* If the proposed service activities require specialized member training and/or qualifications (for example, tutoring programs as outlined in 45CFR §2522.910-940), the applicant must describe how the program will meet those requirements in the “Member experience” portion of the narrative.
	+ There are very specific AmeriCorps Rules related to tutoring programs. If you are considering a tutoring program, these should be read in full as they address the training of members, curriculum standards, student assessment, and Member supervision. See 45 CFR §2522.900-2522.950
* Programs must report on three sets of aligned performance measures:
	+ Program service activities (outputs and outcomes) are selected from the National Performance Measures and entered in eGrants. Programs whose service activities are not covered by the National Performance Measures may propose self-determined measures.
	+ Member Development and Capacity Building performance measures (outputs and outcomes) are **prescribed by the Commission**. They can be found on page 28 of this document.
* Operating Grants with annual CNCS funding of $500,000 or more are required to arrange for an independent external program impact evaluation. Grantees with lesser amounts must perform a program evaluation but may use internal resources. Appropriate budgeting for evaluation expense is an expectation.

## IV. Restrictions on the Use of CNCS/AmeriCorps Funds (CFR § 2540)

The following section may be useful to organizations hoping AmeriCorps can assist with local challenges:

(a) *Supplantation.* Corporation assistance may not be used to replace State and local public funds that had been used to support programs of the type eligible to receive Corporation support. For any given program, this condition will be satisfied if the aggregate non-Federal public expenditure for that program in the fiscal year that support is to be provided is not less than the previous fiscal year.

(b) *Religious use.* Corporation assistance may not be used to provide religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in any form of proselytization.

(c) *Political activity.* Corporation assistance may not be used by program participants or staff to assist, promote, or deter union organizing; or finance, directly or indirectly, any activity designed to influence the outcome of a Federal, State or local election to public office.

(d) *Contracts or collective bargaining agreements.* Corporation assistance may not be used to impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.

(e) *Nonduplication.* Corporation assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless the requirements of paragraph (f) of this section are met, Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.

(f) *Nondisplacement.*

(1) An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.

(2) An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.

(3) A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.

(4) A participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.

(5) A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that—

(i) Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or

(ii) Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.

(6) A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any—

(i) Presently employed worker;

(ii) Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;

(iii) Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;

(iv) Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or

(v) Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

## V. Member Eligibility, Selection, and Accommodation

Eligibility to Serve in AmeriCorps. The federal law that authorized AmeriCorps defines who may serve and requires grantees to document that Members selected to participate in a program are eligible to serve. Accordingly, an eligible member is an individual who:

* is a U.S. citizen, U.S. national or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States. See 45 CFR §2522.2 for the list of specific documents that are acceptable means of certification;
* is at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service unless the member is out of school and enrolled:
	1. in a full-time, year-round Youth Corps Program or full-time summer Program as defined in the Act (42 U.S.C. §12572 (a) (2)), in which case he or she must be between the ages of 16 and 25, inclusive, or
	2. in a Program for economically disadvantaged youth as defined in the Act (42 U.S.C. §12572 (a)(9)), in which case he or she must be between the ages of 16 and 24, inclusive;
* has a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate [or agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent before using an education award] and who has not dropped out of elementary or secondary school in order to enroll as an AmeriCorps member (unless enrolled in an institution of higher education on an ability to benefit basis and is considered eligible for funds under section 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, 20 U.S.C. §1091); ***OR***has been determined through an independent assessment conducted by the Program to be incapable of obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent (provided that CNCS has waived the education attainment requirement for the individual).
* has not been convicted of murder
* does not appear on the National Sex Offender Public Registry Website *(*[www.nsopr.gov/](http://www.nsopr.gov/) )

Selection. Each AmeriCorps program selects its members at the local level. The selection criteria must reflect the program service roles and work to be performed that is defined in the member position description. In all cases, however, selection must be conducted in a fair and non-discriminatory manner that complies with §2540 of the AmeriCorps rules. Under no circumstances may AmeriCorps members displace any existing paid employees.

Programs must establish minimum qualifications (skills, knowledge, abilities) according to the service that members will provide. These qualifications along with responsibilities or duties and essential as well as desired functions must be stated in a member position description (similar to a standard volunteer role description). Successful completion of an AmeriCorps orientation period is a mandatory qualification for members. We encourage you to select members who possess leadership potential as well as a commitment to the goals of the national service program, regardless of educational level, work experience, or economic background.

Eligibility for Additional Terms. An individual may serve up to four terms and may earn up to the equivalent value of two full education awards.

There are specific guidelines for determining whether someone who has done a term of service in AmeriCorps can serve again and earn an education award. Applicants who are awarded AmeriCorps grants will receive technical assistance on this topic as they implement their recruitment process.

Reasonable Accommodation For People with Disabilities. Increasing the participation of people with disabilities in national and community service programs is a key interest of CNCS. In fact, its commitment to including people with disabilities in service has been expressed in providing programs with additional positions and funding during second and third years of grants. In addition, not only are AmeriCorps programs encouraged to actively reach out to and include people with disabilities, but role descriptions must identify essential and desired functions so that potential AmeriCorps members can identify opportunities for themselves.

Programs and activities must be accessible. You must provide reasonable accommodation to known mental or physical disabilities of otherwise qualified members, service recipients, applicants, and program staff. All selections and project assignments must be made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation. By far, the vast majority of accommodations are inexpensive. For those limited cases where reasonable accommodations are more costly, there may be money separate from the grant award, available through state commissions to provide accommodations for members serving in an AmeriCorps program.

Participation of Individuals Receiving Supplemental Security Income. On June 17, 2008, H.R. 6081: the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act of 2008 (“the HEART Act”) was signed into law, making AmeriCorps more accessible to people with disabilities.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a Federal program that provides a monthly cash benefit to low-income individuals who are aged, blind, or who have a disability. In the past, receiving an AmeriCorps living allowance could disqualify an individual from eligibility. The Heart Act directs the Social Security Administration to ignore an individual's receipt of AmeriCorps benefits for purposes of SSI eligibility. The Act excludes “any benefit (whether cash or in-kind)” and so covers the living allowance, health insurance, childcare, and the education award (and related interest payments). This brings all AmeriCorps members under one treatment of benefits rule for SSI. Note the law does not change how AmeriCorps benefits could impact SSDI.

The exclusion of AmeriCorps benefits took effect for benefits payable after August 16, 2008.

## VI. Member Benefits.

Member Living Allowance. Only AmeriCorps members whose service assignments require an intense concentration of time (i.e., 40 hours or more weekly) may receive a living allowance or stipend. The living allowance is not a wage but, rather, support that allows the member to give nearly all their time to the program’s service activities and have some funds for rent, heat, food, and transportation. Unlike a wage, the living allowance is the same for all members serving the same types of service terms (minimum hours and position description) and does not vary according to the person’s skills, prior experience, service assignment in your program, or prior experience in AmeriCorps. In Maine, by law, members are not employees and do not qualify for unemployment insurance.

Usually the service terms that provide stipends as benefits are one of the following types:

* full-time; minimum 1700 hours in 52 weeks;
* three quarter time; minimum 1200 hours in 30 weeks;
* half-time; 900 hour positions completed in 22.5 weeks, or
* seasonal positions (summer, school year, etc.) that require full-time effort (e.g., 40 hrs/wk).

For positions requiring less than 1700 hours, the full living allowance is pro-rated.

Terms of service that are designed so a member serves only a few hours per week do not entail living allowances; however, students who are AmeriCorps members may receive a Work-study benefit as part of their service. If the work-study benefit does not equal the living allowance, then the program makes up the difference. In any case, the value of work-study for eligible members can be included as local share (match).

Cost Reimbursement budgets must include a living allowance for full-time members that is between the minimum and maximum (see below) per member. Cost Reimbursement applicants enter in the budget the amount of living allowance planned under either CNCS or grantee share. The cost may be shared between CNCS and the grantee share.

Full-cost Fixed amount grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets but are still required to provide members a living allowance that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements. Because the amount of the living allowance is not stated in the budget section, the positions should be entered under “without living allowance” in order to secure the correct level of education award and service term slots.

For the sake of clarity, “Full-time” is used below to refer only to 1700-hour terms of service and not the number of hours per week a member must serve to complete a term on time.

As shown below for programs operating in 2021, the minimum living allowance for a full-time (1700 hour) member is $15,100. The maximum living allowance for a full-time member is $30,200; however, the maximum amount of the living allowance that can be covered by CNCS funds is $15,100.

Applicants are not required to provide a living allowance to half-time, reduced half-time, quarter-time, or minimum-time members. The request for allotment of these slots is made in the Budget Module of eGrants where the number of positions is entered in the “without living allowance” field.

Exceptions. The AmeriCorps rules contain exceptions related to living allowances. If your program existed prior to the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (September 21, 1993), the law does not require you to provide living allowances to your members. If you choose to provide living allowances, they are exempt from the minimum requirement but not from the maximum requirement.

### Terms of Service, Education Award Amounts, Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance Rates

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Service Term** | **# of Hours** | **Education Award** | **Minimum Living Allowance** | **Maximum Living Allowance** |
| Full-time | at least 1700 |  TBA | $15,100 | $30,200  |
| Three Quarter -time | at least 1200 |  TBA | $10,570 if 40 hrs/wk | $21,318 |
| Half-time | at least 900 |  TBA | Not required | $15,988 |
| Reduced half-time  | at least 675  |  TBA | Not required | $ 11,991 |
| Quarter-time | at least 450  |  TBA | Not required | $ 7,994 |
| Minimum-time | at least 300  |  TBA | Not required | $ 5,329 |
| Abbreviated time |  at least 100 | TBA | Not required | $ 1,776 |

Education Awards. The value of the Education Awards is tied to the Pell Grant. At the time this competition opened, that amount had not been finalized (federal budget appropriation not final). Yet, it is worth noting the AmeriCorps members serving in 2020 will earn up to $6,345 for repayment of loans of post-secondary education or training.

Funds for Education Awards are not part of program budgets. Congress makes a direct appropriation to the National Service Trust for these. AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will receive education awards for each term. Members may serve up to four terms but may not earn more than the equivalent of two full-time education awards.

Members who use the awards for their own educational goals have up to seven years from completion of service to use their education award. They may use their awards to pay for any combination of: (1) the costs of attendance at a qualified institution of higher education where the member is pursuing a degree or certificate; (2) the costs of approved school-to-work programs; or (3) the costs of repaying qualified student loans.

Members who are age 55 or older when they begin service may opt to transfer their education award to a child, grandchild, or foster child. In such cases, the education award is available to the person receiving it for 10 years after the AmeriCorps member completes his/her term of service.

While they serve, members who have outstanding qualified student loans may be eligible for forbearance on their payments. To qualify, they must contact their loan holders. Upon successful completion of a term of service, the National Service Trust will make payments for interest that accrued during the period of forbearance.

For additional information on the Education Award, forbearance, and the National Service Trust, visit: [www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-americorps-education-award](http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-americorps-education-award).

Child Care. For full-time members who need childcare in order to participate, grantees must assist members in accessing the CNCS childcare benefit (either childcare through an eligible provider or a childcare allowance in an amount determined by the Corporation). CNCS makes direct payments to childcare providers.  Therefore, this benefit is ***not paid*** from the grantee budget and should not be included as an expense.

CNCS will not cover childcare costs for less than full-time members. Programs may provide childcare to less-than-full-time members serving in a full-time capacity, but they are not required to do so.

Health Insurance. The grantee must provide, or make available, healthcare insurance to those members serving a 1700-hour full-time term who are not otherwise covered by a healthcare policy at the time the member begins his/her term of service. The grantee must also provide, or make available, healthcare insurance to members serving a 1700-hour full-time term who lose coverage during their term of service as a result of service or through no deliberate act of their own. CNCS will not cover healthcare costs for dependent coverage.

Less-than-full-time members who are serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period of time (e.g. a full-time summer project) are eligible for healthcare benefits. Programs may provide health insurance to less-than-full-time members serving in a full-time capacity, but they are not required to do so. For purposes of this provision, a member is serving in a full-time capacity when his/her regular term of service will involve performing service on a normal full-time schedule for a period of six weeks or more. A member may be serving in a full-time capacity without regard to whether his/her agreed term of service will result in a full-time Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.

Any of the following health insurance options will satisfy the requirement for health insurance compliant with Minimum Essential Coverage for full-time AmeriCorps members (or less than full-time members serving in a full-time capacity): staying on parents’ or spouse plan; insurance obtained through the Federal Health Insurance Marketplace of at least the Bronze level plan; insurance obtained through private insurance broker that is MEC compliant; Medicaid, Medicare or military benefits.

If coverage is being provided via the Healthcare Marketplace, and thus third-party payment is not an option, programs must develop a process to reimburse members for monthly premiums. Reimbursements for health insurance premiums are considered taxable income for the member, and programs must have a way to document such reimbursements. It is not permissible to increase reimbursement amounts to cover the tax.

Grant Terms and Conditions, Policies. The AmeriCorps Grant Terms & Conditions and the CNCS General Terms and Conditions contain post-award details that should be considered in program design. Applicants would do well to review these documents in order to gauge the administrative systems that will be required. Be sure to review the documents for 2020 (the last issued) that are labeled “State.”

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cncs-grants>

*NOTE*: CNCS policies on AmeriCorps are titled “FAQs” but, in fact, are not merely informational questions and answers. (<https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/upload/policy%20FAQs%207.31.14%20final%20working%20hyperlink.pdf> )

Examples of what will be expected include developing role descriptions, member service agreements, codes of conduct, notice of circumstances that would be grounds for immediate release, and development of a grievance procedure for members or other interested parties.

Samples of issues with financial implications are listed below; however, this list is not exhaustive and applicants should review the regulations, provisions and policies directly.

* The grantee must have adequate general liability coverage for the organization, employees and members, *including coverage of members* engaged in on- and off-site project activities.
* The grantee must withhold Federal personal income taxes from member living allowances, requiring each member to complete a W-4 form at the beginning of the term of service and providing a W-2 form at the close of the tax year. The grantee must comply with any applicable state or local tax requirements. Note that members are exempt from state unemployment coverage and not eligible for benefits at the end of service.
* Workers’ Compensation is an allowable cost to the grant. Maine law does not require provision of workers’ compensation for members although it is encouraged if the applicant’s carrier offers the option. If a program opts not to provide workers’ compensation, it must obtain Occupational Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance coverage for members to cover in-service injury or incidents.
* Unless exempted by the IRS, all AmeriCorps programs must pay FICA for any member receiving a living allowance even when CNCS funds are not funding the living allowance. Participation in FICA helps members earn quarters in the system and is particularly beneficial to individuals who may be older or have spent considerable time out of the workforce.
* A living allowance is not a wage. Programs ***may not*** pay a living allowance on an hourly basis. Programs should pay the living allowance in regular increments, such as weekly or bi-weekly, paying an increased increment only on the basis of increased living expenses such as food, housing, or transportation. Payments should not fluctuate based on the number of hours served in a particular time period and must cease when a member ends service.
* Grantees may enroll Federal Work Study students as AmeriCorps members. Only individuals who enroll in an AmeriCorps position in a program that has been approved by the Corporation are eligible to receive AmeriCorps member benefits. Except as required by Federal Work Study regulations, AmeriCorps members may not be paid on an hourly basis**.** The Corporation does not consider a wage under the Federal Work Study program to be a living allowance for purposes of the National and Community Service Act. The grantee is not required to report such wages in the AmeriCorps grant.

## VII. Federal Grant Financial Management & Administration Requirements

As with all Federal grant programs, grantees funded by AmeriCorps are responsible for ensuring the appropriate stewardship of Federal funds entrusted to them. Under CNCS regulations, each grantee must maintain financial management systems that provide accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of its program.

**Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.** Grants under this program are subject to 2 CFR Part 200 and CNCS regulations issued to implement the Part 200. For an overview of financial management requirements and expectations, visit the online resources at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/financial-management>

All applicants regardless of funding level, are required to submit a Operation and Financial Management Survey and supporting documents. See “Additional Documents” on page \* for further information and direction.

**National Service Criminal History Check Requirements.** The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving AmeriCorps funds.  An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such AmeriCorps funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. **Programs should include funds to check each covered position in the program budget. (Remember, the grantee share is part of the budget and personnel listed are covered positions.)** If these funds are not reflected in the budget, the applicant must state how these costs will be covered. This explanation should be entered under “Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.”

Maine AmeriCorps programs are required to use the federally designated vendor, Truescreen, for NSOPW checks. Programs use the state Maine State Bureau of Identification system for Maine, other state of residence, and FBI fingerprint-based checks which provide results directly to a designated program representative who considers any findings in the context of local policy about criminal history and AmeriCorps regulations. Programs may use the federally designated vendor, Fieldprint. That vendor is prohibited from sharing results so programs may be required to repeat the search to assess findings in the context of local policy.

 Recipients must perform the following checks for positions funded with either AmeriCorps or local monies:

All program staff, national service participants, and volunteers must have a National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) that includes:

1. A nationwide name-based search of the [National Sex Offender Public Website](https://www.nsopw.gov/?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1)
2. Either
3. A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person’s state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *or*
4. A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

Special Rule for Persons Serving Vulnerable Populations. Award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers *with recurring access to vulnerable populations* (i.e., children age 17 or younger, individuals age 60 or older, or individuals with disabilities) must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based check of the [NSOPW](http://www.nsopw.gov/); and
2. Both
3. A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person’s state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *and*
4. A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

*See* 45 C.F.R. § 2540.200–§ 2540.207 and <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check> for complete information and FAQs. Vendor checks (checks performed by commercial vendors) are often noncompliant with these requirements. Inability of a grantee to demonstrate that they have conducted an NSOPW and other required criminal history checks, as specified in AmeriCorps regulations, may result in *disallowance of all or part of the costs* associated with noncompliance.

**Use of Material.** To ensure that materials generated with AmeriCorps funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, AmeriCorps reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so.45 CFR § 2543.36; 2541.30

**Civil Rights and Accessibility Compliance**. As with all Federal grant programs, you must assure that your programs will be conducted, and facilities operated, in compliance with the applicable civil rights statutes and their implementing regulations. You must obtain assurances of such compliance prior to extending Federal financial assistance to partner organizations that host AmeriCorps members. For civil rights purposes, all programs and projects funded or receiving service members under the National and Community Service Act, as amended, are programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

## VIII. Reporting and Compliance Requirements

Every program must develop policies and a system for collecting, organizing, and analyzing data on an ongoing basis. The categories of data include member records, service activities and impact, identities of partners, as well as financial (in-kind and cash). The most common reporting mechanisms are fiscal reports, quarterly progress reports, and final reports.

All grantees will be expected to have data collection and data management policies and practices that provide reasonable assurance that they are providing MCCS with high quality programmatic and financial data. At a minimum, grantees should have policies and practices which address the following five aspects of data quality:

* The data measures what it intends to measure;
* The grantee collects data in a consistent manner;
* The grantee takes steps to correct data errors;
* The grantee ensures that the data reported is complete; and
* The grantee actively reviews data prior to submission.

In addition, the program must cooperate with state or national program evaluation studies the funders may undertake. These studies do not supplant the evaluation requirements of each grantee. Also, if selected you must compile data on civil rights compliance, as detailed in the AmeriCorps Grant Provisions that are part of your grant award.

## IX. Continuous Improvement

Every program that receives AmeriCorps funding must design and implement a continuous quality improvement system. Such a system assesses management effectiveness, the quality of services provided, and the satisfaction of AmeriCorps members, project volunteers, and persons served. Internal evaluation activities should seek frequent feedback and provide for quick correction of weaknesses. Typical components of internal evaluation are community advisory councils, participant advisory councils, quality control inspections, and customer and participant surveys. In continuation applications, the results of continuous improvement systems are used to explain changes in program operations, services, or plans.

## X. Performance Measures

Performance measurement is the process of systematically and regularly collecting and monitoring data related to observed changes (positive or negative) in communities, members, or end beneficiaries receiving your program’s services. Performance measures track how much is being done (units of service; outputs), how often, for what duration of time, by how many AmeriCorps members, for how many community beneficiaries, and how much change is occurring as a result (intermediate outcomes).

All applicants will submit one set of aligned Service Activity (primary intervention) performance measures in the proposal. All funded programs will also be required to track and monitor one performance measure in the following categories: Member Development and Capacity Building.

Service Activity options are in the National Performance Measure Instructions (<https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/3%20ASN_FY2021_PerformanceMeasuresInstructions_FINAL_508.pdf>). Applicants may propose their own aligned set of measures if no suitable National Performance Measure exists. The Service Activity performance measures (output and outcome) must tie to the primary intervention of the program. A second performance measure can be submitted if it reflects an equally significant activity in the program. CNCS does not want applicants to select performance measures for every activity or impact. Applicants are strongly urged to review the CNCS presentation on quality performance measures if they will propose their own. (<https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Regional_Conferences_High_Quality_PMs_0.pdf> )

Post Award Performance Measures:

For AmeriCorps Member Development (training and professional development), all programs will use these state-defined performance measures and note the measurement instructions:

* *Output*: Number of AmeriCorps program training and formal member development events that result in increased AmeriCorps member skills, knowledge, and abilities related to the service assignment (community, tasks, and sector).

*How to calculate/measure*: Count of program sponsored/conducted events that resulted in a majority of participants acquiring service-related skills, knowledge, abilities.

*How to collect data*: Event agenda/curriculum outline with enrollment, date, instructor, duration, and location details.

* *Outcome*: Number of AmeriCorps members demonstrating increased competency in skills or application of knowledge.

*How to calculate/measure*: Unduplicated count of members who demonstrate increased competency while carrying out their service assignment.

*How to collect data*: Documented assessment by supervisor or program staff of specific competencies in Member mid-term and/or final evaluations.

For Capacity Building, applicants will choose *either* Set A *or* Set B of the state-defined performance measures outlined below.

NOTE: The mandatory capacity building OUTPUTS of 1) recruiting and/or managing volunteers and 2) tracking the hours those volunteers contributed to program or host site services are now reported in data fields. Applicants want to plan for this data collection.

The OUTCOME of the volunteers’ efforts that is measured is as follows:

* *OUTCOME*: Number of additional direct service activities and/or units completed for organizations by volunteers recruited/managed by AmeriCorps members.

*How to calculate/measure*: Recruited means enlisted or enrolled as a direct result of an intentional effort to do so. In the measure, the applicant/grantee should indicate a minimum number of days or hours, or other units of service, that must be performed by the individual in order for him or her to be counted as a recruited volunteer.

*How to collect data*: The organization must use some form of volunteer management system, having processes or capabilities that allow them to track information about individual volunteers such as but not limited to: the volunteer’s name, relevant demographic information including location of residence, method of recruitment, participation in orientation and/or training activities, planned and actual role, assignment(s) or activities, start and end dates of service, and hours served related to the program that the capacity building activities were intended to support or enhance

The total number of volunteers recruited or managed should be an unduplicated count of community volunteers engaged by the applicant organization or the AmeriCorps members during the program year. Applicants/grantees should control for double counting.

National service participants may not recruit volunteers to do activities that they themselves are prohibited from doing, including but not limited to managing the CNCS-supported projects/grants or community organizing intended to promote advocacy activities.

Note: **All** performance measures must be consistent with the program’s Theory of Change as described in the narrative and reflected in the logic model. CNCS also values thorough data collection plans. These must be outlined in the application logic model and performance measurement fields. Instructions for completing the application’s performance measure section can be found in Attachment C, page 54.

## XI. Evaluation and Data Collection

Evaluation vs. Performance Tracking and Data. Evaluation is a more in-depth, rigorous effort to measure the impact of programs. It uses scientifically based research methods to assess the effectiveness of programs by comparing the observed program outcomes with what would have happened in the absence of the program.

Requirements Differ According to Applicant Type. CNCS has established a tiered approach to content in the evaluation narrative of the application that uses experience with AmeriCorps as the distinguishing criteria. Note that data collection elements are required of everyone in performance measures and logic models.

AmeriCorps Applicant Experience and Evaluation Submission Requirements

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *What to submit 🡪* | Data Collection Plan | Evaluation Plan | Evaluation Results Report |
| *How to submit 🡪* | Use “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field | Use “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field | Submit as hard copy attachment |
| Applicant with no prior AmeriCorps grant | X |  |  |
| Applicant funded for the first time within the past 5 years; this proposal is first recompete and is for same project (see definition of same project on page 11) |  | X |  |
| Applicant funded for the same project more than once within the past 5 years; this application is second or subsequent recompete for the same project (see definition of same project on page 11) |  | X | X |

The “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field in eGrants does not count toward narrative page limits but does have a 20,000 character limit. Applicants should print the section to check whether text is dropped due to the limit.

Data Collection Plan Content.

* Describe the applicant’s data collection system and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data during the three years of this proposed first grant. If the applicant does not have a data collection system yet, describe the plan and timeline for developing a high-quality system; and
* describe how the applicant will use performance data (performance measures, other process measures, outcome measures) to improve the program during the first three years if funded.

Be aware that CNCS may require submission of data collection instruments if a proposal is selected for funding.

Evaluation Types. The evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of the grant, as described in 45 CFR §2522.700-710:

* If the applicant’s annual CNCS program grant is $500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external impact evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in §2522.730. (See note below regarding option for alternative evaluation approach)
* If the applicant’s annual CNCS program grant is less than $500,000, it must conduct an internal *or* an external evaluation of the program and submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in §2522.730.

Evaluation Plan. Evaluation plans must include as much information as possible for each of the following (see Frequently Asked Questions: Evaluation, available at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/cncs-evaluation-policies> ):

* A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results
* Outcome(s) of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation
* Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes
* Proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the design selected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components
* Description of the data sources, sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures that will be used in the evaluation
* Analysis plan that clearly describes the methodology/ies that will used to analyze the collected data
* A timeline for the evaluation that describes how the evaluation will cover at least one year of AmeriCorps-funded activity and will be completed within the three-year timeframe of the grant
* Qualifications needed for the evaluator
* The proposed budget.

For more information about evaluation plans visit the CNCS Knowledge Network’s Evaluation Resources: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation>.

Evaluation Reports. A qualified evaluator will be familiar with the report format. It typically contains an executive summary, program description, evaluation methodology, findings, interpretation, and recommendations. The Commission and federal agency will consider evaluations when making judgments about any recompeting organization’s application for funds. Instructions for submitting evaluations are on page 10.

Alternative Evaluation Approach. Recompeting state Grantees may be eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. Eligible applicants should submit a request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach along with their evaluation plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in eGrants. The request should clearly explain: (a) the evaluation constraints faced by the program, (b) why the proposed approach is the most rigorous option feasible, and (c) how the proposed alternative approach will help the grantee build their evidence base. The evaluation plan in the application should be consistent with the argument offered in the request to use an alternative approach. The text for the request is in addition to, not in place of, an evaluation plan. More information on alternative evaluation approaches can be found at:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/2019/ASN-alternative-evaluation-approach-guidance>

If the request for the alternative evaluation approach and the evaluation plan itself will exceed the character limit of the evaluation summary or plan field in eGrants, the applicant should do the following:

* Enter the evaluation plan in the evaluation summary or plan filed in eGrants.
* Include a note in the evaluation summary or plan field stating that the applicant is requesting an alternative evaluation approach.
* Include the alternative evaluation approach at the END of the application narrative with the heading “REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPROACH.” This section of the application narrative will not count against the page limit.

## XII. Data Collection Training for Sites and Members

Program models that propose to locate members in host organizations to perform service should orient and train both host supervisors and members on the program’s objectives, performance measures, continuous quality improvement system, and evaluation plan. Experience shows that most data is collected at the host sites as part of the service activities. Therefore, the most critical players in a program’s data collection need to have a thorough understanding of what information is needed, the format, the source, who needs to provide it, the frequency, and the methods by which it will be collected at the program level. These elements should be included in the required host site agreements.

## XIII. Cost-per-Member

The Corporation for National and Community Service annually sets a maximum cost per Member Service Year (MSY = 1700 hours). This amount is, in essence, a formula for determining the ***maximum amount of funds*** that can be awarded. In 2020, these amounts are

* Cost Reimbursement Grant - $16,300 per MSY
* Fixed Price Grant - $16,300 per MSY

Reminder, CNCS has instituted a new practice of comparing proposals with similar program models and determining what cost-per-MSY it wants to offer grants proposing similar programs. Thus, new with a cost-per-MSY that is below the maximum may have a competitive advantage.

## XIV. Grantee Share (Match) Requirements: Cost Reimbursement Grants

***Note: Fixed-amount grants are not required to document or report local resources used to implement the program. Therefore, this section is not relevant.***

The grantee share (match) can be provided through cash or third-party in-kind contributions. For a more detailed discussion of match sources and in-kind options, see page 17.

The required match rate is specific to the legal applicant and not the proposal. Proposals from applicants funded within the last 5 years must provide match at the level reflecting the total number of years they have operated AmeriCorps programming. This is true even if the applicant proposes a new program.

**Match levels required for Maine AmeriCorps State Operating Grants.**

The AmeriCorps share and Grantee shares in this table refer to the “Grand Total” of the program budget.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grant Cycle** | **First Year** | **Second Year** | **Third Year** |
| New ApplicantFirst Operating Grant | 70% CNCS share30% Grantee share |  70% CNCS share 30% Grantee share  | 70% CNCS share 30% Grantee share  |
| First Re-compete GrantSecond Operating Grant |  60% CNCS share 40% Grantee share | 60% CNCS share 40% Grantee share  | 60% CNCS share 40% Grantee share  |
| Second Re-compete GrantThird Operating Grant | 45% CNCS share 55% Grantee share | 45% CNCS share 55% Grantee share | 45% CNCS share 55% Grantee share |
| Third Re-compete GrantFourth Operating Grant | 1. **Formula Programs must apply under State\*Competitive rules.**
2. May apply for full Cost-per-Member allowed.

Match split changes to 40% CNCS share, 60% Grantee share |

# E. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

The following application instructions describe what AmeriCorps grant applicants must provide in their funding applications. The key difference in application content for each type of grant (Cost Reimbursement options or Fixed-Amount) lies in the budget detail. These differences are noted in the budget instructions.

## I. eGrants Application System

Both Volunteer Maine and AmeriCorps conduct business *primarily* through electronic systems. These systems use the Internet for grant application, award notification, contract negotiation, progress reporting and fiscal and program administration. Grant applicants must ensure *at least* one member of their proposed administrative team has the skills to accomplish this.

All proposal narratives and budgets must be submitted through eGrants, the on-line grant application and management system developed by AmeriCorps. The system operates over the internet and can be accessed at [www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/](http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/) .

***NOTE*:** If you intend to submit a proposal, visit this eGrants ***early*** and set up your organization’s identity, user name, and password. eGrants has a tutorial (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/egrants> ) on how to establish an account. The contact information for the Help Desk is on the same web page.

Proposals received through eGrants will be reviewed, assessed, accepted or rejected by Volunteer Maine. Although the proposals are submitted on the federal eGrants system, the federal agency does not have access to, nor the ability to view proposals until the Maine selection process has been completed.

The eGrants Help Desk is limited to the mechanical operation of the system. The Help Desk staff are not familiar with the various application instructions and cannot answer questions about content or interpret any portion of the instructions. Should you need technical assistance, the Help Desk is available by webform email at all times and by phone via the National Service Hotline (1-800-942-2677) on the following schedule: Mon - Thurs, 9 am – 7 pm ET. Be prepared to provide your Application ID, your organization’s name and the name of the federal NOFO (AmeriCorps State and National Competitive) to which your organization is applying.

## II. Preparations

### Unique Entity Identifier and SAM.

Applications must include a DUNS number or Unique Entity identifier and an Employer Identification Number.

All applicants must register with the Systems for Award Management (SAM) at <https://sam.gov/SAM> and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If an applicant is awarded a grant, it must maintain an active SAM registration throughout the life of the award. SAM collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance.

Applicants that are not already registered with SAM are urged to begin the registration process three weeks before the application deadline in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications.

The Federal government is implementing Unique Entity Identifiers (UEI) as part of the SAM registration process to eventually replace DUNS numbers. AmeriCorps may ask applicants to add the UEI to their application as part of the clarification or pre-award process. AmeriCorps is adding a field to capture the UEI in eGrants. If you already have a UEI and the UEI field is available in eGrants, you can enter it at the time you submit your application.

Applicants can obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at the [DUNS Request Service](https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform). Be sure to register at least 30 days before the application due date, if applicants do not yet have their UEI.

## III. Starting an Application in eGrants

Applicants will need to establish an eGrants account if they have not submitted an application to the Corporation for National and Community Service in another competition. Applicants ***must use*** their SAM-registered legal name and address on all grant applications to CNCS.

To set up a new eGrants account, an authorized person

1. goes to <http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/egrants>
2. selects the blue button in the middle of the page that says “eGrants login”
3. on the next screen, finds the gray text (middle of page) “Don't have an eGrants account? Create an account”
4. on the next screen, selects “Create a Grantee account” and follow the prompts.
5. information you will need to complete registration includes your organization’s Employer Identification Number (EIN) and Unique Entity Identifier or DUNs number.

***Note: Anyone within your organization who will be entering information in the application at any point during application preparation and submission in the eGrants system must have their own eGrants account.*** The individual who first establishes an account and enters organizational information becomes the person who authorizes subsequent accounts and assigns user rights. This person will receive an email indicating someone new is trying to associate themselves with the organization’s account. Given this system, applicants should review their agency policies and internal controls.

Once an account is established and while you are logged in, use eGrants to complete the following steps in order to access the application sections. The texts in parentheses below are guides for making selections from the menus or lists.

* Under the header “Creating An Application” in the bottom left of your screen
	+ Select
		- “New” if you are applying to AmeriCorps for the first time or have been funded as a Formula program anytime in the last 5 years.
		- “Continuation/Renewal” if you have operated an AmeriCorps program anytime in the last 5 years.
	+ Select a program area (AmeriCorps)
	+ Select a NOFA (this competition is either:
		- “*FY 2021 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission (New and Continuations)*” for cost reimbursement applications

 Or

* + - “*FY 2021 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission Fixed and EAP*” for Full-cost Fixed amount
	+ Select the state (Maine)
	+ Select the State Prime ID (using the pull-down menu; there should be one Maine choice only)

Once these steps are completed, you can to fill out the Applicant Info and Application Info sections.

## IV. Contents of a Complete Application (eGrants and Hard Copies)

Your application consists of information submitted through the eGrants system AND hard copy materials that must be submitted electronically (email) to the Maine Division of Procurement Services by the submission deadline. If any required component is not received at the time applications close – that application will be rejected and not considered. The Commission, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in proposals received in response to this RFP.

***Items I to VII: To be completed in eGrants***

Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF424 Facesheet.

1. **Applicant Info**
* New applicants enter the requested information in the fields that appear. Renewal applicants should review and update information that is auto-entered from the last proposal submitted. The contact person needs to be the person who can answer questions about the application.
* The project/program name must include “AmeriCorps” and be suitable for use as the “brand” for the program in community outreach.

**II. Application Info**

 In the Application Info Section enter:

* Areas affected by your proposed program. For city or county information, please follow each one with the two-letter capitalized state abbreviation. Use commas as separators.
* Requested project period start and end dates. Start dates are generally September 1 and may not be earlier than August 15.
* State Application Identifier: Enter N/A.
* The Application is Subject to Review by State Executive Order 12372 Process: This is pre-filled as “No, this is not applicable.”
* Indicate Yes or No if you are delinquent on any federal debt. If yes, send explanation

**III. Narratives**

**IV. Logic Model**

**V. Performance Measures**

**VI. Program Information**

**V. Documents**

**VI. Budget Narrative** (Budget Summary form is automatically created by eGrants from budget narrative)

**VII. Review, Authorize, Submit**

## V. Instructions for Narratives

The application narrative section is your opportunity to convince reviewers your project meets the selection criteria. Below are some recommendations to help you present your project to reviewers.

#### General Advice on Narrative Form

* **Lead from your strengths and be explicit.** Do not make the mistake of trying to stretch your program concept to fit every strategic initiative, special consideration, and priority articulated in the regulations or the Request for Proposals*.* Focus on the considerations and priorities that apply to your program idea.
* **Be clear and succinct. Answer the questions – don’t waste space on information that is tangential.** Reviewers are not interested in jargon, boilerplate, rhetoric, or exaggeration. They are interested in learning precisely what you intend to do, and how your project responds to the selection criteria presented below. They want the answers to the questions asked, in the order in which they are asked, and without distracting stories or unrelated data. They want to understand the severity or prevalence of the need in your target geographic area not a national description of the problem. Therefore, use local not national data.
* **Avoid circular reasoning.** The problem you are addressing should not be described as the lack of the program you are proposing.
* **Explain how. Provide detail.** Avoid simply stating that the criteria will be met. Describe what AmeriCorps members will do, how often, for how many, for what length of time, with what impact or change or outcome.
* **Don’t make assumptions.** *Most peer reviewers are not from Maine*. Do not assume proposal reviewers know anything about your organization, its programs, the geographic area you intend to serve, the local issues, your partners, or your beneficiaries. Avoid overuse of acronyms.
* **Use an impartial proofreader.** Before you submit your application, let someone who is completely unfamiliar with your project read the selection criteria and critique your project narrative.
* **Follow the instructions and discuss each criterion in the order they are presented in the instructions.** Use headings to differentiate narrative sections according to the criteria.
* **Prepare and save your application first as a word processing document** prior to uploading it into eGrants. Then, copy and paste the document into eGrants.
* **Enter narrative text into eGrants at least one week before the submission deadline.** All applicants are strongly urged to leave plenty of time for entering narrative and budget into the eGrant system. Because it is web-based, it does not recognize text formatting.
* **Use only uppercase letters for all section headings**. Bold face, bullets, underlines, or other types of text formatting as well as charts, diagrams, and tables DO NOT copy into eGrants. Do not use any of these in your application.

#### Application Page Limitations

* **Applications are limited to 10** **pages for the Narratives** (12 pages for Rural Intermediaries)**.** Sections included in this page count are SF424 Facesheet, the Executive Summary, Program Design, Organizational Capacity, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy sections **as the pages print out from eGrants.** To check the length, go to Review menu and use “View/Print” option.
* This limit **does not include** the Evaluation Summary and Plan narrative, Logic Model, Budget, Performance Measures, nor required supplementary hard copy materials. Do not submit items not required, they will not be considered or returned.
* The Logic Model has its own specific 3-page limit. Again, print using the menu option under Review.
* The Evaluation Summary and Plan field has its own specific 20,000-character limit. It will not give an error message if the limit is exceeded but will drop excess characters when saved.
* Reviewers will consider the number of pages as they print out from the Review tab in eGrants when determining compliance with any page limits and will not consider material submitted over the page limits, even if eGrants allows you to enter and submit text over the limit.
* *Note:* eGrants handles text differently than word processing programs so the page lengths are not comparable. The Commission will not consider the results of any alternate printing methods in determining whether an application complies with the page limits.

In eGrants, each of the following narrative sections is a text box field in your application’s narrative record.

* Executive Summary
* Program Design
* Organizational Capability
* Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
* Evaluation Summary and Plan

*Note*: The Narratives Section also includes fields for Clarification Summary, Amendment Justification, and Continuation Changes. These are *not* required fields.They are used to enter information *after* awards are made.

Please **enter N/A in these fields**. The verification step in eGrants will not allow you to submit unless this notation (N/A) is entered.

#### Narrative Content

The outline below reflects aspects of AmeriCorps program design and operation CNCS feels are most indicative of the likely success of a proposal. These aspects are intended to help reviewers differentiate among applications. During Review, first state and then federal reviewers will assess each application against the selection criteria noted below. It should be noted there are AmeriCorps program requirements that are not included in the narrative. Examples are commitment to identify the program as AmeriCorps including the use of AmeriCorps in the program name and forming a community advisory board.

**A. Executive Summary – required (0 percent)**

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. Do *not* deviate from the template below.

The [Name of the organization] proposes to have [Number of] AmeriCorps members who will [service activities the members will be doing] in [the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage [number of recruited community volunteers] who will be engaged in [what the volunteers will be doing.] This program will concentrate on the CNCS focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)]. The CNCS investment of $[amount of request] will be matched with $[amount of projected match], $[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and $[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding.

Full-cost Fixed amount grant applicants should list their Other Revenue (see Attachment J: Terms and Definitions) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still raise significant additional resources to operate the program. The last sentence in the Executive Summary should be altered to read:

The CNCS investment of $[amount of request] will leverage $[amount of local “Other Revenue”], $[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and $[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding.

CNCS will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov) in the interest of transparency and Open Government.

 **B. Program Design (50 percent/points)**

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application’s response to the criteria below. Therefore, note the criteria and literally respond to it. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

***1. Theory of Change and Logic Model (24 points)***

In the narrative theory of change:

* Demonstrate that the proposed intervention (service/program) responds directly to the identified community problem.
* Clearly articulate the proposed intervention including the design, dosage (quantity or amount over what time period), target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and community volunteers.
* Demonstrate the intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in this theory of change.
* Demonstrate the expected outcomes articulated in the application narrative and Logic Model represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem identified by the applicant.
* Provide a reasonable rationale for using AmeriCorps members to deliver the intervention.
* Demonstrate that service by AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.

Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization’s performance data, relevant research such as targets documented by organizations operating similar programs, or prior program evaluation findings.

The logic model is a visual representation of the applicant’s theory of change. Programs should include short, medium or long-term outcomes in the logic model. Applicants are not required to measure all components of their theory of change. Instead, they should select performance measures that represent the significant program activities described in the theory of change.

It is entered as a chart in a specific section of eGrants (see Attachment B page 53) and may not be longer than three pages. It needs to depict:

* A summary of the community problem.
* The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
	+ Locations or sites in which members will provide services
	+ Number of AmeriCorps members that will deliver the intervention
* The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
	+ The duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention).
	+ The intensity/dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week).
	+ The target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, individuals in recovery, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level).
* The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served, types and number of activities conducted). When applicable, identify output indicators by the alphanumeric reference assigned in the National Performance Measures Instructions (e.g., O4 or EN5).
* Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur as a result of the intervention. When applicable, identify outcome indicators by the alphanumeric reference assigned in the National Performance Measures Instructions.

Applicants with multiple interventions should complete a single logic model chart which incorporates each intervention. Logic model content that exceeds three pages will not be reviewed.

In eGrants, the logic model section of the application is completed using a link in the left side navigation menu. This takes you to a part of the proposal that is outside the narratives, so you are advised to enter it *after* completing all narrative fields and saving those sections.

In the first blank row of the logic model, click “edit.” Clicking this link will open a pop-up screen with fields for each column of the logic model. Complete any fields that are applicable; there are no required fields in this screen. When you are finished click “save and close.”

You may add an unlimited number of rows to the logic model by clicking “add a new row.” However, please be mindful of the 3-page limit. You may edit or delete an existing row by clicking “edit” or “delete” in the last column of the logic model.

***3. Evidence Base (20 points)***

The assessment of an applicant’s evidence base has two parts. First, the applicant will be assigned to an evidence tier (see the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.) Second, the quality of the applicant’s evidence and the degree to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

*Evidence Tier (12 points):*

An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of applying the strategic characteristics (moderate/strong evidence) and understanding the relative strength of each applicant’s evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the logic model.

In 2020, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 26%, Moderate 18%, Preliminary 24%, and Pre-Preliminary 32%. As these figures indicate, CNCS values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. Thus, do not be deterred from applying for funding due to your current evidence level.

Applicants who have outcome or impact evaluation reports of the same intervention described in the application (see Attachment J: Terms and Definitions for a definition of “same intervention”) may submit up to 2 of those reports, plus (if applicable) the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle, to qualify for the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tier. In order to qualify for consideration, the intervention evaluated in the submitted report(s) must match the intervention proposed by the applicant in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Program Design and Logic Model sections of the application:

* Characteristics of the beneficiary population
* Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention
* Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention, including all key components and activities
* The context in which the intervention is delivered
* Outcomes of the intervention

Submitted reports that do not sufficiently match the intervention proposed by the applicant in all of these areas will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points. Submission of additional documents that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements described (e.g., advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives that are not research studies or program evaluations) will not be reviewed.

In the Evidence Tier section of the application narrative, applicants must

(1) summarize the study design and key findings of any outcome or impact evaluation report(s) submitted and

(2) describe any other evidence that supports their program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform their program design.

Applicants who submit evaluation reports for consideration must also describe in the Evidence Base section of the application narrative how the intervention described in the submitted reports is the same as the intervention described in the application (see Attachment J: Terms and Definitions).

Applicants should provide citations for the studies they describe, if applicable; however, reviewers will not review any documents external to the application other than evaluation report(s) submitted in accordance with the *Notice* instructions.

Applicants must meet all requirements of an evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier.

If the evaluation reports submitted by the applicant do not meet the definitions in Attachment J: Terms and Definitions, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier.

*Evidence Quality (8 points)*

After the applicant’s evidence tier has been assessed, the quality of the applicant’s evidence and the extent to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tiers, reviewers will score the submitted evaluation reports using the following standards:

* The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.);
* The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years;
* The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier, reviewers will score the narrative provided in the Evidence Base section of the application using the following standards:

* The applicant uses relevant evidence, including past performance measure data and/or cited research studies, to inform their proposed program design;
* The described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years;
* The evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

Applicants assessed in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier who do not provide adequate responses to the Evidence Quality standards will not meet the federal threshold requirements for this competition and will not be considered for funding.

All applicants, including new grantees, are required to provide additional information in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field of the application (See Section E. Evaluation Plan, page 30); however, information provided in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

***4. Notice Priority (1 points)***

In the narrative indicate whether the proposed program

* fits within one or more of the 2021 AmeriCorps funding priorities
* meets all requirements detailed on page 9 and in the Attachment K: Terms and Definitions.

*NOTE*: AmeriCorps and the Commission both fund program grants that are outside the competition’s priorities.

***5. Member Experience (5 points)***

In the narrative demonstrate how

* AmeriCorps members will gain skills as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.
* The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate.
* The applicant will foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds, talents, and capabilities are welcomed and tapped for learning and effective service delivery.

**C. Organizational Capability (25 percent)**

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application’s response to the criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

***1. Organizational Background and Staffing (9 points)***

In the narrative detail:

* The roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing the AmeriCorps program as well as providing oversight and monitoring for the program.
* The names and credentials/qualifications of staff who will lead the program. If individuals are not known, the qualifications the organization will use to select the program leadership.

***2. Compliance and Accountability (5 points)***

In the narrative demonstrate that

* The organization has a monitoring and oversight plan to prevent and detect non-compliance and enforce compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities and criminal history checks at the grantee and service site locations.
* The CNCS-required evaluation report (if applicable)
	+ Meets CNCS requirements
	+ Is of satisfactory quality

***3. Culture that Values Learning (5 points)***

In the narrative demonstrate that

* The applicant's board, management, and staff collects and uses information, including performance data, for learning and decision making.

***4. Member Supervision (6 points)***

In the narrative demonstrate how

* AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service.
* AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations.

**D. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)**

Reviewers will assess the quality of the application’s budget using the following criteria. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

These criteria will be assessed based on the budget submitted. **No narrative should be entered in the narrative box except for “See budget.”**

***1. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 points)***

* Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
* Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
* Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
* Budget clearly identifies the line items in grantee share that are third-party in-kind as well as items to be paid by cash in the applicant’s accounts.
* Match (grantee share) is submitted in Sources of Funds with adequate information to support the entire amount described in the budget.
* The budgeted match is equal to or more than the required match for the given program year.
* The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum cost per MSY.

Proposed budgets with MSY costs that exceed the maximum cost per MSY and/or with less than required match will be considered unresponsive to the application criteria.

Applicants must complete the budget and ensure the following information is in the budget screens:

* Current indirect rate cost if used to claim indirect/administrative costs. (See Attachment E for directions on uploading approved rate document.)
* Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project, including for Full-cost Fixed amount applicants.
* Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash), the sources of these commitments, and if the commitments are proposed or secured.

**E. Evaluation Summary or Plan**

This field has a 20,000-character limit even though it is not part of the page limit. Instructions and guidance for this required section can be found on page 30**.** of this document. Applicants should print out this section from the Review Screen before submitting to ensure text has not been dropped due to character count.

**F. Amendment Justification**

Enter N/A. This field is used if you are awarded a grant and need to amend it.

**G. Clarification Information**

Enter N/A. This field is used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period. Please clearly label new information added during clarification with the date.

**H. Continuation Changes**

Enter N/A. This field is used to enter changes in application narratives in continuation requests.

## VI. Performance Measures

All applicants must submit performance measures with their application. See Attachment C, page 54, for instructions for entering performance measures.

Applicants must check the relevant boxes in the Performance Measure tab in eGrants in order to be considered for CNCS’ assessment of the any strategic considerations or special initiatives.

For guidance and instructions on required service activity, member development, and capacity building performance measures, see page 28 of this document.

## VII. Program Information

In the Program Information Section, applicants must check the relevant boxes in order to be considered for CNCS’ assessment of the strategic considerations and Special Initiatives. Applicants should only check the boxes for those characteristics that represent a significant part of the program.

**AmeriCorps Funding Priorities**

Check priority area(s) that apply to the proposed program. Only select Priorities (see page 9) if they are described in the narratives, included in the logic model and outcomes, represent a significant part of the program focus, and reflect high quality program design. If the proposal is a local priority not related to the CNCS priorities, select “No NOFO priority area.

**Grant Characteristics**

Check any grant characteristics that are a significant part of the proposed program.

## VIII. Documents

If the documents you are required to provide in digital format are part of the pre-filled list, change their status in eGrants from the default “Not Sent” to “Sent” or to “Not Applicable.”

For documents that are not part of the standard list, select “Enter New,” name the new document (e.g., “AmeriCorps Readiness Assessment”) and enter status “Sent.”

**These documents must be submitted as email attachments by the application deadline. See page 10 for specific instructions on compiling, emailing, and labeling. Only emailed documents will be accepted.**

1. A copy of the program’s SF424 facesheet to the document package.
2. A contents list enumerating the documents you have included in this package.
3. Organizational chart for legal applicant showing where the proposed AmeriCorps program would reside.
4. Audit (with management letters and all findings) of legal applicant for the last completed fiscal year.
5. A copy of the organization’s negotiated indirect cost rate. If the applicant does not have one, please include a statement to this effect and indicate if the applicant organization has a cost allocation plan.
6. Federal Financial Management Systems Survey (Attachment F, page 68)
7. Explanation if delinquent on Federal Debt (if applicable). Any applicant that checks Yes to the question on federal debt delinquency must submit a complete explanation which will be forwarded to CNCS Office of Grants Management.
8. AmeriCorps Readiness Assessment – (Attachment G, page 70)
9. Research studies or evaluations *[for applicants claiming evidence tiers for the proposed program model of preliminary, strong or moderate]*
10. Independent or Internal Program Evaluation (if applicable)
11. Labor Union Concurrence or Displacement Assurance (if applicable; if not applicable, please include an explanation statement in order to avoid the appearance of omitting this consideration)

Labor Union Concurrence applies:

1) If a program applicant:

a) Proposes to serve as the placement site for AmeriCorps members; and

b) Has employees engaged in the same or substantially similar work as that proposed to be carried out by AmeriCorps members; and

c) Those employees are represented by a local labor organization, then the application must include the written concurrence of the local labor organization representing those employees. Written concurrence can be in the form of a letter or e-mail from the local union leadership.

2) If a program applicant:

a) Proposes to place AmeriCorps members at sites where they will be engaged in the same or substantially similar work as employees represented by a local labor organization, then the applicant must submit a written description of how it will ensure that:

i) AmeriCorps members won’t be placed in positions that were recently occupied by paid staff

ii) No AmeriCorps member will be placed into a position for which a recently resigned or discharged employee has recall rights as a result of a collective bargaining agreement, from which a recently resigned or discharged employee was removed as a result of a reduction in force, or from which a recently resigned/discharged employee is on leave or strike.

For the purposes of this item, “program applicant” includes any applicant, as well as any entity applying for assistance or approved national service positions through a CNCS grantee (i.e., host site).

If either 1) or 2) above applies to you, please select “Enter New,” name the new document 1) “Labor Union Concurrence,” or 2) “Displacement Assurance” and select “Sent.”

## IX. Funding and Demographics

In the Funding/Demographics Section enter the information requested which includes:

* Other Revenue funds. Enter the amount of funds that your program uses to run the program that are not identified on the application budget as CNCS share or grantee share (match). Note: Programs should not enter the total operating budget for their organization unless the entire operating budget supports the AmeriCorps program. Programs that have additional revenue sources not included in the matching funds section of the budget should provide the amount of this additional revenue that supports the program. This amount should not include the CNCS or grantee share amounts in the budget. Full-cost Fixed amount grantees should enter all non-CNCS funds that support the program in this field. All fixed grants will have other revenue.
* Number of Volunteers Generated by AmeriCorps members. Please enter the number of volunteers participating in one day service projects or ongoing volunteer commitments that the proposed AmeriCorps members will generate.

## X. Operating Sites

This eGrants field is not applicable. It is used by applicants operating in more than one state. ***Do not complete this section.***

# F. Budget Instructions: Fixed-Amount Grants

***These instructions apply only to applicants for fixed-amount grants.***

Full-cost Fixed Amount Grant applicants request a fixed amount of funding per MSY. Therefore, these applicants are not required to complete a detailed budget or complete the “Grantee Share” column. However, you **must** select the “**Enter Source of Matching Funds**” link at the top of the budget entry screen and identify all the source(s) and amount(s) of the additional revenue you will use to operate the program. Identify each match source separately, whether the match is secured or proposed; include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal) for the non-CNCS resources supporting your proposed program.

Applicants should plan on a Commission Technical Assistance fee equal to 1% of the total CNCS share. Like all expenses for fixed price programs, this is not a detail in the budget.

Please note the final amount that a program receives will be adjusted to reflect actual hours served if a member does not serve the minimum hours necessary to complete a term of service (i.e., leaves the program early).

**Budget Section II: Fixed-Amount Grants**  Use the table below to organize your AmeriCorps request and calculate the MSYs.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Member Positions** | **Calculation statement** | **Resulting MSYs** |
| **Number** | **Type** | **Number** | **Fractional value** |  |
|  | 1700 hours |  | X 1.000 = |  |
|  | 1200 hours  |  | X 0.700 = |  |
|  | 900 hours  |  | X 0.500 = |  |
|  | 675 hours |  | X 0.3809524 = |  |
|  | 450 hours |  | X 0.26455027 = |  |
|  | 300 hours |  | X 0.21164022 = |  |
|  | 100 hours |  | X 0.07054674 = |  |
|  |  |  | Total Program MSYs |  |

In eGrants, enter the number of positions by category under the chart column labeled “**#w/o living allowance**.” This ensures the correct number and type of education awards are secured. **Leave all other columns blank**. The total number of MSYs will automatically calculate in the eGrants Member Positions chart.

Using the “Total MSY” figure, enter the total amount of funds requested by creating a calculation in this format:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Total MSY X $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/MSY = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ CNCS Share

Under “Calculation,” you will enter the calculation for your grant request. Full-cost Fixed amount grants may request *up to* $ 16,300 per MSY.

Requests below the maximum would be a competitive advantage as was discussed under “Cost per Member.” In the mock eGrants budget entry screen below, the sample program is requesting only $15,000 per MSY. Be sure to enter $0 in the Grantee Share column or the system will not process the calculation.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose**  | **Calculation**  | **Total Amount**  | **CNCS Share**  | **Grantee Share**  | **edit**  | **del**  |
| **Program Grant Request**  | 21 MSY X $15,000/MSY  | $ 315,000  | $ 315,000  | $0  | view |  |
| **Subtotal**  |  | $ 315,000 | $ 315,000  | $0 |  |  |

After you save the Source of Funds and Budget Narrative section, the Budget Form (a summary by category) will be generated automatically by the eGrants system. No further action is required on your part.

NOTE: The Commission will charge successful applicants a training and technical assistance fee equal to 1% of the total AmeriCorps award. The fee will be calculated each time a reimbursement invoice is submitted and billed quarterly. The funds are similar to the 1% Commission share of indirect that is claimed on cost reimbursement grants (see next section).

# G. Budget Instructions: Cost Reimbursement

If you are applying for the first time, you must provide a Grantee Share (aka match) with cash or in-kind contributions at least 30% of the project’s total Operating Costs (Section I) plus Member Costs (Section II) plus Administrative Costs (Section III). If you are recompeting, please see page 32 for the match schedule. For guidance on sources and types of local share/match, see page 17.

After completing indirect cost information in Section III of the budget, complete the Source of Funds section. Identify each source of the grantee share separately and provide a brief description of the source. Include dollar amount, the match classification (Cash, In-kind, or Not Available) and the source type (Private, State/Local, Federal, Other or Not Available) for your **entire** **match- cash and in-kind**. The most common reason for loss of points is a total source of funds that does not equal the total grantee share in the budget. Define all acronyms the first time they are used.

*Note*: The Corporation’s legislation permits the use of non-CNCS federal funds as match for the grantee share of the budget. Please discuss your intention of using federal funds to match an AmeriCorps grant with the other agency prior to submitting your application and obtain written documentation of their concurrence. Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act requires that grantees that use other federal funds as local share for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to CNCS. The quarterly program income reports and Aggregate Financial Report (AFR) will be used to collect the federal match data.

*Also Note:* the value of the Segal Education Awards that members earn for their service ***is not*** part of the proposal budget. Also, the childcare reimbursements provided to eligible full-time members ***are not*** included in the budget. These costs are covered through appropriations held at the federal agency.

**Preparing Your Budget**

Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your narrative. Reviewers will consider the information you provide in this section in their assessment of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criterion.

Follow the detailed budget instructions below to prepare your budget. It is recommended you prepare your budget in the same order as indicated in the Budget Worksheets in Attachment D, page 61, because the format parallels the budget narrative section of eGrants. The eGrants system will create the budget summary automatically from the detailed budget narrative information you enter.

After the budget details are entered, eGrants will perform a limited compliance check to validate the budget. If it finds any compliance issues you will receive a warning and/or error messages. You must *resolve all* *errors* before you can submit your budget. *Warnings* only appear to give you a chance to check information you have entered and you may choose whether to edit information.

As you prepare your budget:

* All the amounts you request must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.
* Itemize each cost and present the basis for all calculations as a formula
* Do not include unallowable expenses, e.g., entertainment costs (which include food and beverage costs) unless they are justified as an essential component of an allowable activity.
* Do not include fractional amounts (cents).
* Add $ the cost of the NSOPW and criminal history background checks for each covered position in the CNCS share of the budget.

Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and the requirements of the Uniform Code. Please refer to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200) for allowable, allocable, and reasonable cost information, as well as, audit requirements, including the need to provide audits to the Clearinghouse if expending over $750,000 in federal funds as required in the Omni Circular. The OMB Omni circular can be found on-line at <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl>.

## Section I. Program Operating Costs

Complete Section I, Program Operating Costs, by entering the grant first year “Total Amount,” “CNCS Share,” and “Grantee Share” for items A-I. The budget work sheets or a spreadsheet can be used to develop the descriptions and formulas that later will need to go into eGrants.

**A. Personnel Expenses**

Under “Position/Title Description,” list each staff position separately and provide salary and percentage of effort as percentage of FTE devoted to this award. Each staff person’s role listed in the budget must be described in the application narrative and each staff person mentioned in the narrative must be listed in the budget as either CNCS or Grantee share. Note: all personnel on the grant, both grantee share and CNCS share supported, are subject to the National Criminal History Background Check requirements.

**B. Personnel Fringe Benefits**

Under “Purpose/Description,” identify the types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) *for each staff position*. Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Worker’s Compensation, Retirement, SUTA, Health and Life Insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If a fringe benefit amount is over 30%, you must itemize them and justify the high cost.

Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item. Do not enter them.

**C. 1. Staff Travel**

Describe the purpose for which program staff will travel. Provide a calculation that includes itemized costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel-related expenses multiplied by the number of trips/staff. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information. The standard mileage reimbursement should not exceed the federal mileage rate unless a result of applicant policy and justified in the budget narrative. Only domestic travel is allowable.

We expect all applicants to include funds in this line item for travel for staff and site staff to attend Commission and CNCS-sponsored events/meetings. These include the Annual Grantee Training (central Maine), the Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference (October in Orono, ME), AmeriCorps Induction Ceremony (fall), National Service Day at the Capitol (late winter), and quarterly in-person grantee meetings. Attendance at the regional conference of CNCS grantees (Burlington, VT in 2020) is required for program staff and fiscal staff of the legal applicant who are responsible for grant finances.

Example of Travel calculation: 2 staff to the Regional Conference in Springfield, MA: 2 staff X $150 airfare + (3 day) X $400/day shared lodging+ $50 shared ground transportation + $35 per diem per person =$1,760.00 for regional conference.

**C. 2. Member Travel**

Describe the purpose for which members will travel. Provide a calculation that includes itemized costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other related expenses for members to travel outside their service location or between sites. Costs associated with local travel, such as bus passes to local sites, mileage reimbursement for use of car, etc., should be included in this budget category. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information.

Member travel should also support member attendance at the Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference, AmeriCorps Induction Ceremony, National Service Day at the Capitol, and Mid-winter AmeriCorps Member Conference.

**D. Equipment**

Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year AND an acquisition cost of **$5,000 or more per unit** (including accessories, attachments, and modifications). Any items that do not meet this definition should be entered in “E. Supplies” below. Purchases of equipment are limited to 10% of the total Corporation funds requested. If applicable, show the unit cost and number of units you are requesting. Provide a brief justification for the purchase of the equipment under Item/Purpose.

**E. Supplies**

AmeriCorps members must wear an AmeriCorps logo on a daily basis – preferably clothing with the AmeriCorps logo. The item with the AmeriCorps logo is a required budget expense. Please include the cost of the item with the AmeriCorps logo in your budget or explain how your program will be providing the item to AmeriCorps members without using grant funds. Grantees may add the AmeriCorps logo to their own local program uniform items using federal funds. *Please affirm that your program will be using the AmeriCorps logo in the budget description*.

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials, including member service gear and equipment that does not fit the definition above. You must individually list any single item costing $1,000 or more. Except for safety equipment, grantees may only charge the cost of member service gear to the federal share if it includes the AmeriCorps logo. All safety gear may be charged to the federal share, regardless of whether it includes the AmeriCorps logo. All other service gear must be purchased with non-CNCS funds.

**F. Contractual and Consultant Services**

Include costs for consultants related to the project’s operations, except training or evaluation consultants, who will be listed in Sections G. and H., below. There is no maximum daily rate. It is not necessary to include a figure in this field.

Under consultants, you may include the value of volunteer professional services contributed to the organization for organizational functions such as accounting, audit work, training of staff and AmeriCorps members, or host site supervision of AmeriCorps members. Because the purpose of this grant is to enable and stimulate volunteer community service, do not include the value of direct service performed by community volunteers.

**G. 1. Staff Training**

Include the costs associated with training staff and site supervisors on project requirements and training to enhance the skills staff need for effective project implementation (project or financial management, team building, etc.) If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate.

Staff training should include registration fees for CNCS regional meetings ($200 pp), Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference ($50 pp), and the fee for either a training/education event related to the competencies for National Service Program Staff or Certified Volunteer Administrator ($300) qualification.

**G. 2. Member Training**

Include the costs associated with member training to support them in carrying out their service activities. You may also use this section to request funds to support training in Life after AmeriCorps. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate.

Member training should include the program share of the registration costs for the Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference ($40 pp) as well as mid-winter AmeriCorps Member Conference ($25 pp).

**H. Evaluation**

Include costs for project evaluation activities, including additional staff time or subcontracts, use of evaluation consultants, purchase of instrumentation, and other costs specifically for this activity not budgeted in Personnel Expenses. This cost does not include the daily/weekly gathering of data to assess progress toward meeting performance measures but is a larger assessment of the impact your project is having on the community, as well as an assessment of the overall systems and project design. Indicate daily rates of consultants, where applicable.

**I. Other Program Operating Costs**

Allowable costs in this budget category should include when applicable:

* NSOPW and criminal history background checks are required for all members and for all employees or other individuals who receive a salary, education award, living allowance, or stipend or similar payment from the grant (federal or non-federal/ match share and personnel included as in-kind). Include the cost for these checks for staff and members. Program consultants and contractors are not required to have criminal history background checks. If the number of positions under personnel and members does not equal the funding budgeted, add an explanation of the difference in the formula field. The NSOPW cost is $\* per person and $\* will cover a criminal history background check.
* Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
* Utilities, telephone, Internet and similar expenses that are specifically used for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps project staff and are not part of the organization’s indirect cost/admin cost allocation pool. If such expenses are budgeted and shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
* Recognition costs for members. List each item and provide a justification in the budget narrative. Gifts and/or food in an entertainment/event setting are **not** allowable costs.

## Section II. Member Costs

Member Costs are identified as “Living Allowance” and “Member Support Costs.” Local share/match can be from federal, state, local, or private sector funds.

**A. Living Allowance**

The narrative should clearly identify the number of members you are supporting by category (i.e., full-time, half-time, reduced-half-time, quarter-time, minimum-time) and the amount of living allowance they will receive, allocating appropriate portions between CNCS Share and local share. The minimum and maximum living allowance amounts can be found in the table on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**.

In eGrants, enter the total number of members you are requesting in each category. Enter the average amount of the living allowance for each type of member. If the program will have members who will not receive a living allowance because their service is not 40 hours/week, you request their education award by entering the number of members in each category under “without living allowance.”

**B. Member Support Costs**

Consistent with state laws, you must provide members with the benefits described below.

* **FICA for Members**. Unless exempted by the IRS, all projects must pay FICA for any member receiving a living allowance, even when the Corporation does not supply the living allowance. If exempted, please note in the narrative. In the first column next to FICA, indicate the number of members who will receive FICA. Calculate the FICA at 7.65% of the total amount of the living allowance.
* **Worker’s Compensation OR Occupational, Accidental, Death and Dismemberment** **insurance**. Some states require worker’s compensation for AmeriCorps members. Maine does not require it but it is allowable. If you do not choose to pay worker’s compensation, you must obtain Occupational, Accidental, Death and Dismemberment coverage for members to cover in-service injury or accidents.
* **Health Care**. You must offer health care benefits to full-time members (~40 hours/week) in accordance with AmeriCorps requirements. Except as stated below you may not pay health care benefits to less-than-full-time members with CNCS funds. You may choose to provide health care benefits to less-than-full-time members who serve fewer than 40 hours/week from other sources (i.e., non-federal) but the cost may not be included in the budget. Less-than-fulltime members who are serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period of time (such as a full-time summer project) are eligible for health care benefits. In your budget narrative, indicate the number of members who will receive health care benefits. If health care is not budgeted for all full-time members, confirm that all full-time members will have access to health care. CNCS will not pay for dependent coverage.
* **Other Member Support Costs.** Include any other legally required member support costs here. Programs are responsible for determining the requirements of state law by consulting State Commissions, legal counsel, or the applicable state agencies.

## Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs

**Definitions**

Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives CNCS funds and do not include particular project costs. These costs may include administrative staff positions. For organizations that have an established indirect cost rate for federal awards, administrative costs mean those costs that are included in the organization’s indirect cost rate agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the organization’s overall operation and are further described in Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance.

**Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs** (choose **either** A, **or** B, **or** C**)**

Applicants choose one of three methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a CNCS-fixed percentage rate method, a federally approved indirect cost rate method, or a de Minimis method. Organizations with a federally approved rate must use it.

All methods must be applied consistently across federal awards. Applicants who hold a federal negotiated indirect cost rate or will be using the 10% de minimis rate must enter that information in the Organization section in eGrants. However, under section 121(d) of the NCSA and CNCS’s regulations at 45 C.F.R. 2517.710, no more than 5% of the total CNCS funds actually expended may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants.

**Option A. Corporation-Fixed Percentage Method**

***Five Percent Fixed Administrative Costs Option***

The CNCS-fixed percentage rate method allows you to charge administrative costs up to a cap without a federally approved indirect cost rate and without documentation supporting the allocation. If you choose the CNCS-fixed percentage rate method (Section IIIA in eGrants), administrative costs are charged at a fixed 5% of the total of the CNCS funds expended. The 5% is shared between the applicant (4%) and state commission (1%). In order to charge this fixed 5%, the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10% of all direct cost expenditures.

1. To determine the CNCS grant share for Section III and at the same time determine the allocation between the grantee and Commission use these formulas:

**([Total CNCS share of Section I] + [Total CNCS share of Section II] x 0.0526) x (0.20) = Commission Fixed Amount**

**([Total CNCS share of Section I] + [Total CNCS share of Section II] x 0.0526) x (0.80) = CNCS Fixed Amount (grantee portion)**

The factor 0.0526 is used to calculate the maximum amount of federal funds that may be budgeted for administrative (indirect) costs, rather than 0.0500, as a way to mathematically compensate for determining Section III costs when the total budget (Sections I + II + III) is not yet established. Enter this amount as the Corporation share for Section III A.

2. To determine the Grantee share for Section III: Then multiply the total (both CNCS and grantee share) of Sections I and II by 10% (0.10) and enter this amount as the grantee share for Section III A.

3. Enter the sum of the CNCS and grantee shares under Total Amount.

**Option B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate**

If you have a federally approved indirect cost rate, this method must be used and the rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs, not to exceed the 5% maximum federal share payable by CNCS. Specify the Cost Type for which your organization has current documentation on file, i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost rate. Supply your approved IDC rate (percentage) and the base upon which this rate is calculated (direct salaries, salaries and fringe benefits, etc.). CNCS does not restrict the overall indirect cost rate claimed. It is at your discretion whether or not to claim your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate in the Rate Claimed field.

1. Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both the CNCS and Grantee shares, as prescribed by your established rate agreement (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other). Then multiply the appropriate direct costs by the rate being claimed. This will determine the total amount of indirect costs allowable under the grant.

2. To determine the CNCS administrative grant share and at the same time determine the allocation between the grantee and Commission use these formulas:

**([Total CNCS share of Section I] + [Total CNCS share of Section II] x 0.0526) x (0.20) = Commission Amount**

**([Total CNCS share of Section I] + [Total CNCS share of Section II] x 0.0526) x (0.80) = Corporation Share (Grantee Share)**

***When entering the calculation and results in the Budget Narrative section, include a notation that “the State of Maine retains 1% ($ \_\_\_\_)”.***

3. To determine the Grantee match share: Subtract the total amount calculated in step 2 (the CNCS administrative share) from the amount calculated in step 1 (the Indirect Cost total). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee match share for administrative costs.

**Option C. De Minimis Rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs**

Organizations that have never, at any point in time, held a federally negotiated indirect cost rate (except for those non-Federal entities described in 2 CFR 200 Appendix VII – States and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, paragraph (d)(1)(B)) and who receive less than $35 million in direct federal funding, may indefinitely use a de minimus rate of 10%. Under AmeriCorps rules, the calculation of the 5% maximum CNCS share *does* include member living allowances and benefits BUT the grantee share must use modified total direct costs which exclude those items.

For simplicity of calculation, use the following:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| From budget | CNCS Share | Grantee Share | Total |
| Total Program Operating Costs | A. | D. | F. |
| Total Member Costs | +B. | 0.00 | +G. |
| Total Base for Indirect (= sum of program operating & member cost lines) | C. | E. | H. |
| Commission portion of CNCS indirect (use formula here):(Cell C **x 0.0526) x (0.20)** | I. |  |  |
| Grantee portion of CNCS indirect (use formula here):(Cell C **x 0.0526) x (0.80)** | +J. |  |  |
| Subtotal of CNCS share of indirect: | K. |  |  |
| (Cell H X 10%) – Cell K = Grantee share of Indirect, Cell L |  | L. |  |
| Total indirect: K + L = M | K. | L. | M. |

## Section IV. Source of Funds

In the “Source of Funds” fields that appear at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of each source of match separately and the total amount. It is not necessary to indicate what match supports each expense, only the total amounts by source. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal) for your **entire match**. Define all acronyms the first time they are used. The total amount of Source of Match should equal the Grantee Share amount.

## Section V. Increasing Grantee Overall Share of Total Budgeted Costs

Check the auto-calculated federal and match percentages at the end of the budget narrative screen in eGrants. Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget sections, as long as the minimum match of 30% for the first three years, and the increasing minimums in years thereafter, are maintained. See match rates for recompeting applicants on page 32. (45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90 has the regulatory minimums).

# H. Review, Authorize, and Submit eGrants Sections

The review, authorize and submit procedures are the same for all grant applications

eGrants requires that you review and verify your entire application before submitting, by completing the following sections in eGrants:

* Review
* Authorize
* Assurances
* Certifications
* Verify Budget, Performance Measures, and Narrative contents
* Submit

Read the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications carefully. Complete each section of the Assurances and Certifications. Each assurance or certification must be opened and read before eGrants will record it as read and authorized. Each section must also be checked and submitted individually. eGrants does not recognize multiple selections for assurances and certifications. The text of these sections is included as Attachment H, page 73.

The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant’s authorized representative. A copy of the governing body’s authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant’s office.

If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant’s authorized representative, that person must log into his/her eGrants account and proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, his/her name will override any previous signatory that may appear and show on the application as the Authorized Representative.

Be sure to check your entire application to make sure that there are no errors before submitting it. eGrants will also generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected prior to submission when you verify.

# Attachment A: Sample View of Facesheet Generated by eGrants(eGrants Inserts Data Using Applicant Info and Application Info Sections)

Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev. 11/02 to conform to the Corporation’s eGrants system)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE**Standard Form 424 (Rev. 2-2007) Prescribed by OMB Circular A-102 | **1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION:** [x]  Application [x]  Non-Construction |
| **2. a. DATE SUBMITTED:** | **3. a. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE:**      | 3. b. STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:      |
| 2. b. APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:       | **4. a. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:**      | 4. b. FEDERAL IDENTIFIER: (Staff Only)      |
| **5. APPLICANT INFORMATION** |
| 5. a. LEGAL NAME:       5. b. ORGANIZATIONAL DUNS:      5. c. ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT (DEPARTMENT/DIVISION):       | 5. e. NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ONMATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION *(give area code):*NAME:      TELEPHONE NUMBER: (     )       - FAX NUMBER: (     )       - EMAIL:      INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: WEBSITE:  |
| 5. d. ADDRESS *(give street address, city, county, state and zip code):*STREET:       CITY:       COUNTY:      STATE:       COUNTRY:       |
| **6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER *(EIN):***                   | **7. a. TYPE OF APPLICANT: (*enter appropriate letter in box)***  A. State H. Independent School District B. County I. State Controlled Institution of Higher Learning C. Municipal J. Private University  D. Township K. Indian Tribe E. Interstate L. Individual F. Intermunicipal M. Profit Organization G. Special District N. Private Non-Profit Organization O. Federal Government P. HQ Internal Organizations Q. State Education Agency R. Territory  S. Other (specify) 7. b. CNCS APPLICANT CHARACTERISTICS *Enter appropriate codes:*  |
| **8. TYPE OF APPLICATION** [ ]  NEW [ ]  NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE  [ ]  CONTINUATION [ ]  REVISION If Revision, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es):      A. AUGMENTATION B. BUDGET REVISION: C. NO COST EXTENSION to       *(enter date)*E. OTHER (*specify)*  |
| **9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY:**Corporation for National and Community Service |
| **10. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER:**           | **11. a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT’S PROJECT:**        |
| **12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT *(List Cities, Counties, States, etc.):***             |  11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):   |
| **13. PROPOSED PROJECT:** START DATE:       ENDING DATE:       **14. Performance Period (Staff Use Only**             |
| **15. ESTIMATED FUNDING:** Check applicable box: Yr 1: [ ]  Yr.2: [ ]  Yr. 3: [ ]   | **16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE** **ORDER 12372 PROCESS**? a. YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ b. NO. [x]  PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372   **17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT?** [ ]  YES If “Yes,”attach an explanation. [ ]  NO |
| a. FEDERAL | $       |
| b. APPLICANT | $       |
| c. STATE | $       |
| d. LOCAL | $       |
| e. OTHER | $       |
| f. PROGRAM INCOME | $       |
| g. TOTAL | $       |
| **18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN** **DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.** |
| a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:       | b. TITLE:       | c. TELEPHONE NUMBER:       |
| d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:       | e. DATE SIGNED: |

# Attachment B: Logic Model Chart

Use the format below to prepare the logic model for entry into the eGrants Logic Model Section. ***Do not*** enter text as paragraphs but use a thorough outline or short phrase format. When ready to enter your logic model, from your eGrants application page select “Logic Model” in the left side navigation menu. In the first blank row of the logic model, click “edit.” Clicking this link will open a pop-up screen with fields for each column of the logic model. Complete any fields that are applicable; there are no required fields in this screen. When finished, click “save and close.” You may add an unlimited number of rows to the logic model by clicking “add a new row.” To edit or delete an existing row, select “edit” or “delete” in the last column of the logic model. **Be sure to print the eGrants logic model before submitting and ensure it does not exceed the 3 page limit**.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Resources** | **Core Components** | **Evidence of Project Implementation and Participation** | **Evidence of Change** |
| **INPUTS** | **ACTIVITIES** | **OUTPUTS** | **OUTCOMES** |
| **Short-Term** | **Medium-Term** | **Long-Term** |
| *# and slot type of AmeriCorps members* | *What is done as part of the intervention selected, where it is done, and for how long (intensity and duration)* | *What units will be produced by program activities* | *Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, opinions of beneficiaries or conditions in community* | *Changes in behavior or actions of service beneficiaries as a result from participants’ new knowledge, skills, etc.* | *Lasting changes or significant improvement in the lives of service beneficiaries or community conditions* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Attachment C: Performance Measures Instructions (eGrants Performance Measures Module)

## I. Performance Measurement Module of eGrants

In the performance measures module, you will:

* Provide information about your program’s connection to CNCS focus areas and objectives.
* Show MSY and member allocations.
* Create the required performance measure(s).
* Set targets and describe data collection instruments and strategies for your performance measures.

**Home Page**

To start the module, click the “Begin” button on the Home Page.

As you proceed through the module, the Home Page will summarize your work and provide links to edit the parts of the module you have completed. You may also navigate sections of the module using the tab feature at the top of each page.

Once you have started the module, clicking “Continue Working” will return you to the tab you were on when you last closed the module.

To edit the interventions, objectives, MSYs, and member allocations for your application, click the “Edit Objectives/MSYs/Members” button.

After you have created at least one performance measure, the Home Page will display a chart summarizing your measures. To edit a performance measure, click the “Edit” button. To delete a measure, click “Delete.” To create a new performance measure, click the “Add New Performance Measure” button.

**Objectives Tab**

On the objectives tab, applicants will account for the full range of their program activity. Applicants are not expected to create performance measures for every focus area, objective, or intervention they select on this tab.

An expandable list of CNCS focus areas appears on this tab. When you click on a focus area, a list of objectives from the CNCS strategic plan appears. A list of common interventions appears under each objective

First click on a focus area. Then click on an objective. Only the performance measures that correspond to the objectives you select on this tab will be available for selection as you continue through this module. To see which performance measures correspond to which objective, refer to the CNCS Performance Measure Instructions.

Next, select all interventions that are part of your program design. Interventions are the activities that members and/or volunteers will carry out to address the problem(s) identified in the application. Select “other” if one of your program’s interventions does not appear on the list. Repeat these actions for each of your program’s focus areas. Select “other” for your focus area and/or objective if your program activities do not fall within one of the CNCS focus areas or objectives.

Choose your program’s primary focus area from the drop-down list. Only the focus areas that correspond to the objectives you selected above appear in the list. Next, select the primary intervention within your primary focus area. You will be required to create an aligned performance measure (output paired with outcome) that contains your primary intervention. Note that your primary intervention, and the performance measure associated with your primary intervention, must be focused on the community impact of the program not on AmeriCorps member development.

You may select a secondary focus area and a secondary intervention. The primary and secondary focus area may be the same if you have more than one intervention within the focus area.

**MSYs/Members Tab**

On this tab, you will enter information about the allocation of MSYs and members across the focus areas and objectives you have selected. You must allocate 100% of your program’s MSYs to focus areas and objectives. When you create your performance measures, you will be asked to allocate MSYs to each performance measure; however, you will not be required to assign 100% of your total MSYs to performance measures.

Begin by entering the total MSYs for your program. This must match the total MSYs in your budget. Please double-check your budget to make sure that the total MSY values match.

Next, enter the number of MSYs your program will allocate to each objective. Only the objectives that were selected on the previous tab appear in the MSY chart. If some of your program’s objectives are not represented in the chart, return to the previous tab and select additional objectives. The MSY chart must show how all your program’s resources are allocated. If the only activity in another objective that you have selected is focused on AmeriCorps member development rather than beneficiary impact, enter 0 MSYs for that objective.

As you enter MSYs into the MSY column of the chart, the corresponding percentage of MSYs will calculate automatically. When you have finished entering your MSYs, the total percentage of MSYs in the chart must be 100%. The total number of MSYs in the chart must equal the number of MSYs in your budget.

In the members’ column, enter the number of members who will be assigned to each objective. Some members may perform services across more than one objective. If this is the case, allocate these members to all applicable objectives. For example, if one member performs service in both school readiness and K-12 success, allocate one member to each of these objectives. It is acceptable for the total number of members in this table to exceed total slots requested in the application due to counting members’ service across multiple objectives. If the only activity in another objective that you have selected is focused on AmeriCorps member development rather than beneficiary impact, enter 0 members for that objective also.

To ensure that information is entered accurately, please refer to additional instructions in Appendix A of the National Performance Measure Instructions on calculating and entering MSY and member allocations.

**Performance Measure Tab**

This tab allows you to create performance measures for all the grant activities you intend to measure.

Begin by creating the aligned performance measure for your primary intervention. After creating your required performance measure, you will be able to create additional performance measures if desired.

To create a performance measure, begin by selecting an objective. The list of objectives includes those you selected on the objectives tab. Note that programs may not create performance measures for the Find Opportunity, Teacher Corps, Green Jobs, or Access & Attract objectives, since these are member-focused objectives. Member-focused outputs and outcomes related to these objectives may be reported as demographic indicators on grantee progress reports.

Provide a short, descriptive title for your performance measure.

Briefly describe the problem your program will address in this performance measure.

Select the intervention(s) to be delivered by members and/or member-supported volunteers. The list of interventions includes the ones you selected previously for this objective. Select only the interventions that will lead to the outputs (plus outcomes, if applicable) of the performance measure and that are applicable to all beneficiaries counted under the measure. If you selected “other” as an intervention and wish to include an applicant-determined intervention in your aligned performance measure, click “add user intervention” and enter a one- or two-word description of the intervention. (Do not a user-defined intervention that duplicates an intervention already available in the system.)

Select output(s) for your performance measure. The output list includes only the National Performance Measure outputs that correspond to the objectives you have selected. If you do not wish to select National Performance Measures, and if the objective you selected permits applicant-determined outputs, you may create an applicant-determined output by clicking in the checkbox next to the empty output text box and entering the text of your output indicator. You may create additional applicant-determined outputs for the performance measure by clicking “Add User Output.” (Note: you are not permitted to create an applicant-determined output that duplicates a National Performance Measure output. If you do not see the National Performance Measure output that you wish to use, check the Selection Rules in the National Performance Measure Instructions to make sure you selected the objective associated with that performance measure output.)

Select outcome(s). If you have selected a National Performance Measures output that has corresponding National Performance Measures outcome, these outcomes will be available to select. If you do not wish to select a National Performance Measure outcome, you may create an applicant-determined outcome by clicking in the checkbox next to the empty outcome text box and entering the text of your outcome indicator. If you do not wish to select any outcome for your National Performance Measure output, click in the checkbox next to the empty outcome text box and enter “NA” in the outcome indicator text box.

If you have not selected a National Performance Measures output, or if there is no corresponding National Performance Measure outcome, create an applicant-determined outcome by clicking “Add User Outcome.” All applicant-determined outputs must be paired with an applicant-determined outcome.

Enter the number of MSYs and members your program will allocate to achieving the outcomes and/or outputs you have selected in this performance measure. Since programs are not required to measure all grant activities, the number you enter does not have to correspond to the MSY chart you created on the MSY/Members tab; however, the total number of MSYs across all performance measures within a single objective cannot exceed the total number of MSYs previously allocated to that objective. Members may be double-counted across performance measures, but MSYs may not.

Click “next” to proceed to the data collection tab. Later you can return to this tab to create additional performance measures.

**Data Collection Tab**

On this tab, you will provide additional information about your interventions, instruments, and plan for data collection.

Describe the design and dosage (frequency, intensity, duration) of the interventions you have selected. Frequency refers to how often an intervention occurs (for example, number of sessions per week); intensity refers to the length of time devoted to the intervention (for example, number of minutes per session); and duration refers to the period of time over which the intervention occurs (for example, how many total weeks of sessions).

Expand each output and outcome and enter data collection information.

Select the data collection method you will use to measure the output or outcome. To select more than one method, click the “Add new method” button. To de-select a method, click the first (blank) line in the method drop-down.

Describe the specific instrument(s) you will use to measure the output or outcome. Include the title of the instrument(s), a brief description of what it measures and how it will be administered, and details about its reliability and validity if applicable. For outcomes, specify how much improvement in knowledge, attitude, behavior or condition is required to be counted as having improved and clearly explain how the instrument measures this.

Enter the target number for your output or outcome. Targets must be numbers, not percents.

For applicant-determined outputs and outcomes, enter the unit of measure for your target. The unit of measure should describe the beneficiary population you intend to count (children, miles, etc.). Do not enter percents or member service hours as units of measure. In most cases, the unit of measure should be the same for the outputs and outcomes in an aligned performance measure.

For output-only performance measures, eGrants will require text in the outcome data collection fields. If you do not wish to have an outcome for your National Performance Measure output, enter the following:

* Method: Select “other.”
* Instrument Description: Enter “NA”
* Target: Enter “1”
* Unit of Measure: Enter “NA”

After entering data collection information for all outputs and outcomes, click “Mark Complete.” You will return to the Performance Measure tab. If you wish to create another performance measure, repeat the process. If you would like to continue to the next step of the module, click “Next.”

**Summary Tab**

The summary tab shows all of the information you have entered in the module.

To print a summary of all performance measures, click “Print PDF for all Performance Measures.”

To print one performance measure, expand the measure and click “Print This Measure.”

Click “Edit Performance Measure” to return to the Performance Measure tab.

Click “Edit Data Collection” to return to the Data Collection tab.

“Click Validate Performance Measures” to validate this module prior to submitting your application. You should also use the Performance Measures Checklist in Appendix B of the Performance Measure Instructions to self-assess your measure(s) prior to submission.

## II. Understanding MSY and Member Allocations in the Performance Measure Section

**How to Calculate MSY and Member Allocations**

In the performance measure module, applicants enter the total share of program resources (MSYs and members) that will be directed to each objective. Member and MSY allocations entered in the application should be the program’s best estimate of how member time will be allocated.

The charts below show how a sample program could calculate its MSY allocations for different member types and different percentages of member time spent per objective. In this example, the program has a total of 135 members representing a variety of different slot types. All members spend at least some of their time contributing to the K-12 Success objective. The program’s full-time and half-time members also spend time contributing to the School Readiness objective: 50% of their time for full-time members and 20% for half-time members.

|  |
| --- |
| Objective #1: K-12 Success |
| **Type of Member** | **MSY Multiplier for Type** | **x** | **Number of Members for Type** | **x** | **% of Member Time for Objective** | **=** | **MSY Allocation** |
| FT | 1 | x | 100 | x | .50 | = | 50 |
| TQT | .7 | x | 0 | x | 0 | = |  |
| HT | .5 | x | 5 | x | .80 | = | 2 |
| RHT | .3809524 | x | 10 | x | 1.00 | = | 3.81 |
| QT | .26455027 | x | 10 | x | 1.00 | = | 2.65 |
| MT | .21164022 | x | 10 | x | 1.00 | = | 2.17 |
| **Total Members** | **135** | **Total MSYs** | **60.63** |

|  |
| --- |
| Objective #2: School Readiness |
| **Type of Member** | **MSY Multiplier for Type** | **x** | **Number of Members for Type** | **x** | **% of Member Time for Objective** | **=** | **MSY Allocation** |
| FT | 1 | x | 100 | x | .50 | = | 50  |
| TQT | .7 | x | 0 | x | 0 | = |  |
| HT | .5 | x | 5 | x | .20 | = | .5  |
| RHT | .3809524 | x | 10 | x | 0 | = |  |
| QT | .26455027 | x | 10 | x | 0 | = |  |
| MT | .21164022 | x | 10 | x | 0 | = |  |
| **Total Members** | **105** | **Total MSYs** | **50.5** |

**How It Looks on the MSY Tab**

The program enters the total number of MSYs and members for each objective on the MSY/Members tab of the performance measures module. The system automatically calculates the percentage of MSYs allocated to each objective.

**How It Looks in the 424 PDF**

****Table 1 and its corresponding pie chart show the total number of MSYs by Focus Area. Since both the K-12 Success and School Readiness objectives are in the Education Focus Area, Table 1 shows 100% of MSYs in Education.

Table 4 in the PDF report shows the number of MSYs and members allocated to each objective, as seen on the MSY/Members tab.

Note that the total number of members does not accurately reflect the number of slots requested since some members are performing service in both objectives. The total number of MSYs does, however, reflect the total number of MSYs requested by the program.

Because some members are performing service related to both K-12 Success and School Readiness, the total number of members listed in this table (240) is greater than the total number of slots the program is requesting (135). This is OK; individual members can be counted more than once if they contribute to more than one objective. In contrast, MSYs cannot be counted more than once, because they represent the amount of member time spent on a particular objective. As a result, the total number of MSYs listed in this table must be equal to the total MSYs the program is requesting (111.13).



Table 2 and its corresponding pie chart show the same MSY information expressed as percentages of the total MSYs:

**How To Assign MSYs to Performance Measures**

When a program creates an aligned performance measure, it must indicate how many MSYs and how many members will contribute to the outcomes of the aligned measure. Based on the MSY allocations already entered for the sample program, the program may allocate no more than 60.63 MSYs to K-12 Success performance measures, and no more than 50.5 MSYs to School Readiness performance measures. However, programs are not required to measure all of their activities, so it is possible that not all of these MSYs will be allocated to performance measures.

Our sample program has three performance measures, one for the K-12 Success objective and two for the School Readiness objective.

|  |
| --- |
| Objective #1: K-12 Success |
| **Intervention** | **Aligned Performance Measure** | **Percent of K-12 Success Time Spent on Achieving PM Outcomes** | **X** | **Total MSYs in Objective** | **=** | **MSYs Allocated to Performance Measure** | **Percent of Total MSYs** |
| Mentoring | ED3A, ED4A, ED27A | .75 | X | 60.63 | = | 45.47 | 41% |
| Parent Engagement | No performance measure. | .25 | X | 60.63 |  | NA | 14% |
| Objective #2: School Readiness |
| **Intervention** | **Aligned Performance Measure** | **Percent of K-12 Success Time Spent on Achieving PM Outcomes** | **X** | **Total MSYs in Objective** | **=** | **MSYs Allocated to Performance Measure** | **Percent of Total MSYs** |
| Tutoring 1:1 | ED20, ED21, ED23 | .75 | X | 50.5 | = | 37.88 | 34% |
| Parent Engagement | Applicant-Determined Measure | .25 | X | 50.5 | = | 12.62 | 11% |

*Note*: Any aligned performance measure that has member outcomes rather than beneficiary outcomes should have an MSY allocation of 0 members since MSY allocations are designed to show how programs’ resources are allocated to achieving beneficiary outcomes.

**How It Looks in the 424 PDF**

****Table 3 and its corresponding pie chart in the 424 PDF report shows the percentage of MSYs allocated to National Performance Measures, applicant-determined performance measures, or to no performance measures. As seen in the table above, the program has two National Performance Measures (ED3A/4A/27A and ED20/21/23), accounting for 75% of total MSYs. The program has one applicant-determined measure, and a small percentage of program activity is not being measured.

This configuration meets the CNCS requirement to have one aligned performance measure (output + outcome) corresponding to the primary intervention. Programs are not required to allocate 100% of their MSYs and members to National Performance Measures, or to any performance measures at all.

# Attachment D: Cost Reimbursement Budget Worksheet

**Section I. Program Operating Costs**

**A. Personnel Expenses**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Position/Title/Description** | **Qty** | **Annual Salary** | **% Time** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**B. Personnel Fringe Benefits**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose/Description** | **Calculation** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**C.1. Staff Travel**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Calculation** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**C. 2. Member Travel –**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Calculation** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**D. Equipment**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Quantity** | **Unit Cost** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**E. Supplies**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Calculation** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**F. Contractual and Consultant Services**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Calculation** | **Daily Rate** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**G.1. Staff Training**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Calculation** | **Daily Rate** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**G.2. Member Training**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Calculation** | **Daily Rate** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**H. Evaluation**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Calculation** | **Daily Rate** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**I. Other Program Operating Costs**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Calculation** | **Daily Rate** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Subtotal Section I:  | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |

**Section II. Member Costs --***NOTE*: Positions that are not associated with a living allowance are also listed by type (hours of service term) in this section of eGrants under “without living allowance” in order to secure the positions and education awards.

**A. Living Allowance**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **# Members** | **Living Allowance Rate** | **# w/o Allowance** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS $ Share** | **Grantee $ Share** |
| Full Time (1700 hrs)  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Half Time (900 hrs)  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reduced Half Time (675 hrs)  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Quarter Time (450 hrs)  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Minimum Time (300 hrs)  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |

**B.** **Member Support Costs**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Calculation** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Totals |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Subtotal Section II:  | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |
| **Subtotal Sections I and II:** |  |  |  |

**Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs**

**A. CNCS Fixed Percentage Method**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose** | **Calculation** | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
| CNCS (grantee) share |  |  |  |  |
| Commission (State of Maine) share |  |  |  |  |
| Totals |  |  |  |

**OR**

**B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate Method**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Cost Type | Cost Basis | Calculation | Rate | Rate Claimed | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
| Corporation share |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| State of Maine share |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**OR**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Purpose | Calculation | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Totals |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Total Sections I + II + III:  | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share** | **Grantee Share** |
|  |  |  |

**Source of Funds - Indicate match type, amount, source and intended purpose**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Match Description**  | **Amount** | **Type** | **Source** |
| **Briefly describe match source and include if match is Proposed or Secure** | **Dollar amount** | **Cash or In-Kind** | **Private, State/Local, or Federal**  |
|  | **$** |  |  |
|  | **$** |  |  |
|  | **$** |  |  |
| **Total Source of Match/Grantee Share** |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Budget Total: Validate this budget using the labeled function in eGrants.Required Match Percentages:  | **Total Amount** | **CNCS Share**  | **Grantee Share** |
| 100% |  |  |

# Attachment E: eGrants Indirect Cost Rate (IDCR) User Instructions

A new feature has been introduced to eGrants which allows users to input Indirect Cost Rate information into their eGrants account. Grantees claiming indirect costs on CNCS awards are required to enter the following indirect cost rates in eGrants: federally negotiated rates, state negotiated rates, and the use of *de minimis* rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Recipients of AmeriCorps State and National awards may only charge 5% of their negotiated rate to the federal share of the award, with the remaining balance being charged to match (See [45CFR §§2521.95](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=2ea79b2eb0c09e5c1ad42ea96846484e&node=se45.4.2521_195&rgn=div8) and [2540.110](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=2ea79b2eb0c09e5c1ad42ea96846484e&node=se45.4.2540_1110&rgn=div8)).

**Once a rate is entered & saved in eGrants, it cannot be edited.** If users inadvertently enter incorrect information, a new entry must be submitted with the correct information.

**Entry for the IDCR screen can be accessed using the following steps:**



1) From the **eGrants Home** screen, in the lower panel under **Managing My Account**, click on **My Account**



2) From the **My Account** screen, under **Edit My Organization Info**, click on **Add and View Indirect Cost Rate**



3) From the **Add and View Indirect Cost Rate** screen, select **add a new** to add a rate or **cancel** to back out of the screen.

Field by field instructions can be found by clicking the “**?”** located next to Indirect Cost Rate or Indirect Cost Rate Record.

If **add a new** is selected, this screen will pop up.

**4) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate to record?** Respond Yes or No. If **NO** is selected, users cannot go any further & nothing will be recorded. If **Yes** is selected, users can continue.



If your organization will be claiming a current, approved indirect cost rate on any CNCS award, it must be reported on this page.  The rate information you record will be used in all award negotiation and reviews until it is superseded by a new approved rate, or expires. Applicants will have an opportunity to identify, in application submissions, if they elect to use a lesser percentage of an approved rate.

* + - 1. **Rate Type:**

**Federally Negotiated –** select if your rate has been negotiated by your cognizant federal agency. Cognizance is determined by the agency which provides the highest amount of direct federal funding;

**State Negotiated –** select if your rate has been negotiated by a state agency or other pass through entity; or

**10% of MTDC** – select if your organization qualifies for & elects to use the 10% *de minimus* rate of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). Organizations qualify for this rate if they have NEVER had a federally negotiated rate. State entities must also not receive more than $35 million in direct federal funding.

**Rates must be used consistently across ALL federal awards.**

**6) Issuing Agency.**  Respond by selecting the federal agency that approved your rate, or if the federal agency who issued your rate is not listed, select **Other**, or if your rate is issued by a state agency select **Other**.

Identify federal agencies using the drop-down list.  If your rate is approved by a federal agency other than the ones listed, notify your portfolio manager. Other federal agencies may be added as needed.

**7) Acceptance Date.** Enter a valid date.

The acceptance date is usually identified where the rate was signed by the issuing state or federal agency.

1. **Rate Status.** Select one of the following options: **Final**, **Provisional**, **Predetermined**, **Fixed**, **Other**, or **Other – 10%**.

Rates issued by federal agencies will almost always be final or provisional.  However, if your organization has formally notified a federal or state agency of your eligibility and intent to use the 10-percent of MTDC rate, select **Other – 10%**.  If your organization has a **predetermined** or **fixed rate**, select those options accordingly. If a state rate indicates a term that is not listed here select **Other.** Additional rate status options may be added as needed.

**9) Effective From.** Enter a valid date.

The effective from date is found on your indirect cost rate document. If using the 10-percent of MTDC rate, enter today’s date or the date your organization formally started charging costs under the 10-percent of MTDC rate.

**10) Effective To.** Enter a valid date.

The effective to date is found on your indirect cost rate document. If your organization has received approval to extend your rate, enter the end date of the extension.

**11) No Expiration.** Check or leave unchecked.

If your rate does not have an expiration date, as is the case with the use of the 10-percent of MTDC rate, check this box, otherwise, leave unchecked.

**12) Extended?** Respond Yes or No.

If the rate “effective to” date has been extended with approval of the federal cognizant agency under authority of the 2014 Omni Circular, respond **Yes**.  If it is not an extended rate effective to date, respond **No**.

**13) Rate Base.** Enter up to 500 characters including spaces.

Enter the text as found on your indirect cost rate approval document.  For rates issued by state agencies, enter either the rate base used to determine the indirect cost pool as stated on your indirect cost rate approval document or “State Rate N/A.” If you need more than 500 characters, indicate “Summary” and record the most important content.

**14) Treatment of Fringe Benefits.** Enter up to 500 characters including spaces.

Enter the text as found on your indirect cost rate approval document.  For rates issued by state agencies, enter either the how fringe benefits were treated in determining the indirect cost rate as stated on your indirect cost rate approval document or “State Rate N/A.” If you need more than 500 characters, indicate “Summary” and record the most important content.

**15) Treatment of Paid Absences.** Enter up to 500 characters including spaces.

Enter the text as found on your indirect cost rate approval document. For rates issued by state agencies, enter either the how paid absences were treated in determining the indirect cost rate as stated on your indirect cost rate approval document or “State Rate N/A.” If you need more than 500 characters, indicate “Summary” and record the most important content.

16) When you have completed all of the above entries, click the **“save & close”** button at the bottom of the page.



* If you would like to cancel your entry, click the “**cancel**” button and the entry will be cancelled. All entry information will be lost & no entry will be shown.
* **Once a rate is saved it cannot be modified**.
* If users inadvertently enter incorrect information, a new entry must be submitted with the correct information.

**17) Order of Rates** - Once an entry is saved, users will be able to see the rates they have entered. Rates will display in the order of entry. Entry of rates will provide users and CNCS with a historical record which can be used to clarify indirect cost rate inquiries for monitoring, consistent record maintenance, & audits.

# Attachment F: Federal Financial Management Systems Survey

**Financial Management Survey**

**OMB Control Number: 3045-0102 Expiration Date: May 31, 2021**

This survey is intended to collect information about the capacity of applicants to manage federal grant funds. Per 2 CFR §200.205, the Corporation for National and Community Service must evaluate the degree of risk posed by an applicant. Information from the survey will be used to assess an organization’s operational and financial management capabilities prior to receiving a federal award. Completion of this survey is required but is independent from the competitive grant process. Responding organizations are advised to ensure that the person or persons preparing this form are those responsible for, and with sufficient knowledge of, the organization’s operational and financial management functions. The information provided will be used to support future monitoring activities, should the applicant receive federal funds from CNCS. In completing this form, each question requires a response. Please include the completed form within the application materials that are submitted.

|  |
| --- |
| **General Information** |
| Organization Legal Name  | [Organization Legal Name]  |
| EIN  | [EIN]  |
| City, State Associated with EIN  | [City, State Associated with EIN]  |
| DUNS Number  | [DUNS Number]  |
| CFDA Number Associated with Funding Opportunity  | [CFDA Number Associated with Application]  |
| **Operational Management** |
| The policies identified below address some of the most critical elements for administration of a federal grant. As a recipient of federal funds, organizations are required to have a full complement of programmatic, financial, and administrative policies, as well as internal controls in place, as applicable. Policies and procedures should be reviewed and refined, as applicable, at least once every two years. Should the applicant receive federal funding from CNCS, full copies of the policies and procedures may be requested for monitoring purposes. Please indicate whether the organization has current written policies and procedures in the following areas (answer Yes or No):  |
| Personnel/Employee Handbook  | [P&P: Personnel/Employee Handbook]  |
| Financial/Internal Controls  | [P&P: Financial/Internal Controls]  |
| Sub-award Monitoring and Oversight  | [P&P: Sub-award Monitoring and Oversight]  |
| Timekeeping  | [P&P: Timekeeping]  |
| Travel Guidance, including purchase/travel credit card use  | [P&P: Travel Guidance, Credit Card Use]  |
| Procurement  | [P&P: Procurement]  |
| Standards for Use of Federal Funds  | [P&P: Standards for Use of Federal Funds]  |
| Code(s) of Conduct/Ethics, applicable to employment/purchasing  | [P&P: Code of Conduct/Ethics]  |
| Document Retention  | [P&P: Document Retention]  |
| Please indicate the training areas below that are provided to employees by the organization (answer Yes or No)  |
| Personnel/HR Issues  | [Training: Personnel/HR Issues]  |
| Financial Accounting  | [Training: Financial/Accounting]  |
| Risk Management  | [Training: Risk Management]  |
| Cyber-security  | [Training: Cyber-security]  |
| Fraud, Waste, and Abuse  | [Training: Fraud, Waste and Abuse]  |
| **Financial Management** |
| Are financial reports (profit and loss, budget vs. actual, etc.) provided to and reviewed by leadership level staff, at least quarterly?  | [Financial: Reports Reviewed Quarterly]  |
| Does the organization utilize an automated accounting system?  | [Financial: Automated Accounting System]  |
| Can the organization’s accounting system separate the receipts and payments of a federal grant from the receipts and payments of the organization’s other activities supported by separate funding streams?  | [Financial: Ability to Separate Multi-Funding Streams]  |
| Can the organization’s accounting system summarize expenditures from a federal grant according to different budget categories such as salaries, rent, supplies, and equipment?  | [Financial: Ability to Summarize Budget Categories per Grant]  |
| How often does the organization post transactions to the accounting system ledger(s)?  | [Financial: Frequency of Transaction Posting]  |
| Does the organization use an automated payroll system?  | [Financial: Automated Payroll System]  |
| Please indicate whether organizational leadership approval is required for any of the following financial transactions (answer Yes or No):  |
| Opening/Closing Bank Accounts  | [Financial: Leadership Approval Opening/Closing Bank Accounts]  |
| Opening Lines of Credit  | [Financial: Leadership Approval Opening Lines of Credit]  |
| Assigning Credit Cards  | [Financial: Leadership Approval Assigning Credit Cards]  |
| Buying/Selling Property  | [Financial: Leadership Approval Buying/Selling Property]  |
| Financial Investment/Divestment  | [Financial: Leadership Approval Financial Investment/Divestment]  |
| Has the organization issued loans to an employee or officer of the organization or forgiven/written-off any loans or debts in the last year?  | [Financial: Loans to Employees/Debt Write Offs]  |
| Please identify who is authorized to write-off any debt owed to the organization as a bad debt.  | [Financial: Staff Authorized to Write-off Debt]  |
| Has the organization experienced cash flow deficits an any point in the previous 2 years?  | [Financial: Cash Flow Deficit]  |
| **Compliance** |
| Has the organization received federal funds for similar programs or projects?  | [Compliance: Recipient of Similar Federal Funding]  |
| If so, has your organization met federal program requirements for similar programs?  | [Compliance: Met Requirements for Similar Program]  |
| Has an audit been performed on the organization’s financial accounts?  | [Compliance: Audit Performed on Financial Accounts]  |
| If so, what was the audit opinion?  | [Compliance: Audit Opinion]  |
| If applicable, has the organization addressed any outstanding deficiencies identified in the most recent audit?  | [Compliance: Outstanding Audit Deficiencies Addressed]  |
|  |
| Please provide any clarifications or similar remarks/information in the section below (optional):  |
| [Preparer Comments]  |
| **Preparer’s Certification** |
| Preparer’s Name (First, Last)  | [Preparer Name]  |
| Preparer’s Position Title  | [Preparer Position Title]  |
| I certify that the above information is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and ability.  | [Preparer Certification/signature]  |
| Date of Certification  | [Preparer Certification Date]  |

Privacy Statement -- In compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, the following information is provided: The collection of this information is authorized by the provisions of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, and the Serve America Act of 2009. The primary purpose of the information is to determine if appropriate systems are in place to manage federal grant funds or, if not, to identify training and technical assistance a grantee may need to develop or enhance appropriate systems. Completion of this survey is required as an element of CNCS’ pre-award risk assessment process. The information provided will be maintained and treated confidentially. However, appropriate federal, state, and local law enforcement entities may request and obtain this information under certain circumstances. Otherwise, the information provided will not be disclosed without express written permission.

# Attachment G: AmeriCorps Readiness Assessment

This assessment tool is designed to assess the organizational readiness of applicants to complete development and prepare to administer an AmeriCorps State program. There are three sections: organizational, volunteer management, and grant management.

**Section 1. These responses pertain to the organization/legal applicant. Check the appropriate box.**

If you wish to make a brief comment about a particular answer you may attach an extra sheet.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | No | Unsure |  |
|  |  |  | 1. Does your organization have a written mission statement that clearly expresses its reason for existence? (if no, skip to question 3) |
|  |  |  | 2. Is the mission frequently referred to (e.g. in annual planning, public relations, communication with stakeholders?) |
|  |  |  | 3. Does the organization have a clear and coherent written strategic plan? (if no, skip to question #9) |
|  |  |  | 4. Does the strategic plan have well defined goals, objectives, and action steps with timeframes? |
|  |  |  | 5. Are the objectives measurable? |
|  |  |  | 6. Is the strategic plan linked to the overall mission, vision and purpose of the organization? |
|  |  |  | 7. Is the strategic plan broadly known by the staff and board? |
|  |  |  | 8. Is this annual plan consistently used at all levels of the organization to direct operations? |
|  |  |  | 9. Is the AmeriCorps program concept you want to develop aligned with the goals and objectives of the strategic plan? |
|  |  |  | 10. Does your organization conduct frequent assessments of the community needs? |
|  |  |  | 11. Does your organization analyze the results of needs assessments and implement changes? |
|  |  |  | 12. Does the organization have a track record of growing and/or creating programs to meet needs of its customers/clients/constituents? |
|  |  |  | 13. Do you have and use a comprehensive evaluation system to measure the impact of programs and services? |
|  |  |  | 14. Do you analyze evaluation or performance data and report findings to stakeholders in a timely manner? (e.g. issue a public annual report) |
|  |  |  | 15. Does the organization conduct frequent assessment of existing programs’ effectiveness in meeting recipient needs AND identify areas for improvement? |
|  |  |  | 16. Does the organization assess internal operations to assess efficiency and effectiveness? |
|  |  |  | 17. If yes to questions 15-16, are adjustments and/or improvements always made? |
|  |  |  | 18. Does your organization have networked computing hardware with a comprehensive range of up-to-date business software applications?  |
|  |  |  | 19. Does every key staff member have a computer with up-to-date software? |
|  |  |  | 20. Does every key staff member have internet access and e-mail capabilities? |
|  |  |  | 21. Is computer technology used regularly by staff? |
|  |  |  | 22. Does the organization have a documented (written) process to recruit, develop and retain employees? |
|  |  |  | 23. Does the organization provide relevant and regular internal and external training? |
|  |  |  | 24. Are employee performance appraisals done annually, consistently, and in writing? |
|  |  |  | 25. Does the organization recruit, develop, and deploy volunteers to deliver mission-related services to its customers/constituents? |
|  |  |  | 26. Does your organization have more than 2 significant sources of operating funds? |
|  |  |  | 27. Does your organization have an active board of directors or other governing body? |
|  |  |  | 28. Does your organization have written administrative and personnel policies and procedures?  |
|  |  |  | 29. Does staff understand and consistently follow the written policies and procedures? |

**Section 2. Grant Management Experience**

Information provided here should cover the full period of a grant by another public agency or private funder. Information provided may be verified through contact with the identified program or grant officer.

Title of Grant described in this report:

Funder name: Public or Private:

Funder address:

Funder Program or Grant Officer (name):

Email of Program or Gant Officer:

Business phone of Program or Grant Officer:

Total Grant Performance Period (start and end dates):

Grant Finances:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total $$ | Funder $$ | Local share/match $$ | Was match required? | % Match |
| Budget |  |  |  |  |  |
| Actual Expenses |  |  |  |  |  |

Brief summary of grant purpose (1,000 characters max.):

Brief summary of grant accomplishments including objectives achieved (1,000 characters max.):

Description of primary target population or beneficiaries of this grant’s efforts:

Number of beneficiaries served during grant period:

Were local volunteers involved in conducting activities under this grant?

If “yes,” describe how many, responsibilities of their assignments, how many completed their assignments, total number of hours served by volunteers, and major accomplishments of the volunteers. (2,500 characters max.)

Brief description of staff supported by this grant (1,000 characters max). Include titles, how many for each title, and general duties.

Was this grant required to have an external or internal evaluation?

If “yes,” was the evaluation submitted with this AmeriCorps application? (highly recommended)

Source of regulations or requirements governing this grant’s administration or operation:

**Section 3.** **Essential Practices of Volunteer Management**

For some organizations, AmeriCorps is the first introduction to implementation of all the essential practices of volunteer management. Please use this section to show the stage of development in your organization with regard to volunteer management. Check the box that best fits your organization.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Elements of Volunteer****Resources Management** | Fully implemented | Partially implemented | Not being done |
| Written statement of philosophy related to volunteer involvement |  |  |  |
| Orientation for new paid staff about why and how volunteers are involved in the organization's work |  |  |  |
| Designated manager/leader for overseeing management of volunteers agency-wide |  |  |  |
| Periodic needs assessment to determine how volunteers should be involved to address the mission |  |  |  |
| Written position descriptions for volunteer roles |  |  |  |
| Written policies and procedures for volunteer involvement |  |  |  |
| Organizational budget reflects expenses related to volunteer involvement |  |  |  |
| Periodic risk management assessment related to volunteer roles  |  |  |  |
| Liability insurance coverage for volunteers |  |  |  |
| Specific strategies for ongoing volunteer recruitment  |  |  |  |
| Standardized screening and matching procedures for determining appropriate placement of volunteers |  |  |  |
| Consistent general orientation for new volunteers |  |  |  |
| Consistent training for new volunteers regarding specific duties and responsibilities |  |  |  |
| Designated supervisors for all volunteer roles |  |  |  |
| Periodic assessments of volunteer performance |  |  |  |
| Periodic assessments of staff support for volunteers |  |  |  |
| Consistent activities for recognizing volunteer contributions |  |  |  |
| Consistent activities for recognizing staff support for volunteers |  |  |  |
| Regular collection of information (numerical and anecdotal) regarding volunteer involvement |  |  |  |
| Information related to volunteer involvement is shared with board members and other stakeholders at least twice annually |  |  |  |
| Volunteer manager and fund development manager work closely together |  |  |  |
| Volunteer manager is included in top-level planning |  |  |  |
| Volunteer involvement is linked to organizational or program outcomes |  |  |  |
| Please identify the person responsible for volunteer management in your agency and describe the current roles volunteers fulfill along with the number of volunteers who are involved in agency operations. |

# Attachment H: Text Of Assurances And Certifications(Part Of eGrants Review, Authorize, And Submit Section)

**Instructions**

**By signing and submitting this application, as the duly authorized representative of the applicant, you certify that the applicant will comply with the Assurances and Certifications described below.**

**a) Inability to certify**

Your inability to provide the assurances and certifications listed below will not necessarily result in denial of a grant. You must submit an explanation of why you cannot do so. We will consider your explanation in determining whether to enter into this transaction. However, your failure to furnish an explanation will disqualify your application.

**b) Erroneous certification or assurance**

The assurances and certifications are material representations of fact upon which we rely in determining whether to enter into this transaction. If we later determine that you knowingly submitted an erroneous certification or assurance, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, we may terminate this transaction for cause or default.

**c) Notice of error in certification or assurance**

You must provide immediate written notice to us if at any time you learn that a certification or assurance was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous because of changed circumstances.

**d) Definitions**

The terms “covered transaction”, “debarred”, “suspended”, “ineligible”, “lower tier covered transaction”, “participant”, “person”, “primary covered transaction”, “principal”, “proposal”, and “voluntarily excluded” as used in this clause, have the meanings set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of the rules implementing Executive Order 12549. An applicant shall be considered a “prospective primary participant in a covered transaction” as defined in the rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact us for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.

**e) Assurance requirement for subgrant agreements**

You agree by submitting this proposal that if we approve your application you shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by us.

**f) Assurance inclusion in subgrant agreements**

You agree by submitting this proposal that you will obtain an assurance from prospective participants in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions that the participants are not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction.

**g) Assurance of subgrant principals**

You may rely upon an assurance of a prospective participant in a lower-tier covered transaction that is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless you know that the assurance is erroneous. You may decide the method and frequency by which you determine the eligibility of your principals. You may, but are not required to, check the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs.

**h) Non-assurance in subgrant agreements**

If you knowingly enter into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, we may terminate this transaction for cause or default.

**i) Prudent person standard**

Nothing contained in the aforementioned may be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the assurances and certifications required. Your knowledge and information is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.

***ASSURANCES***

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that the applicant:

* Has the legal authority to apply for federal assistance, and the institutional, managerial, and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-federal share of project costs) to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in this application.
* Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, and if appropriate, the state, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
* Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their position for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
* Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
* Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the nineteen statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM’s Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 CFR 900, Subpart F).
* Will comply with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1681-1683, and 1685-1686). which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability (d) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) The Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) The Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) sections 523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. 290dd-3 and 290ee-3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended; and (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
* Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of federal or federally assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of federal participation in purchases.
* Will comply with the provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.
* Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C 276a and 276a-77), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C 276c and 18 U.S.C. 874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 327-333), regarding labor standards for Federally assisted construction sub-agreements.
* Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires the recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is $10,000 or more.
* Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved state management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C 1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).
* Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C 1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
* Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16U.S.C. 469a-l et seq.).
* Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
* Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
* Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
* Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act of 1984, as amended, and OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.
* Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, application guidelines, and policies governing this program.
* Will comply with all rules regarding prohibited activities, including those stated in applicable Notice, grant provisions, and program regulations, and will ensure that no assistance made available by the Corporation will be used to support any such prohibited activities.
* Will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions in the national service laws, which provide that an individual with responsibility for the operation of a project or program that receives assistance under the national service laws shall not discriminate against a participant in, or member of the staff of, such project or program on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, disability, or on the basis of religion. (NOTE: the prohibition on religious discrimination does not apply to the employment of any staff member paid with non-Corporation funds or paid with Corporation funds but employed with the organization operating the project prior to or on the date the grant was awarded. If your organization is a faith-based organization that makes hiring decisions on the basis of religious belief, your organization may be entitled, under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb, to receive federal funds and yet maintain that hiring practice, even though the national service legislation includes a restriction on religious discrimination in employment of staff hired to work on a Corporation-funded project and paid with Corporation grant funds. (42 U.S.C. §§ 5057(c) and 12635(c)). For the circumstances under which this may occur, please see the document “Effect of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act on Faith-Based Applicants for Grants” on the Corporation’s website at: <http://www.usdoj.gov/archive/fbci/effect-rfra.pdf>.
* Will comply with all other federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination, including any self-evaluation requirements. These include but are not limited to: (a)Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1681-1683, and 1685-1686). which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps (d) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) The Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) The Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) sections 523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. 290 dd-3 and 290 ee-3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; and (i) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
* Will provide, in the design, recruitment, and operation of any AmeriCorps program, for broad-based input from – (1) the community served, the municipality and government of the county (if appropriate) in which the community is located, and potential participants in the program; and (2) community-based agencies with a demonstrated record of experience in providing services and local labor organizations representing employees of service sponsors, if these entities exist in the area to be served by the program;
* Will, prior to the placement of participants, consult with the appropriate local labor organization, if any, representing employees in the area who are engaged in the same or similar work as that proposed to be carried out by an AmeriCorps program, to ensure compliance with the nondisplacement requirements specified in section 177 of the NCSA;
* Will, in the case of an AmeriCorps program that includes or serves children, consult with the parents or legal guardians of children in developing and operating the program;
* Will, before transporting minor children, provide the children’s parents or legal guardians with the reason for the transportation and obtain the parent’s or legal guardian’s permission for such transportation, consistent with state law;
* Will, in the case of an AmeriCorps program that is not funded through a State, consult with and coordinate activities with the State Commission for the state in which the program operates.
* Will ensure that any national service program carried out by the applicant using assistance provided under section 121 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and any national service program supported by a grant made by the applicant using such assistance will address unmet human, educational, environmental, or public safety needs through services that provide a direct benefit to the community in which the service is performed;
* Will comply with the nonduplication and nondisplacement requirements set out in section 177 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, and in the Corporation’s regulations at § 2540.100;
* Will comply with the grievance procedure requirements as set out in section 176(f) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and in the Corporation’s regulations at 45 CFR § 2540.230;
* Will provide participants in the national service program with the training, skills, and knowledge necessary for the projects that participants are called upon to perform, including training on prohibited activities;
* Will provide support services to participants, such as information regarding G.E.D. attainment and post-service employment, and, if appropriate, opportunities for participants to reflect on their service experiences;
* Will arrange for an independent evaluation of any national service program carried out using assistance provided to the applicant under section 121 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 or, with the approval of the Corporation, conduct an internal evaluation of the program;
* Will apply measurable performance goals and evaluation methods, which are to be used as part of such evaluation to determine the program’s impact on communities and persons served by the program, on participants who take part in the projects, and in other such areas as required by the Corporation;
* Will ensure the provision of a living allowance and other benefits to participants as required by the Corporation;
* Has not violated a Federal criminal statute;
* If a state applicant, will ensure that the State subgrants will be used to support national service programs selected by the State on a competitive basis;
* If a state applicant, will seek to ensure an equitable allocation within the State of assistance and approved national service positions, taking into consideration such factors as the locations of the programs, population density, and economic distress;
* If a state applicant, will ensure that not less than 60% of the assistance will be used to make grants to support national service programs other than those carried out by a State agency, unless the Corporation approves otherwise.

**ASSURANCE SIGNATURE. This is signed digitally through eGrants.** The system will not accept an application unless this form is included. In rare instances, a hard copy must be submitted in which case applicants should sign this form and include in the application if submitting a hard copy.

***CERTIFICATIONS***

**Certification – Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters**

This certification is required by the government-wide regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 2 CFR Part 180, Section 180.335, *What information must I provide before entering into a covered transaction with a Federal agency?*

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that neither the applicant nor its principals:

* Is presently excluded or disqualified;
* Has been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in § 180.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against it for one of those offenses within that time period;
* Is presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission or any of the offenses listed in § 180.800(a); or
* Has had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.

**Certification – Drug Free Workplace**

This certification is required by the Corporation’s regulations implementing sections 5150-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-690), 45 CFR Part 2545, Subpart B. The regulations require certification by grantees, prior to award, that they will make a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to maintain a drug-free workplace. The certification set out below is a material representation of fact upon which reliance will be placed when the agency determines to award the grant. False certification or violation of the certification may be grounds for suspension of payments, suspension or termination of grants, or government-wide suspension or debarment (see 45 CFR Part 2542, Subparts G and H).

As the duly authorized representative of the grantee, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that the grantee will provide a drug-free workplace by:

A. Publishing a drug-free workplace statement that:

a. Notifies employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee’s workplace;

b. Specifies the actions that the grantee will take against employees for violating that prohibition; and

c. Informs employees that, as a condition of employment under any award, each employee will abide by the terms of the statement and notify the grantee in writing if the employee is convicted for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace within five days of the conviction;

B. Requiring that a copy of the statement described in paragraph (A) be given to each employee who will be engaged in the performance of any Federal award;

C. Establishing a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:

a. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;

b. The grantee’s policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;

c. Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and

d. The penalties that the grantee may impose upon them for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;

D. Providing us, as well as any other Federal agency on whose award the convicted employee was working, with written notification within 10 calendar days of learning that an employee has been convicted of a drug violation in the workplace;

E. Taking one of the following actions within 30 calendar days of learning that an employee has been convicted of a drug violation in the workplace:

a. Taking appropriate personnel action against the employee, up to and including termination; or

b. Requiring that the employee participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for these purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;

F. Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs (A) through (E).

**Certification - Lobbying Activities**

As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, as the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that:

* No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the applicant, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer of Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement;
* If any funds other than federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the applicant will submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;

The applicant will require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subcontracts at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients will certify and disclose accordingly.

**Erroneous certification or assurance**

The assurances and certifications are material representations of fact upon which we rely in determining whether to enter into this transaction. If we later determine that you knowingly submitted an erroneous certification or assurance, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, we may terminate this transaction for cause or default.

**Notice of error in certification or assurance**

You must provide immediate written notice to us if at any time you learn that a certification or assurance was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous because of changed circumstances.

**Definitions**

The terms “debarment”, “suspension”, “excluded”, “disqualified”, “ineligible”, “participant”, “person”, “principal”, “proposal”, and “voluntarily excluded” as used in this document have the meanings set out in 2 CFR Part 180, subpart I, “Definitions.” A transaction shall be considered a “covered transaction” if it meets the definition in 2 CFR part 180 subpart B, “Covered Transactions.”

**Assurance requirement for subgrant agreements**

You agree by submitting this proposal that if we approve your application you shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by us.

**Assurance inclusion in subgrant agreements**

You agree by submitting this proposal that you will obtain an assurance from prospective participants in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions that the participants are not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction.

**Assurance of subgrant principals**

You may rely upon an assurance of a prospective participant in a lower-tier covered transaction that is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless you know that the assurance is erroneous. You may decide the method and frequency by which you determine the eligibility of your principals. You may, but are not required to, check the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs.

**Non-assurance in subgrant agreements**

If you knowingly enter into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, we may terminate this transaction for cause or default.

**Prudent person standard**

Nothing contained in the aforementioned may be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the assurances and certifications required. Your knowledge and information is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.

**CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE. This form is signed digitally through eGrants.** The system will not accept an application unless this form is included. In rare instances, a hard copy must be submitted in which case applicants should sign this form and include in the application if submitting a hard copy.

# Attachment I: Federal Application Review

## I. Review and Selection Process

*The information below is from the Notice of Funding Opportunity published by AmeriCorps for state service commissions. It is provided here so Maine applicants can understand the second phase of the competition.*

**a. Review and Selection Process**

CNCS will engage External and Staff Reviewers with relevant knowledge and expertise to assess and provide input on the eligible applications. The review and selection process is intended to produce a diversified set of high-quality programs that represent the priorities and strategic considerations described in the federal Notice. The determinations made by federal reviewers may be different than what the applicant or Commission determined.

**b. Compliance and Eligibility Review**

Federal AmeriCorps staff will conduct a Compliance Review to determine if an application meets the compliance requirements published in the *Notice* and advances to the next stage of the review process. An application is compliant if the applicant:

* Is an eligible organization
* Is eligible to submit directly to CNCS
* Submits an application by the submission deadline

Reviewing for eligibility is intended to ensure that only those applications that are eligible for award are further reviewed. However, a determination of eligibility can take place at any point during the application review and selection process. Applicants that are determined to be non-compliant and ineligible will not receive an award.

**c. Application Review**

**External Review.**

External Reviewers will review and assess the evidence criteria in the Notice. CNCS will recruit and select reviewers on the basis of demonstrated expertise. All External Reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

**Internal Review**

CNCS staff will evaluate the application using the application review criteria and assess the priorities and strategic considerations detailed in the *Notice*. Reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

**d. Post Review Quality Control**

After the initial review process is complete, CNCS staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review may be used to assess applications for which there are significant panel anomalies. In addition, the Commission input on National Direct applications will be reviewed and assessed.

**e. Applicant Clarification**

CNCCS may ask an applicant for clarifying information. CNCS staff will use this information to make funding recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee an award. Applicants may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked for clarifying information. An applicant’s failure to respond to a request for clarification adequately and in a timely manner may result in the removal of its application from consideration.

**f. Risk Assessment**

CNCS staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant to assess an applicant's ability to manage federal funds . This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant’s eligibility for funding and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If CNCS determines that an award will be made to an applicant with assessed risks, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. Additionally, if CNCS concludes that the reasons for applicants having poor risk assessment are not likely to be mitigated, those applications may not be selected for funding. In evaluating risks, CNCS may consider the following, but not limited to:

Due diligence:

* Federal debt delinquency
* Suspension and debarment
* Information available through OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
	+ Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Informaiton System (FAPIIS)
	+ US Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
* “Do Not Pay” and/or
* System for Award Management (SAM)

Operational and financial management

* Financial stability
* Operational and Financial Management Survey

Past Performance

* the applicant’s record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
	+ Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements,
	+ Accuracy of data reported
	+ Conformance to the terms and conditions of the previous federal awards
	+ Conformance to the terms and conditions of previous federal awards
	+ Applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients
	+ Meeting match requirements
	+ The extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
	+ *Grant progress reports – attainment of performance measures*
	+ *Enrollment and retention of AmeriCorps members under previous awards*
	+ *Monitoring findings – CNCS and/or OIG (if applicable) and State Commission (for their subgrantees)*
	+ *Commission ranking*

Other Programmatic Risks:

* Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website

State Commission staff will assess their recompeting subgrantees’ past performance using the italicized criteria above and submit those assessments to CNCS. CNCS will assess its recompeting direct grantees related to past performance. This assessment is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant’s eligibility for funding or the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this assessment will inform funding decisions. In evaluating programmatic performance, CNCS may consider the italicized criteria above for applicants that are current formula and competitive grantees.

Additionally, CNCS may use the results of the review of the risk assessment evaluation in determining which applications to fund. If CNCS concludes that the reasons for applicants having poor risk assessment evaluations are not likely to be mitigated, those applications may not be selected for funding.

**g. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information.**

Prior to making any award that exceeds $250,000, CNCS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM and FAPIIS (see 41 U.S.C. 2313). Additionally CNCS may expand upon these requirements and use its discretion to review and consider information about any applicant receiving an award, including those under the simplified acquisition threshold.

Any applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through FAPIIS.

CNCS will consider any comments by any applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing its review of risk posed by the applicant under the Risk Assessment Evaluation section of this *Notice.*

## II. Selection for Funding

The review and selection process is designed to:

A. Identify how well eligible applications are aligned with application review criteria

B. build a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:

* Federal Funding Priorities
* Meaningful representation of
	+ Geographic diversity
	+ Rural communities (see definitions)
	+ Single and multi-state programs
	+ Faith- based organizations
	+ Focus area representation

Based on the evaluation of these strategic considerations, applications may be selected for funding over applications with a greater degree of alignment with the review criteria. In selecting applicants to receive awards under this *Notice*, the Chief Executive Officer will endeavor to include a diverse portfolio of applications based on staff evaluations, recommendations, priorities, and strategic considerations.

CNCS reserves the right to prioritize funding existing awards over making new awards.

CNCS reserves the right to award applications in an amount other than at the requested level of funding and will document the rationale for doing so.

***CNCS reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, in the event that unforeseen challenges or urgent circumstances make it impossible, impractical or inefficient to conduct the review process as planned. Any such adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria that will be used to assess applications submitted to CNCS.***

## III. Feedback to Applicants

Following grant awards, applicants will receive feedback from the External Review and Staff Review of their compliant applications. This feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect any information that may have been provided during clarification.

## IV. Transparency in Grant-making

CNCS is committed to transparency in grant-making. The following information for new and re-competing applications will be published on [CNCS Results of Grant Competitions](http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open-government-initiative/transparency/results-grants-competition) within 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

* a list of all compliant applications submitted
* Executive Summaries of all compliant applications
* data extracted from the SF-424 Face Sheet
* a blank template of the external review worksheet
* a list of all external reviewers that completed the review process
* a summary of external reviewer comments for successful applications.

*Submitted program narratives for successful applications will be available upon request.*

# Attachment J: Terms and Definitions

**► Capacity Building:** A set of activities that expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness of programs and organizations. These activities achieve lasting positive outcomes for the beneficiary populations served by CNCS-supported organizations (i.e. AmeriCorps programs.) As a general rule, CNCS considers capacity building activities to be *indirect services* that enable CNCS-supported organizations to provide more, better, and sustained *direct services*. Capacity building activities cannot be solely intended to support the administration or operations of the organization. Capacity building activities must:

1. Be intended to support or enhance the program delivery model;
2. Respond to the program’s goal of increasing, expanding, or enhancing services in order to address the most pressing needs identified in the community; and
3. Enable the program to provide a sustained level of more or better direct services after the capacity building services end.

**► Cost Reimbursement Grants**: These grants fund a portion of program operating costs and member living allowances, with flexibility to use all of the funds for allowable costs regardless of whether or not the program recruits and retains all AmeriCorps members. Cost reimbursement grants include a formal matching requirement and require the submission of a budget and financial reports.

**► Enrollment Rate:** The enrollment rate is calculated as slots filled, plus refill slots filled, divided by slots awarded.

**► Evidence based**: Evidence-based programs that have been rigorously evaluated and have demonstrated positive results for at least one key desired outcome. Rigorous evaluation means conducting at least one Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) or Quasi-Experimental Design (QED) evaluation of the same intervention described in the application.

Evidence-based interventions on the CNCS Evidence Exchange: interventions supported by positive results from rigorous evaluations that are documented at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/evidence-exchange>. Include but are not limited to the following:

* Economic Opportunity: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/CNCS_Economic_Opportunity_Evidence_Brief_2019_508.pdf>
* Education: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/CNCS_Education_Evidence_Brief_112318_508.pdf>
* Healthy Futures: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/HF_Evidence_Brief_FINAL_v2_508.pdf>

**► Evidence informed**: Programs in this category use the best available knowledge, research, and evaluation to guide program design and implementation, but do not have scientific research or rigorous evaluation of the intervention described in the application.

Applicants may be evidence-informed if they have incorporated research from other evidence-based programs into their program designs and/or have collected performance measurement data on the intervention described in the application.

**► Evidence Tiers**:

1. **Pre-preliminary evidence** means the applicant has not submitted an outcome or impact evaluation of the same intervention described in the application, although the applicant may have collected some performance data on the intervention (e.g., data on intervention outputs and/or outcomes). Applicants in this tier must describe in the Evidence Base section of the application how their program design is evidence-informed (see definition above). Applicants may also cite prior performance measure data if applicable.
2. **Preliminary evidence** means the applicant has submitted up to two outcome evaluation reports (non-experimental) that evaluated the same intervention described in the application and yielded positive results on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant’s logic model. The outcome evaluations may either have been conducted internally by the applicant organization or by an entity external to the applicant. The study design must include pre and post-assessments without a statistically matched comparison group or a post-assessment comparison between intervention and comparison groups. In some cases a retrospective pre-post assessment may be considered, but its use must be justified in the text of the evaluation report.

CNCS grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two reports allowed for the Preliminary evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three evaluation reports will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program, then more than two reports will not be considered.

1. **Moderate evidence** means the applicant has submitted up to two well-designed and well-implemented evaluation reports that evaluated the same intervention described in the application and identified evidence of effectiveness on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant’s logic model. Evidence of effectiveness (or positive findings) is determined using experimental design evaluations (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT)) or Quasi-Experimental Design evaluations (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. The ability to generalize the findings from the RCT or QED beyond the study context may be limited (e.g., single-site.) The evaluations were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

CNCS grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two reports allowed for the Moderate evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three evaluation reports will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program, then more than two reports will not be considered.

1. **Strong evidence** means the applicant has submitted up to two evaluation reports demonstrating that the same intervention described in the application has been tested nationally, regionally, or at the state-level (e.g., multi-site) using a well-designed and well-implemented experimental design evaluation (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)) or a Quasi-Experimental Design evaluation (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. Alternatively, the proposed intervention’s evidence may be based on multiple (up to two) well-designed and well-implemented QEDs or RCTs of the same intervention described in the application in different locations or with different populations within a local geographic area. The overall pattern of evaluation findings must be consistently positive on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant’s logic model. Findings from the RCT or QED evaluations may be generalized beyond the study context. The evaluations were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

CNCS grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two reports allowed for the Strong evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three evaluation reports will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program, then more than two reports will not be considered.

1. **Impact evaluation** An evaluation that provides statistical evidence of how well a program achieves its desired outcomes and what effect it has on service recipients and/or service participants compared to what would have happened in the absence of the program. Impact evaluations must be designed to provide evidence of a causal relationship between program activities and outcomes (45 C.F.R. § 2522.700). Grantees must use an experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation design (i.e., the evaluation must include a control group or a statistically matched comparison group).
2. **Same intervention described in the application** The intervention evaluated in submitted evaluation reports must match the intervention proposed in the application in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Program Design and Logic Model sections of the application:

• Characteristics of the beneficiary population

• Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention

• Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention, including all key components and activities

• The setting in which the intervention is delivered

• Outcomes of the intervention

Submitted reports that do not sufficiently match the intervention proposed by the applicant in all of these areas will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points.

**► Full-cost Fixed amount Grants:** These grants provide a fixed amount of funding per Member Service Year (MSY) that is substantially lower than the amount required to operate the program. Organizations use their own or other resources to cover the remaining costs. Programs are not required to submit budgets or financial reports, there is no specific match requirement, and programs are not required to track and maintain documentation of match. However, CNCS provides only a portion of the cost of running the program and organizations must raise the additional resources needed to run the program. Programs can access all of the funds, provided they recruit and retain the members supported under the grant based on the MSY level awarded. Professional Corps programs applying for operational funding through a Fixed Amount Grant must submit a budget in support of their request for operational funds.

* **Full-cost Fixed amount grants**: Fixed amount grants are available for programs that enroll all types of member slots. Professional Corps may only have full-time members. Programs can access funds under the grant based on enrolling and retaining the full complement of members supported under the grant.
* **Education Award Grants (EAP) Fixed amount grant**: Programs apply for a small fixed amount per MSY, can enroll less than full-time members, and use their own resources to cover all other costs. Programs can access funds under the grant based on enrolling the full complement of members supported under the grant. As with full-time fixed amount grants, there are no specific match or financial reporting requirements for EAP fixed amount grants.

State Commissions can withhold up to 2% administrative funds from fixed price grants.

**► Member Service Location:** A member service location is the site at which an AmeriCorps member is placed to provide his/her service to the community.

**► Member Service Year (MSY):** One Member Service Year (MSY) is equivalent to a full-time AmeriCorps position (at least 1700 service hours.)

**National Direct Applicants**

*Multi-state*: Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state or territory apply directly to CNCS.

*Federally-recognized Indian Tribes*: Applicants that are Indian Tribes apply directly to CNCS (see the Eligible *Applicants* section in the *Notice*.)

*State and Territories without Commissions*: Applicants in South Dakota, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands apply directly to CNCS because this State and Territories have not established a State Commission.

**► Operating Site:** An operating site is the organization that manages the AmeriCorps program on behalf of the multi-state recipient of the grant from CNCS. A multi-state grantee must have an operating site in each state in which it has AmeriCorps members. AmeriCorps members may be placed at the operating site, or an operating site may place AmeriCorps members at multiple member service locations. Multi-focused intermediaries may also have operating sites.

CNCS anticipates that applicants have a carefully considered plan for their project implementation and have identified operating sites based on the demonstrated community needs. CNCS expects the sites proposed at the time of application to align with those involved in project implementation. However, if necessary, an applicant can modify their list of operating sites during the clarification process or through an amendment to the application, if funded.

**► Other Revenue:** Funds necessary to operate an AmeriCorps program that are not CNCS funds or grantee share (match) identified in the budget. Programs should not enter the total operating budget for their organization unless the entire operating budget supports the AmeriCorps program. Programs that have additional revenue sources not included in the matching funds section of the budget should provide the amount of this additional revenue that supports the program. This amount should not include the CNCS or grantee share amounts in the budget. Fixed amount grantees should enter all non-CNCS funds that support the program in this field. All fixed grants will have other revenue.

**Professional Corps**: A Professional Corps is a program model composed of AmeriCorps members serving as professionals; i.e. teachers, health care providers, police officers, engineers, attorneys, or other professionals. The programs recruit and place qualified members in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Professional Corps applicants and/or applicants determined to be a Professional Corps by CNCS must demonstrate that the community in which it will place AmeriCorps members serving as professionals has an inadequate number of said professionals.

Professional Corps members’ salaries/compensation, including childcare, are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget request to CNCS. The living allowance or salary provided to AmeriCorps members in Professional Corps programs does not count toward the matching requirement. CNCS requires **Professional Corps** programs to cover the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non CNCS resources. CNCS will only consider operating funds of up to $1,000 per MSY if an applicant is able to demonstrate significant organizational financial need based on the materials reviewed by CNCS. These grants are fixed price grants.

Applicants may propose any authorized program type. In the case that a proposed program fits more than one program type (e.g., a program could be either a professional corps or a traditional program). CNCS staff will make a determination as to program type that will be considered for funding. The determination will be based on data provided within the application and supplemental materials submitted with the application. The determination may be different from the program type proposed by the applicant.

CNCS reserves the right to determine whether an applicant (whether or not the applicant has applied as a **Professional Corps**) has sufficiently demonstrated that they cannot effectively operate an AmeriCorps program without receiving CNCS operating funds. There may be specific circumstances where CNCS determines that a legal applicant has not demonstrated the need for operation grant funds due to other funding resources. Where CNCS’s due diligence review of an application shows that the applicant has a historically high level of support from non-CNCS sources, and as a result has levels of unrestricted funding that is in excess of the requested level of CNCS funding, CNCS may choose to not provide operational grant funding.

**► Prohibited Activities:** While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or CNCS, staff and members may not engage in the following activities (see 45 CFR § 2520.65):

1. Attempting to influence legislation;

2. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;

3. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;

4. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;

5. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;

6. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;

7. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;

8. Providing a direct benefit to – a. a business organized for profit; b. a labor union; c. a partisan political organization; d. a nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and e. an organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph C 7. above, unless CNCS assistance is not used to support those religious activities;

9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive;

10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and

11. Such other activities as CNCS may prohibit.

AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their own initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-CNCS funds.

**► Retention Rate:** Retention rate is calculated as the number of members exited with award (full or partial award) divided by the number of members enrolled.

**►Reducing and/or Preventing Prescription Drug and Opioid Abuse:** CNCS is interested in program models that seek to address the prescription drug and opioid abuse crisis in America.

**Retention Rate**: The AmeriCorps member retention rate is calculated as the number of members exited with education award (full or partial award) divided by the number of members enrolled.

**► Rural Communities:** CNCS uses rural-urban commuting area (RUCA) codes to classify program addresses as either rural or urban for analytic purposes. RUCA codes classify U.S. census tracts using measures of population density, urbanization, and daily commuting. Census tracts with an urban cluster population less than 50,000 are considered rural (RUCA codes 4 – 10). Applicants are encouraged to designate themselves as serving rural communities if some or all service locations are in rural areas as defined by RUCA codes or if the program can provide other compelling evidence that the program is rural in the narrative portion of the application.  This self-designation will be considered in grant-making decisions.

For more information about RUCA codes, please visit the USDA website found here: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-commuting-area-codes.aspx>

The Office of Grant Administration uses Beale Codes when assessing alternative match requirements as the statue (45 CFR 2521.60(c)) requires it.

**► Rural Intermediaries:** CNCS recognizes that severely under-resourced communities may have limited capacity to successfully apply for and implement an AmeriCorps program, due to the size and organizational capacity of eligible applicant/host site organizations or the lack of available matching funds in these communities. Thus it may be effective for a single eligible applicant (intermediary) to develop an application and oversee the implementation of an AmeriCorps program that engages multiple grassroots non-profits/eligible applicants (referred to as a consortium) that, individually, do not have the necessary organizational or fundraising capacity to apply for and run an AmeriCorps program. Given the desire to address community needs holistically, the nonprofits/eligible applicants that make up the consortium may have, but are not required to have, different focus areas (including the non-focus area capacity building) and thus the non profit/eligible applicant intermediary will be multi-focused.

Applicants seeking consideration under this priority must demonstrate that they will be serving in rural severely under-resourced communities; that their application represents a consortium, that the activities provided by the consortium collectively address a compelling community need or set of needs; and that they have sufficient financial and management capacity to act as an umbrella organization for the consortium. Applicants should refer to the *Page Limits* section in the *Notice* for information specific to Rural Intermediary requirements.

The eligible applicant (intermediary) should submit one application which describes:

* How the partnership/consortium will be organized, and AmeriCorps resources will be allocated between the partnering entities (intermediary and consortium members).
* The proposed theory(ies) of change and program model(s).
* How the intermediary will utilize an identified consortium of nonprofits/eligible applicants who are well positioned to achieve outcomes identified in the theory of change.

Applicants must submit via email by the application deadline letters of support from all members of the consortium. See the *Submission of Additional Documents* Section in the *Notice* for specific submission information and requirements.

**► Same Project:** Two projects will be considered the same if they: address the same issue areas, address the same priorities, address the same objectives, serve the same target communities and population, or utilize the same sites.

Programs must get approval from ASN HQ staff to be considered a new project.

If an applicant is applying for a different program model (a new project), select New. Current and previous grantees need to get approval from ASN HQ staff to be considered a new project. CNCS will consider a project to be new if there is a meaningful difference between it and previous projects in a comparison of the following characteristics, among others: the objectives and priorities of the projects; the nature of the services provided; the program staff, participants, and volunteers involved; the geographic locations in which the services are provided; the populations served; and the proposed community partnerships. (§2522.340).

Requests to be considered a new project should include information about how the new project differs from the previous project in the characteristics noted above. The request should also include the proposed name of the new project. CNCS staff will review the request to determine if the proposed project does represent a meaningful difference from the previous project or if the proposed project is an example of natural program evolution over time. If it is determined that the project is new, ASN HQ staff will create a new project in eGrants. Applicants must request new projects significantly in advance of their application deadline.

**► Single-State Applicants**: Single state applicants are organizations that propose to operate in only one state; they must apply through the Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions. Each state and territory commission administers its own selection process and submits to CNCS the applicants it selects to compete for funding. Single-State applicants must contact their State Commissions to learn about their state or territory processes and deadlines which may be significantly *earlier* than the CNCS deadlines and may have additional requirements. The list of State and Territory Commissions can be found on CNCS’s website.

A single-state application submitted directly to CNCS by the applicant rather than the State Commission will be considered noncompliant and will not be reviewed.

**► Unallowable Activities**: In addition to the *Prohibited Activities*, the following restrictions also apply to the service of AmeriCorps members:

Nonduplication.

Corporation assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides unless the entity complies with the following “nondisplacement” requirements.

Nondisplacement.

* 1. An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
	2. An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
	3. A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
	4. A participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
	5. A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that—
		1. Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
		2. Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
	6. A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any—
		1. Presently employed worker;
		2. Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
		3. Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
		4. Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
		5. Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

# Attachment K: Compilation of Links in RFP

Volunteer Maine

<http://www.maineservicecommission.gov/>

The Corporation for National and Community Service

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/>

5 MRSA § 1825-E and 18-554 Code of Maine Rules, Chapter 120

<http://www.maine.gov/purchases/policies/120.shtml>

The Code of Federal Regulations sections on AmeriCorps

<https://ecfr.federalregister.gov/>

45 CFR §2520.20 - §2520.55, Member Service Activities

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2520&rgn=div5#se45.4.2520_120>

45 CFR §2520.65, Prohibited Activities

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2520&rgn=div5#se45.4.2520_165>

45 CFR §2522.100, Minimum Requirements for Every AmeriCorps Program Type

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2522&rgn=div5#se45.4.2522_1100>

45 CFR §2522.110, Types of AmeriCorps Programs

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2522&rgn=div5#se45.4.2522_1110>

45 CFR §2522.900-2522.950, Tutoring Programs

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2522&rgn=div5#se45.4.2522_1900>

45 CFR §2521.35-2521.90, Matching Funds

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2521&rgn=div5#se45.4.2521_135>

45 CFR§2522.240-2522.250, Member Benefits

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2522&rgn=div5#se45.4.2522_1240>

45 CFR §2522.485, Calculating Cost Per Member Service Year (MSY)

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2522&rgn=div5#se45.4.2522_1485>

45 CFR §2522.500-2522.650, Performance Measures

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2522&rgn=div5#se45.4.2522_1500>

45 CFR §2522.500-2522.540 and §2522.700-2522.740, Evaluation

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2522&rgn=div5#se45.4.2522_1700>

45 CFR §2522.400-2522.475, Selection Criteria and Selection Process

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=33a45bd4ae4a1b2ef10c18c2213daf80&mc=true&node=pt45.4.2522&rgn=div5#se45.4.2522_1400>

CNCS policies on AmeriCorps

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/upload/policy%20FAQs%207.31.14%20final.pdf>

**Key Concepts of Cash and In-Kind Match**

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/olc/moodle/fm_key_concepts_of_cash_and_in_kind_match/view1c03.html?id=3213>

The National Performance Measures (NPM)

Core curriculum

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement> .

NPM Online performance measure tool with definitions of terms and data collection guidance

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/americorps>

NPM Text document version

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/3%20ASN_FY2021_PerformanceMeasuresInstructions_FINAL_508.pdf>

How performance measures are entered into eGrants

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/egrants-performance-measures-module-americorps>

Performance measure requirements for applicant proposed measures

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Regional_Conferences_High_Quality_PMs_0.pdf>

Central recruiting site for AmeriCorps

<http://www.americorps.gov/for_individuals/ready/index.asp>

ServiceYear.org

<https://serviceyear.org/>

A Resource Guide: Hidden Assets for Your Organization

<http://health.mo.gov/living/families/adolescenthealth/pdf/InKindDonations.pdf>

In-kind value of volunteer time for Maine <http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html>

e Education Award, forbearance, and the National Service Trust [www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-americorps-education-award](http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-americorps-education-award)

AmeriCorps Grant Terms & Conditions and the CNCS General Terms and Conditions

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cncs-grants>

Overview of financial management requirements and expectations

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/financial-management>

National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check>

National Sex Offender Public Website

<https://www.nsopw.gov/>

Frequently Asked Questions: Evaluation

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/cncs-evaluation-policies>

CNCS Knowledge Network’s Evaluation Resources: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation>

Alternative evaluation approaches

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Alternative-Evaluation-Approach-Guidance-FINAL-5.17.17.pdf>

Evidence-based interventions on the CNCS Evidence Exchange.

* <https://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/evidence-exchange>

eGrants

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/>

eGrants account set up tutorial

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/egrants>

DUNS

<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

Register with SAM (System for Award Management)

 <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>

AmeriCorps State and National awards may only charge 5% of their negotiated rate to the federal share of the award

45CFR §§2521.95

<http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=2ea79b2eb0c09e5c1ad42ea96846484e&node=se45.4.2521_195&rgn=div8>

Effect of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act on Faith-Based Applicants for Grants

<http://www.usdoj.gov/archive/fbci/effect-rfra.pdf>

CNCS Results of Grant Competitions

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open-government-initiative/transparency/results-grants-competition>

USDA rural-urban commuting area (RUCA) codes

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-commuting-area-codes.aspx>

1. One Member Service Year, or MSY, is 1700 hours. Thus, positions requiring fewer than 1700 hours are added together based on their fractional value to determine the total MSYs. E.g., 2 half-time positions (900 hrs) + 1 full-time (1700 hrs) + 3 quarter time (450 hrs) = 2.795 MSYs. See page 18 for full list of fractional positions. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation which a Federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the Federal Government. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Members serving less than 1700 hours must do so at the rate of 40 hours/week for consecutive weeks. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See page 22 for exceptions. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Note that regulations direct states to establish their own policies in certain areas. This RFP contains applicable details and takes precedence over the minimum federal requirements. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. A capability that, when added to and employed by a service-delivery program, significantly increases the potential of that force and thus enhances the probability of successful mission accomplishment. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See 45 CFR 2520.35 for waiver information related to this requirement. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)