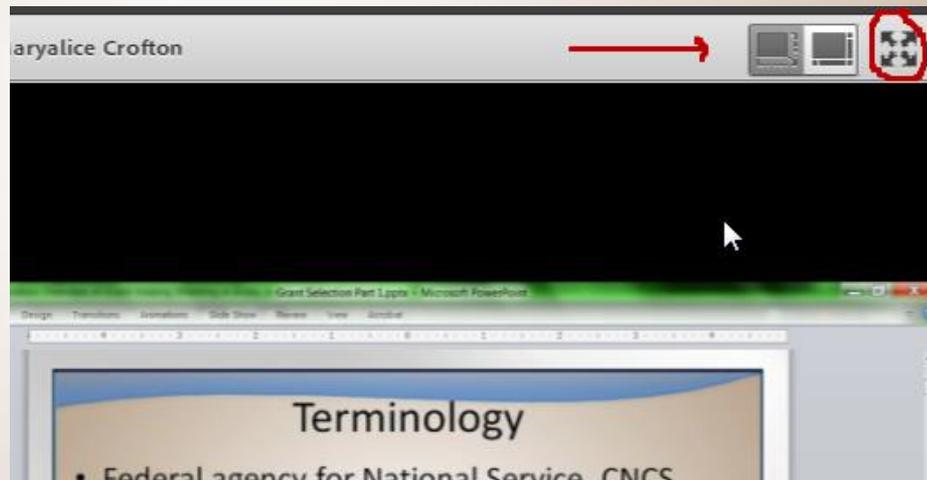


# Grant Selection Part 1

## Maine Commission for Community Service

If you are viewing this as a recording, use the icon shown below to make the visual full screen and eliminate the session controls.



When quizzes appear, know they are not interactive but you can identify your response and learn if it is correct.



# New Commissioner Orientation

## Part 1: Grant Selection

**Maine Commission for Community Service**



# Terminology

- Federal agency for National Service, CNCS
  - Corporation for National and Community Service
    - Created in 1993 – National and Community Service Trust Act
      - 1991 National and Community Service Act
    - Merged 3 federal agencies into 1
      - Action
      - Commission on National and Community Service
      - White House Office on Access to Higher Ed
    - Maintained two federal administrative structures



# Terminology

- Serve America Act 2009
  - Reauthorization of National Service (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq)
  - Put in statute former “pilot” programs
  - Tightened or focused outcomes
    - Original programs and activities authorized to impact
      - Human needs, Public Safety, Education, Environment
    - Diversity of community needs made rolling up data impossible
    - Congress specified activities/outcomes more narrowly



# Terminology

- National Service
  - Grant programs authorized under Serve America
  - Includes three types of activity
    - Support of service by individuals
      - Service and those who participate must qualify (eligibility)
      - Most of the programs provide benefits to the participants
    - Capacity building in the volunteer sector
    - Service combined with academic instruction as an educational strategy



# Terminology

- Government Performance Results Act (GPRRA)
  - Law requiring federal agencies to
    - Develop strategic plans
    - Invest in evidence-based strategies if not doing research or development
    - Measure results of grants or contracts in relation to objectives (performance measurement)
    - Report outcomes not just outputs annually
    - Coordinate federal investments at local level
  - Renewed and strengthened in 2010

# Terminology

- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)
  - “the codification of the general and permanent rules and **regulations** (sometimes called administrative law) published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the **federal** government.”
  - 45 CFR sections cover National Service
  - 2 CFR replaced OMB circulars that addressed allowable expenses, indirect, audits, etc.

# Terminology

- Request for Proposals (RFP)
  - Document issued by state agencies conducting a competition for grants or to purchase goods/services
- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
  - Federal version of state RFP
  - Issued when funding has not been appropriated
- Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)
  - Federal RFP issued when funding is appropriated

# QUESTIONS??

If you've heard a term not referenced, be sure to ask for clarification.

Remember -- take your phone off mute

OR

enter your question in the chat box.



# Authorized Grant Programs

Now Funded in Budget	State Service Commissions	CNCS Direct Admin
Senior Companions		X (100%, \$45.5M)
Foster Grandparents		X (100%, \$108M)
Retired Senior Volunteer Program		X (100%, \$49M)
AmeriCorps VISTA; AmeriCorps Affiliates		X (100%, \$92.4 M)
AmeriCorps State/National	X (80%, \$340+M)	X (20%, \$80+M)
AmeriCorps NCCC		X (100%, \$30 M)
Volunteer Generation Fund	X (100%, \$5.4 M)	
Program Development/Training	X (\$7.5 M)	
Commission Support (operating)	X (\$17.5+ M)	



# Authorized Grant Programs

- No longer funded
  - Non-profit capacity building
  - School-based service learning;
  - Semester of Service;
  - Higher ed service learning;
  - Community-based service learning
  - Social Innovation Fund



# Authorized Grant Programs

- Funding proposed at times but not yet approved
  - Silver Scholars
  - **Serve America Fellows**  
(currently there is high interest among appropriators for funding this)
  - Encore Fellows
  - **National Service Reserve Corps**  
(AmeriCorps Alums serving in disaster recovery)
- Other service grants funded in budget
  - Days of Service (MLK, 9.11)



# QUESTIONS??

Remember to take your phone off mute  
OR  
enter your question in the chat box.



**In The Current Era**

**COMMISSION GRANT/ PROGRAM  
RESPONSIBILITIES**



# Duties under Federal Law

SEC. 178. (e)2-10 [42 U.S.C. 12638]

- Prepare applications from State for funding
  - AmeriCorps grantees must be pre-selected
    - Federal law and CFRs have very specific directions on selecting grants
  - Volunteer Generation grantees can be selected after funding received
    - Less restrictive selection criteria so State of Maine procurement rules and process can be followed



# Duties under Federal Law

SEC. 178. (e)2-10 [42 U.S.C. 12638]

- Provide technical assistance and training to potential applicants
  - Capacity building done through volunteer management training, Service Enterprise, etc.
  - Grant specific prep is done under Program Development and Training grant to State Service Commissions
    - No funding from 2013-2016 due to Congressional Budget Office misunderstanding. Funds restored 2017.



# Duties under Federal Law

SEC. 178. (e)2-10 [42 U.S.C. 12638]

- Develop system for programs to recruit members
  - MCCS
    - participates in Service Year
    - maintains VolunteerMaine.org “opportunities” search
    - devotes 2/3 of public education media to awareness (MAB contract)
    - Includes all known Maine programs in displays, social media, website, and presentations



# Duties under Federal Law

SEC. 178. (e)2-10 [42 U.S.C. 12638]

- Administer grants approved
  - Monitoring performance, compliance, evaluation
  - AmeriCorps grants have many unusual elements
- Provide training and technical assistance to *“national service programs that receive assistance directly from the Corporation”*
  - Significance: not just Maine programs funded through MCCS



# Duties under MCCS statute

5MRS c.373 §7503

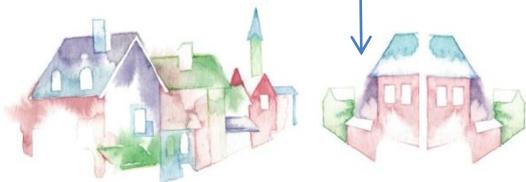
- Mirror federal statute with regard to national service grants and programs
- Add “community service” (volunteering) to these duties:
  - Serve as an information clearinghouse and technical assistance source
    - For people seeking volunteer placements
    - For organizations seeking to develop service programs



# How National Service program funds get to communities

National or Multi-State Nonprofits  
-----  
Assign resources to affiliates and partners in various communities

AMERICORPS  
VISTA



State Service Commissions  
-----  
Commissions re-grant competitively to local agencies to operate in single state

AMERICORPS COMPETITIVE  
AMERICORPS FORMULA  
VOLUNTEER GENERATION FUND



CNCS directly  
-----  
Direct to community agencies operating in single state

AMERICORPS AFFILIATES  
VISTA  
FOSTER GRANDPARENTS  
SENIOR COMPANIONS  
RSVP  
AMERICORPS NCCC



# Pop Quiz!

Which of the following are true?

- Acronym for federal agency is CNCS
- Service-learning is funded through grants to higher ed institutions
- Governors have no influence on the CNCS direct grants operating in their states
- The National Service programs are AmeriCorps and Senior Corps



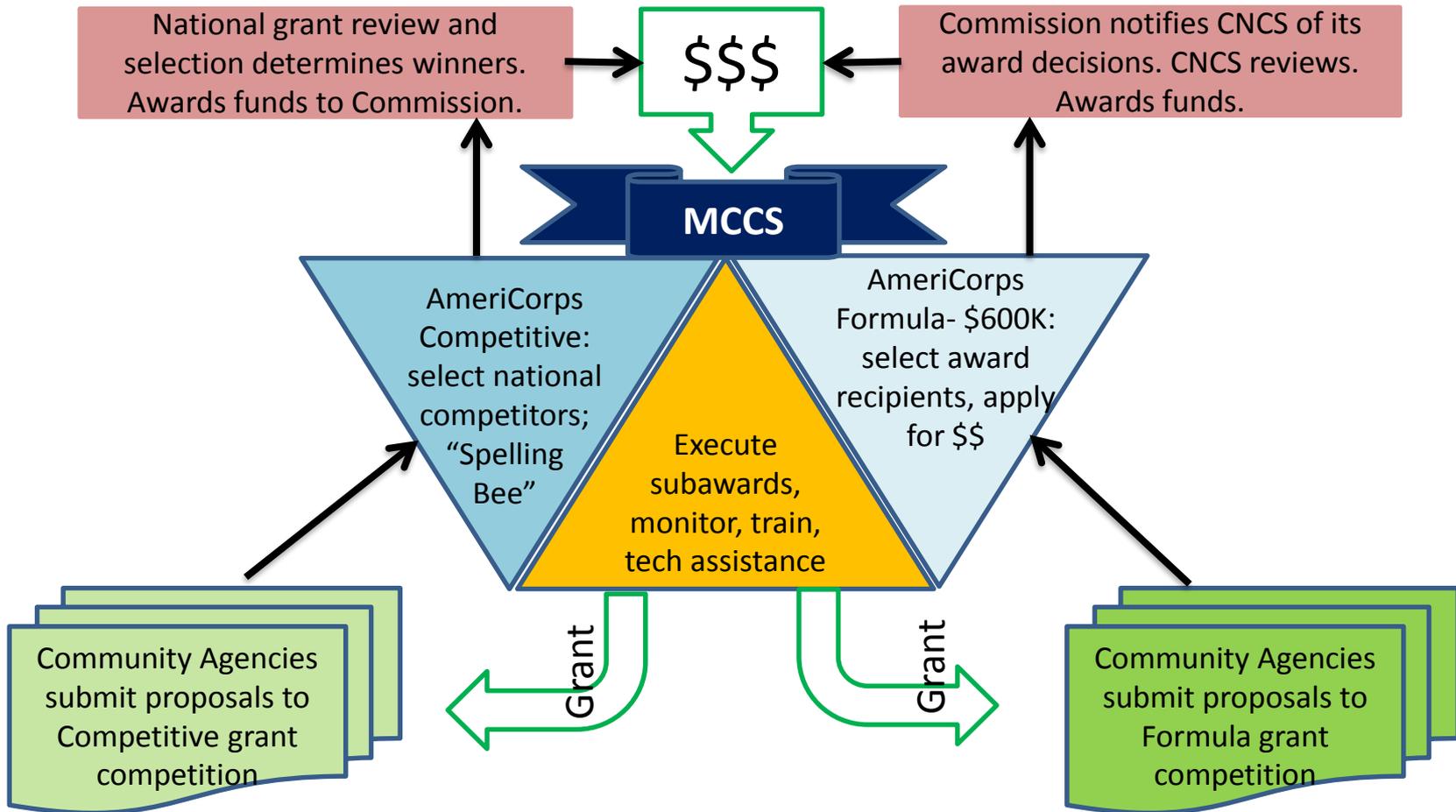
The Major Grant Program for MCCS

**AMERICORPS STATE**



# AmeriCorps Resources: One admin duty, two selection systems

## CNCS National Service Appropriation for Participants and Funds



# What shapes the grant-making

- Federal law and regulations
  - Eligible applicants to operate programs defined
    - State Commissions are prohibited from applying
  - Program types
    - Youth corps
    - Professional corps
    - Community corps
  - Activity type
    - Direct service



# What shapes the grant-making

- Federal law and regulations
  - AmeriCorps grant award provides
    - National Service positions
    - Funding to support those who serve
  - Local share (inaccurately called match)
    - Minimum rate set in CFR; Maine Commission set different rates to match doesn't increase each year – just with re-competing awards
    - repeat applicants have to match at increasing rate
    - Funds from other federal agencies may be used as local share
    - AmeriCorps portion of grant is a set \$\$ rate per 1700 hours of service



# What shapes the grant-making

- Federal law and regulations
  - Allowable categories of activities
    - Economic Opportunity. Create or increase access to
      - services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people;
      - services that enhance financial literacy of economically disadvantaged people;
      - safe, healthy, affordable housing (includes remaining in current homes);
      - experiences or services that improve employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.



# What shapes the grant-making

- Allowable categories of activities
  - Healthy Futures
    - improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities;
    - increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes;
    - engage individuals in disease prevention and health promotion activities;
    - result in health literacy for patients of health services



# What shapes the grant-making

- Allowable categories of activities

- Disaster Services

- increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters,
    - improve individuals' readiness to respond to disasters, help individuals recover from disasters,
    - help individuals mitigate disasters



# What shapes the grant-making

- Allowable categories of activities

- Education

- services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children;
    - improved school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children;
    - improved educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools;
    - help economically disadvantaged students prepare for success in post-secondary educational institutions



# What shapes the grant-making

## – Allowable categories of activities

- Environmental stewardship

- decrease energy and water consumption;
- improve at-risk ecosystems;
- increase behavioral changes that lead directly to decreased energy and water consumption or improved at-risk ecosystems;
- build, weatherize, and/or retrofit housing units for low-income households to significantly improve the energy efficiency
- increase green training opportunities that lead to employment in new industries



# What shapes the grant-making

## – Allowable categories of activities

- Other human, public safety, education, or environmental needs

- creates opportunity for special grants

- » opioid abuse prevention

- » partnerships with other federal agencies like DOJ/OJJDP

- gives CNCS flexibility to respond to crises like Flint

- gives states opportunity to use Formula funds to meet unique needs

- » Kentucky and Georgia programs focused on needs of individuals with disabilities



# What shapes the grant-making

- Federal law and regulation specifications
  - Time, manner (eGrants), content of application
    - E.g., *A description of the manner in which the national service programs will build an ethic of civic responsibility and produce a positive change in the lives of participants through training and participation in meaningful service experiences and opportunities for reflection on such experiences;*
    - Need to be addressed, program design, member activities/selection/training/supervision, performance measures, community involvement in program development, organizational experience, evaluation plan, risk management around prohibited activities, budget



# What shapes the grant-making

- Federal law and regulations
  - Specifies scoring for application sections
    - 50% - Community need/Program design/Member management
    - 25% - Organizational capability
    - 25% - Cost effectiveness and Budget adequacy
  - Annually CNCS tinkers with distribution of points within sections
    - Commission impact – have to wait for NOFO/NOFA to be issued; must edit all materials before issuing RFP
  - This portion done by external peer reviewers



# What shapes the grant-making

- Federal law and regulations
  - Specifies factors States must assess in addition to specified scoring
    - risk factors related to managing federal funds
    - past performance (e.g., achieving objectives, impact, evaluation)
    - alignment with priorities in current competition
    - program model
  - The above constitute the tech review by Grant Selection and Performance Task Force



# What shapes the grant-making

- State of Maine procurement rules
  - MCCS ends up asking for exceptions
  - Add hard copy docs to meet state specific requirements and incorporates some language
  - Hard copy docs submitted to Division of Procurement Services, they determine which applicants are considered
- Commission grant policies
  - Can be more specific or strict than federal. Examples:
    - Standard grant requires coalition or set of partners
    - Host sites may only have AmeriCorps resource for 3 years



# Pop Quiz!

1. The local share AmeriCorps grantees must provide cannot include other federal funds.

False     True

2. In assessing grant proposals, all federally required criteria can be scored by peer reviewers.

False     True



# Selecting New AC Grants: Process

- Refer to process map for preparation and implementation
- Federal law requires State Commissions to use the same criteria used at federal level



# Selecting New AC Grants: Process

- External Peer Review
  - Generally non-commissioners with expertise in management of programs, nonprofit/gov agencies, volunteers PLUS some topical area
  - Process is done virtually so often participants are from other states
    - Description of peer reviewer role plus application is on M CCS website ([MaineServiceCommission.gov/grants](http://MaineServiceCommission.gov/grants))
    - Applications taken year round
  - Assess and score narrative using CFR points

# Selecting New AC Grants: Process

- Grants Task Force Tech Review
  - Grants Officer prepares analysis of fiscal and financial docs
    - Audit, 990, fiscal health, financial management system survey
    - Proposed budget compliance with allowable uses and cost limits
    - Confirms applicant EIN, DUNS, not debarred, etc.
  - If applicant had AmeriCorps grant within the last 5 years, Grants Officer also compiles performance report
    - Enrollment and retention rates
    - Regulatory plus terms and conditions compliance
    - Performance and evaluation

# Selecting New AC Grants: Process

- Grants Task Force Tech Review
  - Not done in public
  - Task force members review
    - Staff analysis
    - Original documents – especially past performance and AmeriCorps readiness reports
    - Budget and financial reports to understand staff analysis
    - Task force member ratings
    - Individually do initial ratings then meet virtually to develop consensus score



# Selecting New AC Grants: Process

- Grants Task Force Final Recommendations
  - Done in public meeting
  - Staff preparation
    - Peer Review scores added to Tech Review scores to make final score
    - List of applicants in order of score shared with TF
    - Possible awards developed based on Procurement Rules (high score gets complete ask, etc.)
  - Task force meets to develop funding recommendations
  - Recommendations presented for vote to M CCS Board



# QUESTIONS??

Remember to take your phone off mute  
OR  
enter your question in the chat box.



# Considering AC Continuations

- Refer to process map for preparation and implementation
- Federal criteria apply to continuations
  - Performance and compliance
- Commission criteria generally relate to conditions or corrective actions



# Considering AC Continuations

- Grants Task Force Assessment
  - Reviews performance report form compiled by staff
    - Results of monitoring/compliance reviews
    - Enrollment and retention reports
    - Financial performance
  - Reviews Continuation Narrative and Budget Request and Performance Measure targets for next year
  - Has these options:
    - Approve as requested
    - Reduce award of positions and funds
    - Approve basic request plus supplemental request (if any submitted)



# QUESTIONS??

Remember to take your phone off mute  
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Key Policies for MCCS:  
Federal Conflict of Interest Rules  
Commission Ethics Policy  
Confidentiality Policy

Your “homework”:

Go to the Commissioner Reference section of the hub, locate and read the above items in the writeboard “Board Operating Docs”





# THE END

These slides are available as a PDF.  
If you would like a copy, contact one  
of the Commission staff.

