



AMERICORPS



2018-2021 Grant Period

STATE OF MAINE RFP #201801008

MAINE AMERICORPS STATE GRANTS:

SPECIAL FEDERAL COMPETITION

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES

Relevant for New Grant Proposals in these categories:

- ◆ Cost Reimbursement
- ◆ Fixed Amount

Issued by and Coordinator: Maine Commission for Community Service

Maryalice Crofton, Proposal Coordinator
111 Sewall Street Rm 105, Augusta, ME 04333-0105
voice: (207) 624-7792
email: Service.Commission@Maine.gov
web site: www.MaineServiceCommission.gov

Deadline for Submitted Questions: March 15, 2018

Proposal Submission Deadline: 4:00 p.m. local time on March 29, 2018

Submission Address: Division of Procurement Services, Maine Dept. of Administrative and Financial Services, Burton M. Cross Building, 4th Floor, 111 Sewall St., Augusta ME 04330

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. The information contained in this document is drawn from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) 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.
2. 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 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.
3. A complete proposal consists of the application sections in the federal grant management system, eGrants, ***plus*** the hard copy documents submitted to the Division of Procurement Services. See page 8 for submission deadline and delivery address.
4. This document has three types of information:
 - a. an introduction to AmeriCorps and its service culture;
 - b. guidance on designing an AmeriCorps program; and,
 - c. directions for writing a grant proposal.
5. Links to all external resources noted in this Request for Proposals are consolidated in Attachment M, page 90 for easy use. Take care not to lose sight of the context in which the link was provided.
6. Proposals submitted in this competition must have sufficient work to account for ***at least*** 17,000 hours of service by AmeriCorps members in ***each*** of three years. These grants do not support placement of just one AmeriCorps member.
7. Based on over 20 years of grant reviews, the proposals most likely to succeed are those that
 - a. pay close attention and interpret literally the narrative instructions;
 - b. pay close attention to page limits and character limits of the fields in eGrants;
 - c. provide relevant data and concise (pithy) narrative descriptions that correspond with the narrative prompts;
 - d. present a complete program design and implementation process that is ready for immediate launch if funded;
 - e. have a well-developed logic model; and
 - f. have a well-developed a set of aligned performance measures that relate directly to the change (improvement) the program seeks to make in a community and set specific achievement targets for each year of operation.
8. Proposals submitted in this competition **must** fit within the special **CNCS funding priorities** which are described on page 8.
9. 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.
10. CNCS has made it clear it now funds proposals that implement evidence-based and evidence-informed program models that have been shown to make a strong impact on community needs and conditions. Strong impact means “an impact with a substantial likelihood of yielding a major change in life outcomes for individuals or improvements in community standards of living.”

Successful applicants cite evaluations of their proposed program model that were done by issue experts (e.g., national literacy leaders, US Centers for Disease Control, National Institute of Building Sciences). The evaluations cited need to show the program proposed will provide service proven to be effective and endorsed by experts as a solution for the targeted community need.

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A. FEDERAL & STATE PARTNERS IN AMERICORPS STATE GRANT-MAKING

I. The Maine Commission for Community Service

The Maine Commission for Community Service (MCCS) 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 1995, the mission of MCCS is to foster community service and volunteerism to meet human and environmental needs in the State of Maine.

As the State of Maine partner for the federal Corporation for National and Community Service, the Commission 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;
- ◆ providing training and technical assistance to National Service programs in Maine;
- ◆ evaluating, monitoring, and administering grant programs.

All the Commission activities -- those related to the wider volunteer sector as well as National Service -- and its funding priorities flow from its Strategic Plan. To learn more about the business side of Commission work, visit 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:

- ◆ **Senior Corps**, which includes Foster Grandparents, RSVP, and Senior Companion Program; and
- ◆ **AmeriCorps** which is comprised of VISTA, the National Civilian Community Corps programs, and AmeriCorps State/National (the crew program).

The CNCS mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities and fortify the civic health of our nation.

The Corporation for National and Community Service:

- ◆ Acts as a catalyst by providing strategic critical support to volunteer organizations that, in turn, deliver much-needed services to communities throughout the country.
- ◆ 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, CNCS 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 CNCS, visit www.nationalservice.gov.

B. AMERICORPS STATE PROGRAM PROPOSALS

AmeriCorps 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, CNCS refers to the service activities as “the intervention.”

Organizations that operate local AmeriCorps programs identify proven solutions to the need selected and then design service activities for a team of members serving full- or part-time for one year or during a season. The activities must require at least 17,000 hours of service each year by the team. 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 40 hours each week may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. 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

As AmeriCorps members carry out the 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 CNCS 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 not had an AmeriCorps grant for five (5) or more years. In other words, the closeout for the last AmeriCorps grant occurred 5 or more years ago.

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

The Maine Commission for Community Service 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 in Spring 2018 and are *not* part of this competition.

The second process by which AmeriCorps State funds come to Maine is this State Competitive one. The 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 In planning the number and types of slots needed based on the program design, new applicants should keep in mind that CNCS generally limits awards for new AmeriCorps grantees (those with no experience operating a program) to no more than 50 member positions. Remember, a MSY is to the AmeriCorps world what a Fulltime Equivalent (FTE) is to the employment world. ***MSYs can be divided into multiple positions.***

A. NUMBER OF AWARDS AND SIZE. Applications submitted for national consideration undergo a federal review and selection process managed by CNCS. The number of proposals funded is determined at the federal level by their competitive selection process.

Although recent grants in Maine have ranged from \$300,000 to \$700,000, CNCS 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. However, the level of federal support and requirements for match vary significantly between each grant type.

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, CNCS 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* \$14,932 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.

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.

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.

Fixed-amount Grants. Under CNCS policy, this grant type is *not* open to new applicants. An eligible program design has AmeriCorps Member terms of service that must be completed by serving 40 hours a week for consecutive weeks until the hours are met. For example, 1700 hours served at 40 hours/week for 44 consecutive weeks; 900 hours served at 40 hours/week for 22 consecutive weeks; and so forth. The proposal can request \$13,430 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.

IV. Funding Priorities for This Competition

This is a special competition for which CNCS has identified limited priorities for support through AmeriCorps. Proposals that address the funding priorities receive 3 points in the 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. CNCS seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in:

- Child Wellness - in one or more of the following areas:
 - Reducing and/or preventing child abuse
 - Improving outcomes for child victims of abuse
 - Improving outcomes for foster youth, including youth aging out of foster care
- Working to improve or support improvement of one or more of the following infrastructure categories:
 - Aviation
 - Bridges
 - Dams
 - Hazardous Waste
 - Inland Waterways
 - Levees
 - Ports
 - Public Parks
 - Rail
 - Roads
 - Schools
 - Solid Waste
 - Transit
 - Wastewater

Applications that do not fall within these funding priorities are considered noncompliant and will not be reviewed.

V. Submission Deadline and Compliance Requirements

All proposals must be submitted in eGrants <http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/> **no later than 4:00 p.m. local time on March 29, 2018.** Receipt time will be established by the date/time stamp electronically recorded at the time of submission.

Hard copies of required additional documents must also be delivered **no later than 4:00 p.m. local time on March 29, 2018** to:

- ◆ Division of Procurement Services, Maine Dept. of Administrative and Financial Services, Burton M. Cross Building, 4th Floor, 111 Sewall St., Augusta, ME 04330.
Re: RFP # 201801008*

In order for an application to be considered complete, both the eGrants and hard copy documents must meet the specified deadline.

Facsimiles or emailed versions of hard copy documents will not be accepted. Applications received after the announced deadline will not be considered. Only the required attachments may be submitted. Other materials will be discarded.

Applications will be reviewed for compliance with the prescribed content requirements as outlined in “Grant Application Instructions” found later in this document. **Incomplete applications will be rejected.**

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.

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 #201801008”. The deadline for written questions is March 15, 2018. Responses will be posted under “Submitted Questions: RFP #201801008” on the same page as the RFP <http://www.maine.gov/purchases/venbid/rfp.shtml> and at MaineServiceCommission.gov/grants.

VII. Applicant Resource Page

Attachment M 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 A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this *RFP/Notice*.

PREFERENCE: MCCS will give preference 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.

The Maine Commission for Community Service 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 BY MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE.

The Commission uses selection criteria and a process that incorporates the mandatory AmeriCorps weighting and scoring of various criteria published in the Code of Federal Regulations as well as Commission policies on funding and performance, and the requirements of state contract selection rules.

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.

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:

- ◆ Applicant organization's most recent IRS Form 990 as found on the central internet registry as well as data on other 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.

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 April 20, 2018 business meeting.

NATIONAL REVIEW PROCESS FOR COMPETITIVE PROPOSALS.

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, staff review, quality control after review, risk assessment evaluation, consideration of integrity and performance system information, clarification, and selection.

Attachment K, page 82, 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 June.

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, all submissions will become public record and available for public inspection pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act once the award decisions are announced. Portions of submissions will be published on the federal website in compliance with its policy on government transparency. Consult Attachment K, page 82, for more information.

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

During the review period, applicants/bidders 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/bidders may only contact the designated proposal coordinator at the Maine Commission for Community Service with questions or comments regarding this competition. If an applicant/bidder initiates or attempts direct contact with reviewers, this will result in disqualification of their proposal.

IV. Appeal of Grant Decisions

Any person aggrieved by the Commission'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: <http://www.maine.gov/purchases/policies/120.shtml>). 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 through the State Service Commission. AmeriCorps National programs are multi-state or national nonprofit organizations that submit proposals directly to CNCS.

The chart on the following page shows a comparison of major program traits.

Comparison of AmeriCorps program types and grants (examples; not complete)	AmeriCorps State/National		AmeriCorps VISTA	AmeriCorps NCCC
	CR	FA		
AC State/National Grant types: CR= Cost Reimbursement Grant; FA= Fixed-amount Grant;				
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		
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 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	

³ Members serving less than 1700 hours must do so at the rate of 40 hours/week for consecutive weeks.

⁴ See page 21 for exceptions.

I. National Reference Materials

There are four sources of critical background information. The first 2 can be found online.

- A. **The Code of Federal Regulations** sections on AmeriCorps (<https://www.ecfr.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 Regulations⁵

<i>Requirements and Selection</i>	<i>Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations</i>
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

- B. **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> .

C. **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

D. **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 <http://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 <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/2018%20Performance%20Measures%20Instructions%20Final.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>

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.

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

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:

- a) The quality of the national service program proposed to be supported by a grant
- b) The innovative aspects of the national service program, and the feasibility of replicating the program.
- c) The sustainability of the national service program.
- d) The quality of the leadership, the past performance, and the extent to which the program builds on existing programs.
- e) 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.
- f) The extent to which projects would be conducted in one of the areas listed in §2522.450(c)(1) through (5) of this subpart.
- g) The extent to which the application is consistent with the application [approved by] the State in which the projects would be conducted.
- h) (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 Corporation for National and Community Service 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 new 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, VolunteerMaine.org, Craigslist, and job sites that permit volunteer listings.

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.

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 29 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.

In a recent development, 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.

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. The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services published a very good overview of in-kind and organizational considerations. The document, “*A Resource Guide: Hidden Assets for Your Organization*,” is online at <http://health.mo.gov/living/families/adolescenthealth/pdf/InKindDonations.pdf>

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 http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html .

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 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 10 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.

SERVICE TERM OPTIONS FOR MEMBERS	Service term minimum hours	MSY Value	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
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

All operating proposals must accommodate at least the equivalent of 10 AmeriCorps Member Service Years (MSYs) or 17,000 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 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 I (page 74).

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.

- ♦ 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 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. 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 are outlined in Section VII, page 24.

- ◆ 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 recompetiting 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. Fixed amount grantees are not reimbursed for unfilled positions.
- ◆ The project start date is proposed by the applicant. 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.

⁷ See 45 CFR 2520.35 for waiver information related to this requirement.

- ◆ 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 recompetitiveness 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 recompetitiveness applications. Underenrolled 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 26 of this document.
- ◆ Operating Grants with annual CNCS funding of \$500,000 or more are required to arrange for an independent external program 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 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:
 - a. 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
 - b. 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/)

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, child care, and the education award (and related interest payments). This brings all AmeriCorps members under one treatment of benefits rule for SSI. In the past, only AmeriCorps VISTA benefits were excluded by law from countable income for SSI purposes.

Why doesn't the law cover both SSI and SSDI? Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) is a Federal program that provides money to individuals with disabilities based on their having paid into the insurance program. There are separate laws and regulations for SSDI eligibility and the HEART Act moved through Congress too quickly to include 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;
- ◆ half-time 900 hour positions that are 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.

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 2017, the minimum living allowance for a full-time (1700 hour) member is \$13,732. The maximum living allowance for a full-time member is \$27,464; however, the maximum amount of the living allowance that can be covered by CNCS funds is \$13,732.

Examples of programs that might set stipends at a higher rate include those that recruit graduate students training for medical, legal, public safety, or teaching professions to serve in communities. 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	\$13,732	\$27,464
Half-time	at least 900	TBA	Not required	\$14,539
Reduced half-time	at least 675	TBA	Not required	\$ 10,905
Quarter-time	at least 450	TBA	Not required	\$ 7,270
Minimum-time	at least 300	TBA	Not required	\$ 4,847

EDUCATION AWARDS. 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. The value of the education award for 2018-2019 will be announced at the time of grant awards. The federal agency is waiting for 2018 budget action to determine it. Applicants may find it useful to know the 2017 value of the education award is \$5,920 for a 1700 hour term of service.

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/american-corps-education-award](http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps/segal-american-corps-education-award).

CHILD CARE. For full-time members who need child care in order to participate, grantees must assist members in accessing the CNCS childcare benefit (either child care through an eligible provider or a child care allowance in an amount determined by the Corporation). CNCS makes direct payments to child care 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 child care 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 labeled "State."

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnsc-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.
- ♦ Worker's Compensation is an allowable cost to the grant. Maine law does not require provision of worker's compensation for members although it is encouraged if the applicant's carrier offers the option. If a program opts not to provide worker's 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 concludes a term of 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 Financial Management & Grant 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. These regulations supersede and streamline requirements from OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, A-110, and A-122 ; Circulars A-89, A-102, and A-133; and the guidance in Circular A-50 on Single Audit Act follow-up.

For an overview of financial management requirements and expectations, visit the online resources at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/financial-management>

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 CNCS funds. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such CNCS funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award.

Unless CNCS has provided a recipient with a written exemption or written approval of an alternative search procedure, 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](#) (NSOPW is no cost)
2. Either
 - a. 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*
 - b. 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](#); and
2. Both
 - a. 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*
 - b. 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 CNCS's regulations, may result in disallowance of all or part of the costs associated with noncompliance.

Use of Material. To ensure that materials generated with CNCS funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, CNCS 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 select one set of aligned performance measures in each of these areas: 1) Service Activities (primary intervention), 2) Member Development, and 3) Capacity Building.

Service Activity options are in the National Performance Measure Instructions (<https://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/2017/2018-ameri-corps-state-and-national-performance-measures-instructions>). 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. CNCS does not want applicants to select performance measures for every potential 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_PM_0.pdf)

For AmeriCorps Member Development (training and professional development), submit these state-defined performance measures with your proposal. Note the measurement instructions.

- *Output*: Number of AmeriCorps program training and other formal development activities 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.

Submit a set of capacity-building measures with your proposal. Capacity-building performance measures are from the standardized National Performance Measures (see national document page 66 et seq). Applicants should choose *either* Set A *or* Set B as outlined below. Use the alpha-numeric label to locate additional instructions on calculating/measuring and collecting data.

- SET A:
OUTPUTS G3-3.1 Number of community volunteers *recruited* by AmeriCorps members or program
AND
G3-3.7 Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were *recruited* by AmeriCorps members or program

- **OUTCOME G3-3.13** Number of additional direct service activities and/or units completed for organizations by volunteers recruited/managed by AmeriCorps members.
- **SET B:**
OUTPUTS G3-3.2 Number of community volunteers *managed* by AmeriCorps members or program
AND
G3-3.8 Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were *managed* by AmeriCorps members or program
- **OUTCOME G3-3.3** Number of organizations fully *implementing three or more new effective volunteer management practices* as a result of capacity building services provided AmeriCorps members

Note that 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 are 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 52.

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

<i>What to submit</i> →	Data Collection Plan	Evaluation Plan	Evaluation Results Report	Learning Memo
<i>How to submit</i> →	Use “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field	Use “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field	Submit as hard copy attachment	Submit as hard copy attachment
Applicant with <u>no</u> prior AmeriCorps grant	X			
Applicant funded for the first time within the past 5 years; this proposal is first re-compete and is for same project (see definition of same project on page 10)		X		
Applicant funded for the same project more than once within the past 5 years; this application is second or subsequent re-compete for the same project (see definition of same project on page 10)		X	X	X

The “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field in eGrants does not count toward narrative page limits but does have a 10,000 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. Also 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 §2522.710:

- If the applicant's annual CNCS program grant is \$500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external 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 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
- Study components – a) a 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; b) description of the sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures, and c) an analysis plan
- 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 the Corporation will consider evaluations when making judgments about any recompeting organization's application for funds. Instructions for submitting evaluations are on page 40.

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/sites/default/files/resource/Alternative-Evaluation-Approach-Guidance-FINAL-5.17.17.pdf>

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.

LEARNING MEMO. Any applicant required to submit an evaluation report must also submit a learning memo that describes how they are using the evaluation to improve and inform their activities in the next funding cycle. The learning memo must be in a 12-point font or larger and should not exceed three pages of double-spaced text. The learning memo should include:

- A short summary of key learnings from the evaluation

- An explanation of how the program will incorporate key learnings into its strategy, design or implementation
- An explanation of how these changes will improve the program
- A discussion of how learning from the evaluation may inform next steps in the program's long-term research agenda

Note that the Learning Memo will not be included in the two-part assessment of the applicant's evidence base. Content the applicant wants considered in the evidence base assessment should be included in the Evidence section of the proposal narrative or (if applicable) in submitted evaluation briefs, reports, or studies.

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 2018, these amounts are

- Cost Reimbursement Grant - \$14,932 per MSY
- Fixed Price Grant - \$13,430 per MSY

Programs operating in rural communities (as defined in the Attachment L: Terms and Definitions) and programs that recruit opportunity youth as AmeriCorps members may request up to \$15,100 cost per MSY for the AmeriCorps members that will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth.

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.

Minimum Cost Reimbursement proposals (\$2,000-\$5,000 cost-per-Member) can be especially competitive if the program design and all other elements are strong. This grant type lets well developed, existing volunteer programs grow or tackle new issues with less than full-time AmeriCorps positions. Funds can be used to increase program AmeriCorps member recruitment, selection, training, and supervision.

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 16.

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 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 CNCS share and Local match shares in this table refer to the “Grand Total” of the program budget.

Grant Cycle	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
New Applicant First Operating Grant	70% CNCS share 30% Local match	70% CNCS share 30% Local match	70% CNCS share 30% Local match
First Re-compete Grant Second Operating Grant	60% CNCS share 40% Local match	60% CNCS share 40% Local match	60% CNCS share 40% Local match
Second Re-compete Grant Third Operating Grant	45% CNCS share 55% Local match	45% CNCS share 55% Local match	45% CNCS share 55% Local match
Third Re-compete Grant Fourth 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% Local match		

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 MCCS and CNCS 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 CNCS. The system operates over the internet and can be accessed at 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 the Maine Commission for Community Service. Although the proposals are submitted on the federal eGrants system, the Corporation for National and Community Service 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 - Fri, 9 am – 7 pm ET (Jan, May, Aug, Sept) and Mon.-Thu, 9am – 7pm ET (Oct, Nov, Dec). 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

DUNS AND SAM.

Applications must include a DUNS number and an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. All applicants must be registered with the Systems for Award Management (SAM).

DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. The website indicates a 48-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. After obtaining a DUNS number register with SAM at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.

SAM collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid SAM registration, which must be renewed annually. Applicants that are not already registered with SAM are urged to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a DUNS number in order to register with SAM.

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.

To set up a new 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 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” (meaning New Application document)
 - Select a program area (AmeriCorps)
 - Select a NOFA (this competition is either:
 - “FY 2018 AmeriCorps State Commission” for cost reimbursement and applications
 - Or
 - “FY 2018 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission Fixed and EAP” for 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 delivered 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

I. Applicant Info

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

- If you are
 - re-competing (in the final year of a AmeriCorps Competitive funding cycle and applying for a new grant cycle), select **Continuation/Renewal**
 - not a current grantee, but have received a competitive AmeriCorps grant in the past five years, select **Continuation/Renewal**
 - applying for the first time, have only received formula funding in the past, or are a former grantee (non-formula) whose last AmeriCorps grant was received more than five years ago, select **New**

Enter or update the requested information in the fields that appear. The contact person needs to be the person who can answer questions about the application.

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
- Request a waiver: Use this eGrants link to request a waiver to the requirement to recruit and engage community volunteers in project activities.

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 12 pages for the Narratives** (15 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 the 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 10,000 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 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 may not be comparable. MCCS 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 with AmeriCorps 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 focus on the [Child Welfare/Infrastructure].* 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.

Fixed Amount grant applicants should list their Other Revenue (see Attachment L: 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. CNCS will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on www.nationalservice.gov in the interest of transparency and Open Government.

B. Program Design (50 percent)

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. Need (4 points)

In the narrative

- Demonstrate the problem the program will address is prevalent and severe in communities where members will serve and has been well documented with relevant data.

“Community” can be a geographic region, a specific population of people, or a combination of both. The applicant organization must document the need it plans to address with its proposed program, whether it is a defined geographic community or a subset of individuals living in a particular area. ***Data should be specific to the community that will be served and not national.***

2. 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.
-

- Applicants should use National Performance Measures if they are part of the program’s theory of change. If none are appropriate, develop a unique aligned set of performance measures that represent the significant program activities described in the theory of change.
- Provide rationale for setting the performance measure targets (output and outcome).
- 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.

Applicants are not required to measure all components of their theory of change. Instead, they should have performance measures that represent the significant program activities described in the theory of change.

The logic model is a visual representation of the applicant’s theory of change. It is entered as a chart in a specific section of eGrants, see Attachment B, and may not be longer than three pages. It needs to depict:

- A summary of the community problem outlined in the narrative.
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
 - Number of 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., teen parents, individuals in recovery, youth aging out of foster care).
- The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served, hours of service delivered, types and number of activities conducted). When applicable, identify output indicators by the alphanumeric reference assigned in the National Performance Measures Instructions (e.g., O14 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 (12 points)

Applicants will be awarded up to 12 points for providing evidence that their proposed intervention (the service program and activities) will lead to the outcomes identified in the logic model. This evidence must be found in evaluations or research done on the program model proposed. It is important to remember that AmeriCorps is not intended to test solutions to community problems but, rather, is intended to implement solutions proven through research or evaluation to be effective and to cause improvement.

Applicants must describe very specifically the evidence that gives them confidence the program services will improve the community problem. Before completing the application, applicants should use the evidence checklist (Attachment E) to identify the tier their evidence fits. Applicants must meet all requirements of an evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier. Do not be deterred or intimidated by the research language used in the following instructions.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS. The assessment of an applicant’s evidence base has two steps. Phase 1, the evidence each applicant presents will be assessed for the purpose of verifying the evidence tier, understanding the relative strength of each applicant’s evidence base, and assessing the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the logic model. The applicant will be assigned to an evidence tier based on the factors that define each tier. It is to the applicant’s advantage to carefully and accurately determine their evidence tier. Definitions and requirements of the tiers can be found in the Attachment L: Terms and Definitions (Attachment M, page 91). Evidence that does not meet the definition for the applicant’s self-identified tier may cause the proposal to be assigned to a lower tier⁸.

Phase 2, the quality of the evidence and the applicant’s overall capacity to collect and use data (including performance measurement and evaluation data) will be assessed and scored. Applicants should be sure the proposal narrative addresses each standard in the following table. These standards are weighted for applicants in different evidence tiers in order to reflect expected variations in program development and evaluation capacity.

Evidence Quality and Evaluation Capacity Standards	Points (total is 12)		
	No Evidence & Pre-Preliminary	Preliminary	Moderate & Strong
The applicant’s evidence is of satisfactory quality. Applicants with no evidence describe an evidence-informed theory of change.	2	2	2
The applicant’s data collection systems are sufficient to yield high quality process and outcome data.	5	4	1
The applicant demonstrates adequate capacity to use process and outcome data including performance measurement (and evaluation data if applicable) to inform continuous learning and program improvement.	5	5	5
The applicant’s long-term research agenda is aligned to the organization’s learning needs and position on the evidence continuum (evidence tier).	0	1	4

EVIDENCE NARRATIVE. Applicants must 1) state the evidence tier for which they think they qualify; 2) clearly indicate and describe the evidence that supports the highest evidence tier for which they are eligible and 3) describe the complete body of evidence that supports their program intervention including evidence from lower tiers. Applicants should pay particular attention to the requirements for each tier of evidence and provide a detailed response in the Evidence section. All requirements must be met in order for applicants to be assigned to a tier. Applicants who do not fully describe their evidence base may not be assigned to a tier for which they might otherwise have qualified.

Applicants classifying their evidence as preliminary who propose to replicate an identical or similar evidence-based intervention, as well as applicants classifying their evidence as either moderate or strong, should pay strict attention to information about the evidence tiers. Submission of additional documents (e.g., advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives that are not research studies or program evaluations) that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements will not be reviewed.

All applicants who have collected relevant performance measurement data must describe this data. The data collection process, methods and results must be described fully and the applicant should explain the link between data collection and the related component(s) of its logic model. Applicants that do not fully describe data collection process, methods and results in the evidence narrative may be assessed as having no evidence.

Applicants who have conducted evaluations of their own program or that are replicating other evidence-based programs must describe these evaluations in this narrative following the outline in the pertinent evidence tier descriptions.

⁸ In 2017, the distribution of evidence tiers among funded AmeriCorps State competitive grants were as follows: Strong 9%, Moderate 9%, Preliminary 38%, and Pre-Preliminary 27%. 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 the current evidence level.

Applicants are advised to focus on describing high-quality evidence from up to two of the strongest and most relevant studies while also summarizing the remaining body of evidence that exists for the program. Studies must be evaluations of specific programs or interventions. Research that does not focus on a specific program or intervention, but rather focuses on a broader issue area or population, will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points.

When describing research studies or evaluations in the application narrative, applicants must include the following information in order to earn points:

- 1) The date the research or evaluation was completed, and the time period for which the intervention was examined
- 2) A description that shows the study's relevance to the proposed intervention
- 3) A description of the target population studied (e.g., the demographics)
- 4) The methodology used in the study (e.g., outcome study, random assignment, regression discontinuity design, propensity score matching, etc.)
- 5) A description of the data, data source, and data collection methods
- 6) The outcomes or impacts examined and the study findings
- 7) The strength of the findings (e.g., effect size, confidence level, statistical power of the study design and statistical significance of findings).

Applicants must provide this information in the narrative even if they submit the study or evaluation. Applicants should provide citations for the studies they describe, if applicable; however, reviewers will not review any links or cited documents referenced in the application and will not review any additional document that is not a study submitted in accordance with these instructions.

Reviewers will examine the descriptions (and attached studies if required by the tier) using the following criteria:

- a) How closely the intervention evaluated in the studies matches the one proposed by the applicant;
- b) The methodological quality and rigor of the studies presented (e.g., sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, use of control or equivalent comparison groups, baseline equivalence and study attrition, etc.);
- c) Strength and consistency of the findings, with preference given to findings that show a meaningful and persistent positive effect on participants demonstrated with confidence levels; and
- d) The date of the study, with a preference towards studies that have been conducted within the last six years.

4. Notice Priority (3 points)

In the narrative indicate whether the proposed program

- fits within one or more of the 2018 AmeriCorps funding priorities as outlined on page 8.
- meets all of the requirements detailed on page 8 and in the Attachment L: Terms and Definitions.

5. Member Experience (7 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.
- AmeriCorps members will have access to meaningful service experiences that include education about the community problem and the community in which they serve.
- AmeriCorps members will have opportunities for reflection and connection to the broader National Service network. Reflection must allow for intentional processing of their experience and integration of lessons learned.
- 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 (7 points)

In the narrative demonstrate that

- The organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program.
- The organization has been successful in establishing and maintaining partnerships similar to those needed by this program and that those partnerships accomplished stated goals.

2. Compliance and Accountability (8 points)

In the narrative demonstrate how

- The organization will comply with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities at the grantee and service site locations.
- The applicant will hold itself and service site locations (if applicable) accountable if instances of risk or noncompliance are identified.
- The CNCS-required evaluation report (if applicable)
 - Meets CNCS requirements
 - Is of satisfactory quality

3. Culture that Values Learning (8 points)

In the narrative demonstrate that

- The applicant's board, management, and staff collects and uses information for learning and decision making.
- The applicant's management and staff produces frequent reports on how well the organization is implementing its programs and strategies.

4. Member Supervision (2 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.

This 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.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the entire amount described in the budget.
- The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum cost per MSY.

Proposed budgets that contain MSY costs that exceed the maximum cost per MSY and/or 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 G for directions on uploading approved rate document.)

- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project, including for 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 (0 points)

This field has a 10,000 character limit even though it is not part of the page limit. Instructions and guidance for this required section can be found on page 27 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 52, 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.

The performance measures may be used separately from the grant narrative after grants are made. Thus all information requested in the National Performance Measure Instructions **must** be included in the text of the performance measures themselves, and it must be evident in the performance measure text that all definitions and requirements outlined in the National Performance Measures Instructions and this RFP are met. Providing performance measures information elsewhere in the narrative cannot be in lieu of providing full information in the Performance Measures section of the application in eGrants. Should an applicant choose to provide duplicate information about performance measures in the narrative, this information will also need to be in the performance measures module.

For guidance and instructions on required service activity, member development, and capacity building performance measures, see page 26 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.

General Information: select either Yes or No from the drop down menu

- My organization has received an AmeriCorps State and National Grant. (Organizations that have been AmeriCorps member host sites but never had a direct grant from either a State Commission or CNCS should answer No.)
- The organization has sufficiently engaged community members and partner organizations in planning and implementing its intervention.
- My organization certifies it will comply with definitions and requirements outlined in the Performance Measures Instructions.

AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

Check any priority area(s) that apply to the proposed program. Only select Priorities that 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.”

Populations Served

Check the appropriate box(es) to identify the populations the proposed program will serve. If you do not plan to serve any of the listed populations, select "None of the above."

- Individuals who are homeless.
- Adult ESL participants.
- Youth ESL participants.
- Disadvantaged youth (K-12).
- Head Start participants.
- Immigrants and refugees.
- Individuals receiving hospice or other care for terminal illness.
- Individuals receiving mental health services.
- Individuals receiving substance abuse services.
- Individuals with HIV/AIDS.
- Individuals with physical or developmental disabilities.
- Senior Citizens
- Victims/Survivors of violence and abuse.
- Veterans.
- Veteran family members
- Caregivers.
- None of the Above

Grant Characteristics

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

- Faith-based organizations
- Community-based organizations
- SIG/Priority Schools
- Professional Corps
- STEM Program
- Geographic Focus – Urban
- Geographic Focus – Rural
- None of the above grant characteristics

AmeriCorps Identity/Co-branding Questions.

Select Yes or No.

- AmeriCorps members will wear the AmeriCorps logo every day.
- AmeriCorps members will create and deliver elevator speeches.
- The AmeriCorps logo will be prominently displayed on the front page of the organization’s website.

Grant Characteristics- AmeriCorps Member Population:

Check any characteristics that are a significant part of the proposed recruitment plan and/or program:

- AmeriCorps member Population – Communities of Color
- AmeriCorps member Population – Low-income individuals
- AmeriCorps member Population – Native Americans
- AmeriCorps member Population – New Americans
- AmeriCorps member Population – Older Americans
- AmeriCorps member Population – People with Disabilities
- AmeriCorps member Population – Rural Residents
- AmeriCorps member Population – Veterans, Active Military, or their Families
- AmeriCorps member Population – Economically disadvantaged young adults/Opportunity Youth
- AmeriCorps member Population – None of the above categories

VIII. Documents

If the documents you are required to provide in hard copy 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., “Financial Management Survey”) and enter status “Sent.”

These documents must be submitted as hard copies by the application deadline to

Division of Procurement Services, Maine Dept. of Administrative and Financial Services, Burton M. Cross Building, 4th Floor, 111 Sewall St., Augusta ME 04330.

- a. Attach a hard copy of the program’s SF424 facesheet to the document package.

- b. A contents list enumerating the documents you have included in this package.
- c. Organizational chart for legal applicant showing where the proposed AmeriCorps program would reside.
- d. Audit (with management letters and all findings) of legal applicant for the last completed fiscal year.
- e. A copy of the organizations 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.
- f. MCCS Financial Management Systems Survey (Attachment H, page 71)
- g. 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.
- h. AmeriCorps Readiness Assessment – (Attachment I, page 74)
- i. *[Only for applicants claiming program model has strong or moderate evidence of success]* Research studies or evaluations.
- j. Independent or Internal Program Evaluation (if applicable)
- k. 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 section, “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:

- Other Revenue funds. Enter the amount of funds that your program uses to run the program that are not identified as CNCS share or grantee share (match). 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. *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. All fixed amount grants will have other revenue.
- Number of Episodic Volunteers Generated by AmeriCorps members. Please enter the number of volunteers that will be participating in one day service projects that the proposed AmeriCorps members will generate.

- Number of Ongoing Volunteers Generated by AmeriCorps members. Please enter the number of volunteers that have an ongoing volunteer commitment that the proposed AmeriCorps members will generate.
- Percentage of MSYs who are opportunity youth, if any.
- Number of reported individuals in performance measure O15 who are opportunity youth (if applicable).
- Number of reported individuals in performance measure O17 who are opportunity youth (if applicable).

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.

Fixed-Amount Grant applicants may only 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 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.

If you are applying for a Stipended Fixed-amount grant, you must pay at least the minimum living allowance listed on page 23 for each type of position you are proposing. Stipended Fixed-Amount applicants may only include AmeriCorps member slots for positions that will complete the service term hours by devoting 40 hours a week to the position. For a guide on how many weeks each position must last to qualify, review the table on page 17 (column 6).

Applicants should plan on a Commission Technical Assistance fee equal to 1% of the total CNCS share. This expense will be billed during the first six months of the budget period. Like all expenses for the program, the fee is not part of the detail in this 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	=	_____
_____	900 hours	_____	X 0.500	=	_____
_____	675 hours	_____	X 0.3809524	=	_____
_____	450 hours	_____	X 0.26455027	=	_____
_____	300 hours	_____	X 0.21164022	=	_____
			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 price (Stipended) Fixed amount grants may request *up to* \$13,430 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 \$9,500 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	47.5 MSY X \$9,500/MSY	\$451,250	\$451,250	\$0	view	
Subtotal		\$451,250	\$451,250	\$0		

After you save the Source of Match 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.

G. BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS: COST REIMBURSEMENT INCLUDING MINIMUM 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 29 for the match schedule. For guidance on sources and types of local share/match, see page 16.

After completing indirect cost information in Section III of the budget, you will be asked to identify each match source 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**. 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 F, page 64, 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 in the form of an equation.

- 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).

Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and the requirements of the Omni Circular. 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 www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars .

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 technical assistance meetings. These include the Annual Grantee Training (central Maine), the Blaine House Conference on Service and Volunteerism (October in Orono, ME), AmeriCorps Swearing-in Ceremony (fall), and monthly grantee meetings. Attendance at the regional conference of CNCS grantees 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 Blaine House Conference on Service and Volunteerism as well as 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), Blaine House Conference on Volunteerism (\$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 Blaine House Conference on Service and Volunteerism (\$35 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:

- 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 or explain how your program will be covering the cost in the budget narrative. Program consultants and contractors are not required to have criminal history background checks.

- 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 22.

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 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. 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. If the program will purchase Occupational, Accidental, Death and Dismemberment coverage for members, enter that item here.

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 and use any formulas provided**)

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:

$$([\text{Total CNCS share of Section I}] + [\text{Total CNCS share of Section II}] \times 0.0526) \times (0.20) = \text{Commission Fixed Amount}$$

$$([\text{Total CNCS share of Section I}] + [\text{Total CNCS share of Section II}] \times 0.0526) \times (0.80) = \text{CNCS Fixed Amount (grantee portion)}$$

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:

$$([\text{Total CNCS share of Section I}] + [\text{Total CNCS share of Section II}] \times 0.0526) \times (0.20) = \text{Commission Amount}$$

$$([\text{Total CNCS share of Section I}] + [\text{Total CNCS share of Section II}] \times 0.0526) \times (0.80) = \text{Corporation Share (Grantee Share)}$$

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

- 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 minimis 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 Local Share/Match

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 re-competing applicants on page 29. (45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90 has the regulatory minimums).

H. REVIEW, AUTHORIZE, AND SUBMIT

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 J, page 77.

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 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
<i># and slot type of AmeriCorps members</i>	<i>What is done as part of the intervention selected, where it is done, and for how long (intensity and duration)</i>	<i>What units will be produced by program activities</i>	<i>Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, opinions of beneficiaries or conditions in community</i>	<i>Changes in behavior or actions of service beneficiaries as a result from participants' new knowledge, skills, etc.</i>	<i>Lasting changes or significant improvement in the lives of service beneficiaries or community conditions</i>

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 one or more aligned performance measure.
- Set targets and describe data collection plans for your performance measures.

Hints:

- Save Frequently. The Save button is off screen in the lower left corner.
- Complete the Budget prior to entering performance measures. The final lines of the budget show the total MSYs.

Home Page

To start the module, select “Performance Measures” from the eGrants application menu (left sidebar) and then 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 aligned 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

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. Do this for all applicable focus areas. All national performance measures fall under a strategic plan objective. Only the performance measures that correspond to the strategic plan 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 Measures Instructions

(<https://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/2017/2018-ameri-corps-state-and-national-performance-measures-instructions>)

Next, select all interventions that are part of your program design. Interventions are the activities that members and 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 that contains your primary intervention.

Select “Capacity Building” as your secondary focus area and secondary intervention.

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. Begin by entering the total MSYs for your program. (See total MSYs on last lines of eGrants budget summary form.) 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 you have selected the Find Opportunity objective (under the Economic Opportunity focus area) and/or the Teacher Corps objective (under the Education focus area), enter 0 MSYs for these objectives and allocate your MSYs to the other objectives

you selected. Note that you may be required to enter “0” (zero) for some other objectives if the only activity in that objective is focused on member development. Please refer to additional instructions for calculating and entering MSY and member allocations at the end of these instructions to ensure information is entered accurately.

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 (+/- 1 MSY).

In the members column, enter the number of members that 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 works on both school readiness and K-12 success, allocate one member to each of these objectives. It is acceptable for members in this table to exceed total slots requested in the application due to counting members’ service across multiple objectives.

Performance Measure Tab

This tab allows you to create sets of aligned performance measures for all the grant activities you intend to measure. You must create at least one aligned performance measure that includes your primary intervention. You also create aligned performance measures for Member Development and Capacity Building.

To create an aligned performance measure, begin by selecting an objective. The list of objectives includes those you selected on the objectives tab.

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 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 outcomes of this aligned performance 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.

Select output(s) for your aligned 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, you may create an applicant-determined output by clicking “Add User Output.”

Select outcome(s). If you have selected a National Performance Measures output with a corresponding National Performance Measures outcome, these outcomes will be available to select. If you have not selected a National Performance Measures output, or if there is no corresponding outcome, create an applicant-determined outcome by clicking “Add User Outcome.”

Note that some National Performance Measures have required output/outcome pairs. Review the instructions for more information.

For some Capacity Building National Performance Measures, you may select optional end outcomes. Complete the corresponding drop-down box for any end outcome selected. To select more than one focus area, click “Add new focus area.” To select more than one beneficiary population, click “Add new beneficiary.” To de-select an item in the drop-down box, click the first (blank) line in the drop-down. To identify focus area outcomes that are connected to your capacity building activities, check the “Focus Area Outcome” box. To select more than one focus area outcome, select “Add new outcome.” To de-select an item in the drop-down box, click the first (blank) line in the drop-down.

Enter the number of MSYs and members your program will allocate to achieving the outcomes you have selected in each 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. Note that MSYs and members cannot be entered for performance measures associated with the Find Opportunity objectives. For the Teacher Corps objective, enter 0 MSYs and members.

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

Data Collection Tab

On this tab, you will provide additional information about your interventions, instruments and plan for data collection. CNCS pays close attention to the thoroughness of this section and will closely track in program reports the extent to which the data collection plan is followed.

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 set of fields using the ► symbol and enter data collection information. For outputs that measure completion, define the minimum amount required to be counted as having completed the program. For example, if the output is “individuals completing financial management training” describe how completion is determined (# of sessions attended, score of X% on post-test, course credit, etc.).

The performance measures may be extracted from the proposal and used separately from the full application after awards are made. Thus all information requested in the National Performance Measure Instructions must be included in the text of the performance measures themselves, and it must be evident in the performance measure text that all definitions and requirements outlined in the National Performance Measures Instructions and this RFP are met. Applicants should limit the amount of duplicate information they include in the narratives, focusing on ensuring performance measure required text is complete.

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 population you intend to count (children, miles, etc.). Do not enter percents or member 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.

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.

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.⁹ Member and MSY allocations entered in the application are understood to be the program's best estimate of how member time will be allocated to various program objectives.

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. All members spend some time contributing to the K-12 Success objective. Only the program's 105 full-time and half-time members contribute to the School Readiness objective.

Objective #1: K12 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
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 MSY
HT	.5	X	5	X	.20	=	.5 MSY
RHT	.3809524	X	0	X	0	=	
QT	.26455027	X	0	X	0	=	
MT	.21164022	X	0	X	0	=	
Total Members			105	Total MSYs			50.5

⁹ Objectives are objectives of the CNCS strategic plan. Activity that does not contribute to a strategic plan objective is categorized as "Other."

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.

Note: Programs that select the Find Opportunity objective (Economic Opportunity Focus Area) or the Teacher Corps objective (Education Focus Area) must enter 0 MSYs for these objectives and allocate their MSYs to other objectives. This is because the MSY allocations are designed to show how programs’ resources are allocated to activities that benefit the community. Each requires the selection of at least 1 separate performance measure that captures service to beneficiaries.

MSYs by Focus Area



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.

Table1: MSYs by Focus Areas

Focus Area	% MSYs
Education	100%

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

Table4: No of MSY and Members by Objective

Objectives	No of MSYs	No of Members
K-12 Success	60.63	135
School Readiness	50.50	105
Total	111.13	240

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.

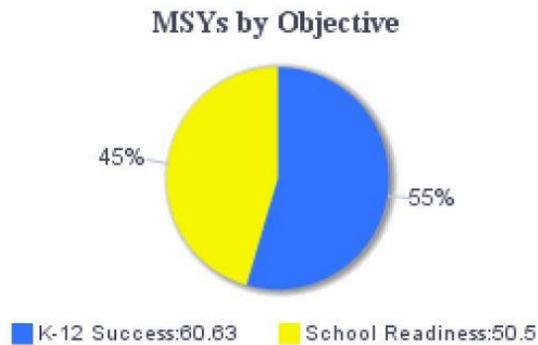


Table2: MSYs by Objectives

Objectives	%MSYs
K-12 Success	55%
School Readiness	45%

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.

% of MSY NPM VS Applicant VS Not in ANY

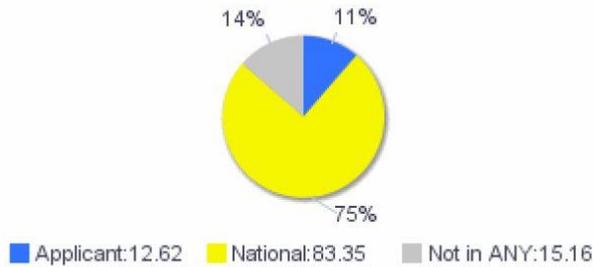


Table3: %MSYs by NPM vs.Applicant vs. Not in ANY

% MSYs	NPM	Applicant	Not in ANY
	75%	11%	14%

ATTACHMENT D: PERFORMANCE MEASURES CHECKLIST

This checklist is used to assess performance measures during the review process. Items on the checklist are common problems that require clarification. Use this checklist to ensure you avoid commonly seen problems.

Alignment with Narrative/TOC	
	Focus areas, objectives, interventions, outputs and outcomes are consistent with the application narrative, logic model and theory of change.
Interventions	
	The interventions selected contribute directly to the outputs and outcomes.
	Interventions are not repeated in multiple aligned performance measures.
Dosage	
	The dosage (frequency, intensity, duration of intervention) is described and is sufficient to achieve outcomes.
Resource Allocation	
	MSY and member allocation charts are consistent with the member activities/time spent on member activities described in the application narrative.
	MSY allocations for performance measures are reasonable. (If it is clear that not all interventions are being measured, then 100% of MSYs should not be allocated to performance measures. CNCS expects an accurate estimate of MSYs that will lead to performance measure outcomes and does not require applicants to measure 100% of program activity or to allocate a certain percentage of activity to National Performance Measures.)
	MSYs are zero for Teacher Corps (ED12, ED13, ED14, ED17, ED18, ED19) and Member Development (O12, O13, O14, O15, O16, O17) performance measures and any other performance measures that measure member outcomes rather than beneficiary outcomes (EN2, EN2.1, V2, V10).
Selection Rules/Performance Measure Instructions	
	The applicant has at least 1 aligned performance measure for the primary intervention.
	National Performance Measures conform to selection rules, definitions and data collection requirements specified in the Performance Measure Instructions. (Compliance with definitions and data collection requirements must be clearly explained in the performance measure text boxes or must be clarified.)
	It is clear that beneficiaries are not double-counted in an aligned performance measure.
	National Performance Measures count beneficiaries, not AmeriCorps members, unless the measure specifies that national service participants are to be counted.
	The population counted in each National Performance Measure is the population specified in the Performance Measure Instructions.
	Capacity Building interventions meet the CNCS definition of capacity-building in the Performance Measure Instructions.
	Member development measures (O12, O13, O14, O15, O16, and O17) have a 30-day timeline, not the previously acceptable 90-day timeline.
	Applicant is not using applicant-determined member development or volunteer generation measures that are the same or similar to National Performance Measures or Grantee Progress Report demographic indicators (e.g., number of volunteers.)
	Member development measures (O12, O13, O14, O15, O16, O17) or volunteer generation measures (G3-3.1, G3-3.2, G3-3.3) are only present if these activities are the primary focus of the program or a significant component of the program's theory of change.
Education Selection Rules/Performance Measure Instructions	
	Completion is defined for education outputs measuring completion. (ED2, ED4A, ED21, ED32). Note: Dosage and completion are not necessarily the same. The applicant must specify the minimum dosage necessary to be counted as having completed the program, which may or may not be the same dosage specified in the intervention description.
	ED1/ED2 and ED3A/ED4A are not used in the same aligned PM.
	The mentoring intervention is selected for ED3A/ED4A, and no other interventions are selected for ED3A/ED4A. Mentoring is not selected as an intervention in any education measures other than ED3A/ED4A.

	The mentoring dosage meets the dosage requirements described in the Performance Measure Instructions for ED3A/ED4A.
	It is clear that the proposed standardized test for ED5 and/or ED30 meets the definition in the Performance Measure Instructions.
	If the state standardized test is proposed to measure ED5 and/or ED30, a justification is provided as directed in the Performance Measure Instructions. (Note: Request must be approved by CNCS.)
	If the applicant is measuring multiple subjects under ED5 and/or ED30, it is clear whether/how much students must improve in reading, math or both subjects in order to be counted.
	For ED27A or ED27B, the applicant specifies which dimension(s) of academic engagement described in the Performance Measure Instructions will be measured.
Alignment & Quality	
	Applicant-determined outputs and outcomes are aligned correctly.
	Outputs and outcomes clearly identify what is counted.
	Each output or outcome counts only one thing (except certain National Performance Measures).
	Outcomes clearly identify a change in knowledge, attitude, behavior or condition. (Counts that do not measure a change are outputs and must be labeled as such.)
	Outcomes clearly specify the level of improvement necessary to be counted as "improved" and it is clear why this level of improvement is significant for the beneficiary population served.
	Outcomes count individual level gains, not average gains for the population served.
	Outcomes measure meaningful/significant changes and are aligned with the applicant's theory of change. (Note: Outcomes that do not measure significant changes in knowledge, attitude, behavior or condition should be revised. If the applicant is not able to propose a meaningful outcome, the aligned performance measure should be removed. CNCS prefers that applicants measure a small number of meaningful outcomes rather than a large number of outputs paired with insignificant outcomes.)
	Outcomes can be measured during a single grant year.
Data Collection/Instruments	
	Data collection methods are appropriate.
	Instruments are likely to yield high quality data.
	The instrument, and what it measures, is clearly described.
	If the Performance Measure Instructions specify the instrument to be used, the applicant is using that instrument (e.g., pre/post test).
	The instrument measures the change specified in the outcome. (For example, if the outcome is a change in knowledge, the proposed instrument measures a change in knowledge, not a change in attitude.)
	Output instruments are sufficient to count all beneficiaries served and to ensure that individuals are not double-counted.
	Outcome instruments will be administered to all beneficiaries receiving the intervention or completing the program. (Note, competitive grantees may propose a sampling plan for CNCS approval if this is not the case. Formula grantees are not permitted to sample.)
Pre/Post Test	
	If using a pre/post test to measure knowledge gains from training activities, it is clear how the pre/post test is connected to the learning objectives of the training.
	The timeline for administering the pre/post test is clear.
	If a pre/post test is required by the Performance Measure Instructions, the instrument described is a pre/post test.
	The applicant can successfully match pre-test data with post-test data at the individual level. The same instrument must be used for the pre-test and the post-test.
Targets	
	Target values appear ambitious but realistic/It is clear how targets were set.
	Outcome targets are smaller than output targets, with some exceptions (i.e., capacity-building National Performance Measures). Note: In some cases it may be appropriate for the outcome target to be equal to the output target.
	The output and outcome targets are reasonably proportional. Note: What constitutes reasonably proportional may depend on what is being counted, how and when.
Unit of Measure	

	The unit of measure is not AmeriCorps members except in National Performance Measures that count national service participants.
	The unit of measure is consistent for all outputs or outcomes in the PM unless otherwise specified in the Performance Measure Instructions.
	The unit of measure is not hours.
	The unit of measure is a number, not a percent.
Sampling	
	If sampling is proposed, the targets represent the total for the population being served, not just the sample. (<i>Note: Formula grantees are not permitted to sample.</i>)
	If sampling is proposed, the sampling plan is forwarded to CNCS for consideration. (<i>Note: Formula grantees are not permitted to sample.</i>)
Misc.	
	The applicant has not opted into National Performance Measures but has the potential to do so. (In this case, clarify why the applicant has not opted into National Performance Measures and, if applicable, direct them to select appropriate National Performance Measures.)
	The applicant has not created applicant-determined measures that are identical to National Performance Measures. (<i>Note: This is a common problem that occurs when applicants have not selected the correct objective. Applicants must review the selection rules and choose the correct objectives or the corresponding performance measures will not be available for selection. Applicant-determined measures are recognizable by the labels OUTPT or OUTCM, followed by numbers. Any applications containing these labels are NOT National Performance Measures, even if the applicant has labeled them with the number of a national measure.</i>)

ATTACHMENT E: EVIDENCE CHECKLIST

Note: In order to receive full points for the assessed evidence tier, all data and studies described in the narrative or submitted as additional documents must contain sufficient detail to assess the quality indicators described earlier in this document (similarity of intervention, methodological quality and rigor, strength and consistency of findings, and date of study). Applicants that do not provide sufficient information to assess these indicators may not receive full points for their evidence tier or may be assessed in a lower evidence tier.

Evidence Provided ¹⁰	Submit Studies ¹¹	Evidence Tier
Applicant has not systematically collected any qualitative or quantitative data on their program or intervention.	No	No evidence
Applicant is evidence informed ¹² but has not systematically collected any qualitative or quantitative data on their program or intervention.	No	No evidence
<p>The applicant has collected systematic and accurate data from their own program or intervention to test or track one or more of the following components of its logic model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community • Activities and services delivered (outputs) • Participation in the intervention by the target population (outputs) <p>Participant outcomes, including performance measurement data</p> <p>All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data collection process and results are described fully • The applicant explains the link between data collection and the relevant component(s) of its logic model 	No	Pre-Preliminary
<p>The applicant has conducted a process evaluation of their own program assessing implementation of one or more interventions depicted in the logic model.</p> <p>All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data collection process and results are described fully • The applicant explains the link between data collection and the relevant component(s) of its logic model 	No	Pre-Preliminary
<p>The applicant has conducted at least one outcome study of its own intervention. The outcome study has one of the following designs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre and post-test without a comparison group • Post-test only with a comparison group • Retrospective pre-post test if use is justified <p>All of the following are true:</p> <p>The outcome study includes data beyond that which is collected as part of routine performance measurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant provides a detailed description of the outcome study data • The description explains whether the outcome study was conducted by the applicant organization or by an entity external to the applicant • The outcome study yielded promising results for proposed intervention 	No	Preliminary (Outcome Study)

¹⁰ Applicants must meet all requirements of the evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier. Applicants that do not meet all requirements will be considered for a lower tier.

¹¹ When submission of studies is permitted, applicants may submit up to two evaluation reports. CNCS grantees re-competing for at least the second time are required to submit an evaluation report. For these grantees, the CNCS-required evaluation report may count toward one of the two studies or may be submitted in addition to them. In the latter case, all three studies will be considered against the review criteria. Studies submitted beyond the allowable number will not be reviewed.

¹² An evidence-informed program uses the best available knowledge, research, and evaluation to guide program design and implementation, but does not have scientific research or rigorous evaluation of the program itself and is not replicating an evidence-based program

<p>The applicant is proposing to replicate¹³ an evidence-based program with fidelity. All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant submits at least one randomized control study (RCT) or quasi-experimental evaluation (QED) of the intervention the applicant will replicate • The evaluation found positive results for the intervention the applicant will replicate • The evaluation was conducted by an entity external to the organization whose program was studied • Applicant describes how the intervention studied and the applicant’s approach are the same • Applicant describes how the applicant will replicate the intervention with fidelity to the program model <p>The following may be true but is not required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has described a process evaluation demonstrating how it is currently replicating the intervention with fidelity to the program model <p>The following is true if the applicant is part of a multi-site program that has conducted an evaluation that qualifies them for the moderate or strong evidence tier, but the evaluation did not include the applicant’s proposed sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant describes how they are replicating the evidence-based program with fidelity at all of the sites included in the application. 	Yes	Preliminary (Replication)
<p>The applicant has conducted at least one quasi-experimental study (QED) or randomized control trial (RCT) of its own program. All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The studies are well-designed and well-implemented • The studies evaluate the same intervention described in the application • The studies demonstrate evidence of effectiveness (positive findings) on one or more key desired outcomes of interest depicted in the applicant’s logic model • The studies were conducted by an independent entity external to the applicant organization • The ability to generalize the findings from the RCT or QED beyond the study context may be limited (e.g., single-site) 	Yes	Moderate
<p>The applicant has conducted at least one quasi-experimental study (QED) or randomized control trial (RCT) of its own program. All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The studies are well-designed and well-implemented • The studies evaluate the same intervention described in the application • The studies were conducted by an independent entity external to the applicant organization • The overall pattern of study findings is consistently positive on the key outcomes depicted in the applicant’s logic model • Findings may be generalized beyond the study context <p>At least one of the following is true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intervention has been tested nationally, regionally, or at the state level (e.g., multi-site) • The applicant has conducted multiple QEDs or RCTs in different locations or with different populations within a local geographic area 	Yes	Strong

¹³ Replicate means that the key elements of the applicant’s intervention are implemented as the evidence-based program model describes (e.g., in terms of content or curriculum, delivery process, and target population), and the applicant’s adaptations are relatively minor. For example, an applicant implementing an intervention using certified teachers to administer the curriculum would not be considered replicating that program with fidelity if it replaces teachers with AmeriCorps members who are not certified teachers because the documented success of the intervention relied on the specialization of certified teachers.

ATTACHMENT F: 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				

	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Subtotal Section II:			
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			

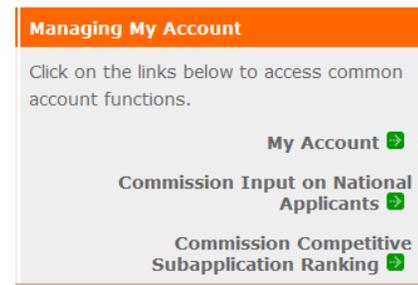
Budget Total: Validate this budget using the labeled function in eGrants.	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
	100%		
Required Match Percentages:			

ATTACHMENT G: eGRANTS INDIRECT COST RATE (IDCR) USER INSTRUCTIONS

eGrants allows users to input Indirect Cost Rate information into their eGrants account. Grantees that will be 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](#) and [2540.110](#)).

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:



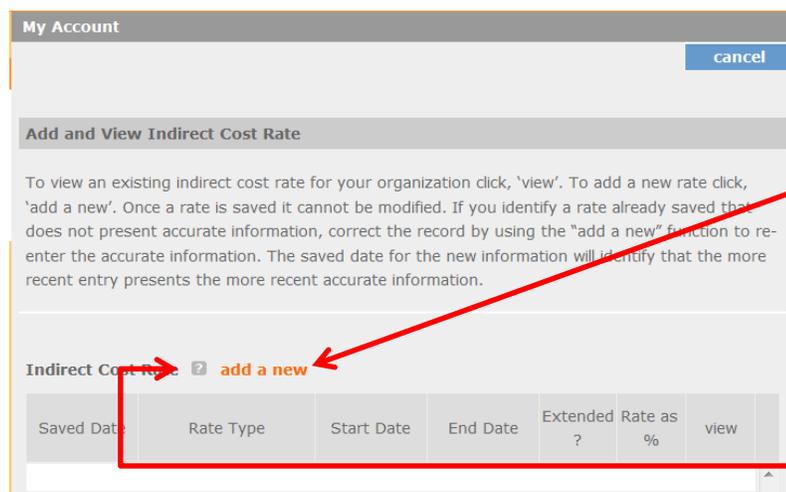
1) From the **eGrants Home** screen, in the lower panel under **Managing My Account**, click on **My Account**

Edit My Organization Info...

You can change the following information by clicking on the links below:

- Update Organization's Contact Information
- Update Organization's Attributes
- Add and View Indirect Cost Rate
- Edit User Role/Permissions
- View All
- Change My Primary User Role

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.

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.

3) **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 grants officer. Other federal agencies may be added as needed.

4) **Acceptance Date.** Enter a valid date. The acceptance date is usually identified where the rate was signed by the issuing state or federal agency.

5) **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** and notify your grants officer. Additional rate status options may be added as needed.

6) **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.

7) **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.

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

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

1) **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 on.

If your organization will be claiming or budgeting with a current, approved indirect cost rate on any CNCS awards, 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 applications, if they will be using a lesser percentage of an approved rate, if you so choose.

2) **Rate Type:** If your rate type is not one of the following options, contact your grants officer for guidance:
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

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.

9) **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**.

10) **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.

11) **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.

12) **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.

13) 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.

14) **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 H: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS SURVEY

Financial Management Systems Survey for Potential Grantees

Legal Applicant: _____ Date of Survey: _____

A. General Information

1. Has your organization received a federal cost-reimbursement award in the last two years?

YES NO If yes, what is your cognizant federal oversight agency.

Agency: _____

Name of Contact: _____ Telephone: _____

2. Has your organization been audited by an independent public accounting firm in the past two years?

YES NO

If yes, please attach a copy of the report along with **all** management letters and/or findings.

3. Was this audit conducted in accordance with OMB Uniform Guidance? YES NO

If "No", what procedures were followed? _____

4. Please indicate the fiscal year of your organization:

Month begins: _____ Month ends: _____

5. What is the usual audit schedule for your organization? _____

6. Does your organization have a cost allocation plan? YES NO (If "Yes", attach a copy.)

7. Does your organization have a negotiated indirect cost rate with a state or federal agency?

YES NO

If "Yes", what is your cognizant agency? _____

Please attach a copy of your most recent letter from this agency.

8. Has the Internal Revenue Service granted final approval for tax-exempt status? YES NO

9. Under which IRS Code did your organization file? _____ 501(c)(3) _____ 501(c)(4)

_____ 501(c)(5) _____ 501(c)(6) _____ Other: _____

10. Please provide a copy of your organization's Articles of Incorporation or governing document in which its purpose and mission is codified.

Comments: _____

11. On what date was your organization's last 990 filed? _____

12. Does the name of the organization filing the 990 exactly match the name of the legal applicant submitting this proposal? YES NO

If "No," what name does appear on the 990? _____

B. Accounting System

- 1. Which of the following best describes the accounting system: Manual Automated Combination
- 2. Is there a chart of accounts? YES NO
- 3. Is a double entry accounting system used? YES NO
- 4. What books of account are maintained?
 - a) General Ledger YES NO
 - b) Project Cost Ledger YES NO
 - c) Cash Receipts Journal YES NO
 - d) Cash Disbursements Journal YES NO
 - e) Payroll Journal YES NO
 - f) Income (Sales) Journal YES NO
 - g) Purchase Journal YES NO
 - h) General Journal YES NO
 - i) Other (please describe): YES NO

-
- 5. Does the accounting system identify the receipt and expenditure of funds separately for each grant and contract? YES NO
 - 6. Does the accounting system provide for recording grant/contract costs according to categories of the approved budget? YES NO
 - 7. Does the accounting system provide for documenting and recording the in-kind value of goods and services contributed to grant or contract projects? YES NO
 - 8. Are time distribution records maintained for each employee to account for his/her total effort (100%)? YES NO
 - 9. Is the accounting system able to disburse stipends that are not based on hours worked but do require withholding income tax and payment of FICA? YES NO
 - 10. Is the organization familiar with the cost principles (2CFR – formerly OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, or A-122 as appropriate) and procedures for the determination and allowance of costs in connection with federal grants and contracts? YES NO

Comments: _____

C. Funds Management

- 1. Is a separate account maintained for Federal grant/contract funds? YES NO
- 2. If a separate account is not maintained, can the federal grant/cooperative agreement funds and related expenses be readily identified? YES NO

Comments: _____

-
-
- 3. Does your organization use electronic fund transfers to make or receive payments? YES NO

D. Internal Controls

1. Are the duties of the bookkeeper/record keeper separated from cash functions (receipt or payment of cash)?
 YES NO
2. Are checks signed by individuals whose duties exclude recording cash received, approving vouchers for payment and payroll preparation? YES NO
3. Are accounting entries supported by appropriate documentation (e.g., purchase orders, vouchers, etc.)?
 YES NO
4. Are employees who handle funds required to be bonded against loss by reasons of fraud or dishonesty?
 YES NO

Comments: _____

Prepared by: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

ATTACHMENT I: 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 -- i.e., 3-10 year 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			

ATTACHMENT J: 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 (16 U.S.C. 469a-1 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 - Grant Review Process (State Commissions Only)

I certify that in conducting our review process, we have ensured compliance with the National and Community Service Act of 1990, the Corporation's peer review requirements, and all state laws and conflict of interest rules.

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 K: 2018 CNCS APPLICATION REVIEW

I. Review And Selection Process

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

CNCS will make determination about applicants utilizing the data provided within the application and supplemental materials. These determinations may be different than what the applicant self-determined upon submission of its application.

a. Compliance and Eligibility Review

CNCS staff will conduct a Compliance Review to determine if an application meets the compliance requirements published in this *Notice* and advances to the next stage of the review process. Applications determined non-compliant will not be considered for funding. 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
- Submit an application with a minimum of twenty AmeriCorps member positions (slots).

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.

b. Review

Each application will be assessed by several CNCS staff. Staff reviewers will evaluate the application using the application review criteria, consider the comprehensiveness and feasibility of the application, and the priorities and strategic considerations detailed in the *Notice*. External Reviewers will review and assess the evidence base criteria in the *Notice*. All reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

c. Post Review Quality Control

After the reviewers complete their assessment, 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 ranked first by a State Commission but received low scores and applications for which there are significant panel anomalies. In addition, the State/Territory Commission input on National Direct applications will be reviewed and assessed.

d. Risk Assessment Evaluation

CNCS staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds and the applicant's past performance (if applicable.) 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, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. In evaluating risks, CNCS may consider the following, but not limited to:

- Financial capability and capacity to manage Federal funds
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant's record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
 - Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements,
 - If applicable, meeting matching requirements, and
 - If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- Information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as—
 - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS),
 - US Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
 - Dun and Bradstreet, or
 - "Do Not Pay"
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance (formerly OMB Circular A-133) and findings of any other available audits

- IRS Tax Form 990
- An applicant organization's annual report
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website
- Any other information listed in 45 C.F.R. § 2522.140
- The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.
- Past Performance

State Commission staff will assess their re-competing subgrantees' past performance and submit those assessments to CNCS. CNCS will assess its re-competing 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 will consider the following for applicants that are current formula and competitive grantees and are submitting applications for the same program model:

- Grant progress reports – attainment of Performance Measures
- Enrollment and retention
- Compliance with 30 day enrollment and exit requirements in the AmeriCorps portal
- Site visit or other monitoring findings (if applicable)
- Office of Inspector General findings (if applicable)
- Significant opportunities and/or risks of the grantee related to national service
- Commission Rank

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.

e. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information.

Prior to making any award that exceeds \$150,000, 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 \$150,000.

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*.

f. Applicant Clarification

Some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information and/or make changes to their application including changes to the budget. This information is used by CNCS staff in making final recommendations. Applications may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked clarification questions. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to requests for clarification in an adequate and timely fashion may result in the removal of applications from consideration.

II. Selection for Funding

The assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. CNCS staff will apply their experience and expertise in evaluating and recommending applications. CNCS will engage external reviewers to provide insight and input with respect to the evidence base of eligible applications. In the end, the review and selection process will produce a diversified set of high-quality programs that reflect the priorities and strategic consideration described in this *Notice*.

Specifically, the review and selection process will:

- A. Identify how well eligible applications are aligned with application review criteria and/or represent relative risk and/or opportunity.
- B. Yield a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
 - Meaningful representation of

- Geographic diversity
- Rural communities (see definitions)
- Single and multi-state programs
- Faith- based organizations
- CNCS *Notice* Priorities representation
- Focus area representation
- Moderate and Strong evidence levels
- Program models that demonstrate a new approach to solving a community problem based on thorough review of existing research and evaluation about existing approaches to the problem
- Program models that will utilize AmeriCorps members to replicate evidence-based programs with fidelity

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 adjust or make changes to the review process, in the event that unforeseen challenges or exigent circumstances make it impossible, impractical or inefficient to execute 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 in response to this Notice.

III. Feedback to Applicants

Following grant awards, each applicant will receive summary comments pertaining to their application. Feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect any information that may have been provided in response to clarification questions, if any. All compliant applications will receive feedback from the external review of the evidence base portion of their application.

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](#) within 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

- a list of all compliant applications submitted
- Executive Summaries of all compliant applications submitted by the applicants
- data extracted from the SF-424 Face Sheet and the submitted program narratives for successful applications
- 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.

ATTACHMENT L: 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.

► **Encore Programs:** Congress set a goal that 10 percent of AmeriCorps funding should support encore service programs that engage a significant number of participants age 55 or older. CNCS seeks to meet that 10 percent target in this competition and encourages encore programs to apply.

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

► **Evidence based program:** a program that has been rigorously evaluated and has demonstrated positive results. Rigorous evaluation means at least one random control trial study or quasi-experimental evaluation, either of the program itself or of another program that the applicant is proposing to replicate.

► **Evidence informed program:** uses the best available knowledge, research, and evaluation to guide program design and implementation, but does not have scientific research or rigorous evaluation of the program itself and is not replicating an evidence-based program.

Applicants that have not yet collected data from their own programs may be evidence-informed if they have incorporated research from other evidence-based programs into their program designs.

► **Evidence Tiers and Requirements for Tier Qualification:** There are five evidence tiers.

1. **No evidence** means that the applicant has not provided evidence that they have systematically collected any qualitative or quantitative data to date.

Applicants in this tier must describe how their program design is *evidence-informed*. An evidence-informed program uses the best available knowledge, research and evaluation to guide program design and implementation, but does not have scientific research or rigorous evaluation of the program itself. Applicants may *describe* up to two research or evaluation studies that inform their program design may not submit these studies.

2. **Pre-preliminary evidence** means the applicant has demonstrated data collection experience testing or tracking at least one aspect of its logic model. For example, the applicant has collected systemic and accurate data on one or more of the following: the community problem the proposed intervention will address, the program intervention's activities and services delivered, participation in the intervention by the target population, and/or participant outcomes (for example, performance measurement data or a process evaluation assessing implementation of the intervention.)

In order to qualify for this tier, the applicant must have collected data about their own program. The data collection process, methods and results must be described fully and the applicant should explain the link between data collection and the relevant component(s) of its logic model. Applicants that do not fully describe the data collection process, methods and results in the application narrative may be assessed as having no evidence. Applicants should describe evidence for the pre-preliminary tier in the Evidence section of the application but should not submit additional documents unless required to meet CNCS evaluation requirements. Evaluations submitted to comply with CNCS evaluation requirements will be reviewed only for compliance with evaluation requirements and will not be considered when assessing this evidence tier.

3. **Preliminary evidence** means the applicant has provided data from at least one outcome study of their own intervention that yielded promising results for the proposed intervention or that the applicant proposes to replicate a similar

intervention with fidelity to the evaluated program model. There are 2 ways to demonstrate preliminary level of evidence are as follows:

A. Preliminary with Outcome Study The applicant must describe at least one outcome study that was conducted of their own intervention. This must include a detailed description of the outcome study data from pre and post-tests without a comparison group or post-test comparison between intervention and comparison groups. In some cases a retrospective pre-post test may be considered, but its use must be justified in the application narrative. The applicant must explain whether the outcome study was conducted internally by the applicant organization or by an entity external to the applicant. Applicants must describe the studies fully but should not submit them unless required to meet CNCS evaluation requirements. Outcome evaluations that are submitted to fulfill the CNCS evaluation requirements will be reviewed for compliance with evaluation requirements and will not be considered when assessing this evidence tier. Outcome evaluations submitted by applicants who were not required to meet CNCS evaluation requirements will not be reviewed.

In addition to describing up to two outcome studies of their own program or intervention, applicants must fully describe the performance measurement data they have collected and how the outcome study data goes beyond performance measurement.

Preliminary with Replication. The applicant must describe and submit at least one randomized controlled trial study or quasi-experimental evaluation (an evaluation using a statistically valid, matched comparison group) that found positive results for the same intervention that the applicant plans to replicate. The applicant must describe how the intervention studied and the applicant's proposed approach are the same and how the applicant will replicate the intervention with fidelity to the program model. The study must have been conducted by an entity external to the organization whose program was studied. If applicable, applicants may also describe evidence from a process evaluation demonstrating that they have implemented the replication with fidelity. The process evaluation should be described but not submitted.

Applicants who do not submit the required study or who do not describe fully how they will replicate the evidence-based program with fidelity will be considered for a lower tier.

For the purposes of this *Notice*, "replicate" means that the key elements of the applicant's intervention are implemented as the evidence-based program model describes (e.g., in terms of content or curriculum, delivery process, and target population), and the applicant's adaptations are relatively minor. For example, an applicant implementing an intervention using certified teachers to administer the curriculum would not be considered replicating that program with fidelity if it replaces teachers with AmeriCorps members who are not certified teachers, because the documented success of the intervention relied on the specialization of certified teachers.

Applicants proposing to replicate an evidence-based program with fidelity must describe how their program is the same as, or very similar to, the program they will replicate in the following areas:

- Characteristics of the beneficiary population
- Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention
- Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention
- Training for the AmeriCorps members and/or other individuals, such as volunteers, delivering the intervention
- The context in which the intervention is delivered
- Outcomes of the intervention

Applicants must also describe how they will assess whether they are implementing the intervention with fidelity to the intervention they are replicating.

Applicants must be clear about whether the sites proposed in the application overlap with the sites included in an evaluation that would qualify them for the moderate or strong evidence tier. In cases where the applicant is part of a multi-site or multi-grant program (for example, a national program operating in multiple states) that has conducted an evaluation that would qualify them for the moderate or strong evidence tier, but the evaluation did not include the applicant's proposed sites, the applicant must describe how they are replicating the evidence-based program with fidelity at one of the sites included in the application. In this case, an application for sites included in the evaluation would receive moderate or strong evidence, and an application for the sites not included in the evaluation would receive preliminary evidence.

4. **Moderate evidence** means the applicant *has submitted up to two* well-designed and well-implemented studies of their own program that evaluated the same intervention described in this application and identified evidence of effectiveness on one or more key desired outcomes 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 studies were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

Applicants classifying their evidence as **Moderate** must submit up to two evaluation reports from external entities or evaluations published in peer-reviewed articles as separate attachments.

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 studies required for the Moderate evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three studies 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 studies will not be considered.

5. **Strong evidence** (10-12 points) means the applicant has demonstrated that the 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 QED or RCT of their own program. Alternatively, the proposed intervention's evidence may be based on multiple (up to two) well-designed and well-implemented QEDs or RCTs of their own program in different locations or with different populations within a local geographic area. The overall pattern of study findings is consistently positive on the key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant's logic model. Findings from the RCT or QED studies may be generalized beyond the study context. The studies were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

Applicants classifying their evidence as **Strong** must submit up to two evaluation reports from external entities or evaluations published in peer-reviewed articles as separate attachments.

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 studies required for the Strong evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three studies 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 studies will not be considered.

Applicants must be clear about whether the sites proposed in the application overlap with the sites included in an evaluation that would qualify them for the moderate or strong evidence tier. In cases where the applicant is part of a multi-site or multi-grant program (for example, a national program operating in multiple states) that has conducted an evaluation that would qualify them for the moderate or strong evidence tier, but the evaluation did not include the applicant's proposed sites, the applicant must describe how they are replicating the evidence-based program with fidelity at one of the sites included in the application. In this case, an application for sites included in the evaluation would receive moderate or strong evidence, and an application for the sites not included in the evaluation would receive preliminary evidence.

► **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 still 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 Time Fixed amount grants:** Fixed amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members or less than full-time members serving in a full time capacity only.

► **Learning Memo:** Any applicant required to submit an evaluation report in order to comply with CNCS evaluation requirements must also submit a learning memo that describes how they are using the evaluation to improve and to inform their activities in the next funding cycle. The learning memo must be in a 12-point font or larger and should not exceed three pages of double-spaced text. The learning memo should include:

- A short summary of key learnings from the evaluation
- An explanation of how the program will incorporate key learnings into its strategy, design or implementation
- An explanation of how these changes will improve the program
- A discussion of how learning from the evaluation may inform next steps in the program's long-term research agenda

► **Leveraged Resources:** “Leveraged resources” are all the non-Corporation resources that a fixed amount grant uses to support the program.

► **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.)

► **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.

► **Opportunity youth:** Opportunity youth are economically disadvantaged individuals ages 16-24 who are disconnected from school or work for at least six months prior to service. CNCS defines “economically disadvantaged” consistent with the definition used in the member development performance measures, “Receiving or meet the income eligibility requirements to receive: Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), Food Stamps (SNAP), Medicaid, SCHIP, Section 8 housing assistance.” CNCS defines “disconnected from school or work” as unemployed, underemployed, and not in school for at least six months prior to their term of national service. A member who was not economically disadvantaged prior to becoming an AmeriCorps member, but became economically disadvantaged because the living allowance was low enough to make them eligible for SNAP, etc., cannot be counted as economically disadvantaged. In order to apply under this priority the applicant must demonstrate the programmatic elements they will implement in order to recruit and support opportunity youth as members and/or program beneficiaries, and a substantial portion of their requested MSYs must consist of or be devoted to serving opportunity youth.

► **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.

► **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 any program models that seek to address the prescription drug and opioid abuse crisis in America.

► **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>

► **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 seeking consideration under this priority may submit a narrative that does not exceed 18 pages. Applicants should refer to the *Page Limits* section in the *Notice* for information specific to Multi-focus 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.

► **Safer communities:** activities that focus on public safety, preventing and mitigating civil unrest, and/or partnerships between police and community. CNCS is looking for program models that create, support, and initiate activities that provide opportunities for law enforcement and community members to become constructively engaged in building or re building public spaces and opportunities for constructive dialogue via sports and community team building such as block watch organizations. Some examples are summer programming or engaging communities that are part of The National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention and programs that are developed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) (<http://www.iacp.org/Police-Foundations-Section>) such as programs that engage youth between the ages of 14-21 living in high crime areas of the city who have been identified as “leaders” in good and/or bad way. The youth are paired with School Resources Officers who meet with them several times during the week to engage them in a variety of leadership building exercises i.e., camping, rafting, community clean-up and much more.

► **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, utilize the same sites. Programs must get approval from their CNCS program officers 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 their Program Officer 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 for approval 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, the Program Officer will create a new project in eGrants.

ATTACHMENT M: COMPILATION OF LINKS IN RFP

Maine Commission for Community Service
<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://www.ecfr.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/2018%20Performance%20Measures%20Instructions%20Final.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

AmeriCorps Grant Terms & Conditions and the CNCS General Terms and Conditions

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

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>