



State Of Maine
Volunteer Maine
The Commission for Community Service



RFA# 202309196



AmeriCorps

**MAINE AMERICORPS STATE COMPETITIVE GRANTS
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES**

RFA Coordinator	<i>All communication regarding this RFA <u>must</u> be made through the RFA Coordinator identified below.</i> Name: Kirsten Brewer Title: Application Coordinator Contact Information: Kirsten.Brewer@maine.gov 19 Elkins Lane, 105 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0105 207-624-7792
Information Session	Date: October 18, 2023 Time: Location: Virtual. Use this link to register and submit questions in advance- https://mainestate.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_t00AQ1TtTQGtgKBZUa2b_w
Submitted Questions Due	<i>All questions <u>must</u> be received by the RFA Coordinator identified above by:</i> Date: October 24, 2023
Proposal Submission	<i>Applications <u>must</u> be received by the Division of Procurement Services by:</i> Submission Deadline: November 7, 2023, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time. <i>Applications <u>must</u> be submitted electronically in the federal eGrants system and additional documents emailed to the following address:</i> Electronic (email) Submission Address: Proposals@maine.gov

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

Highlights for Potential Applicants

1. The information contained in this document is drawn from the federal NOFO for AmeriCorps State Competitive proposals, the sections of the Code of Federal Regulations pertaining to AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps agency 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 two different categories of AmeriCorps grants. Pay close attention to the requirements specific to the proposal category you chose. Note that applicants with no experience managing AmeriCorps grants may not apply for Full-cost Fixed amount grants. The sole exception is for existing AmeriCorps host sites with a solid history of success with AmeriCorps efforts and demonstrable capacity to manage a full program grant.
3. A complete proposal consists of the application sections in the federal grant management system, eGrants, plus the required additional documents submitted to the Division of Procurement Services at the email address specified on the cover page.
4. This document has three types of information:
 - a. details about this competition;
 - b. description of AmeriCorps program design and requirements; and,
 - c. required contents of a grant proposal.
5. 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.
6. Proposals submitted in this competition **must** fit within the **federal focus areas** which are described beginning on page 6. The federal agency has identified funding priorities (activities of greater interest than the full scope of allowable activities) but also clearly states it will consider complete applications for any permitted effort.
7. Note that, as of October 1, 2010 (and amended on August 14, 2023), AmeriCorps members starting service at age 55 or older, who successfully complete a term of service and qualify for an education award, may transfer their education award to child(ren), stepchild(ren), grandchild(ren), or foster child(ren).

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS, ACRONYMS, AND DEFINITIONS

► **AmeriCorps Member:** An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award that they can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

► **Asset Based Approach/Frame:** Instead of looking at what a community needs or lacks, the approach focuses on utilizing the 'assets' that are already there. The approach facilitates the empowerment of individuals and communities by helping them to identify and share their strengths and then work together to create their own social innovations.

► **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 AmeriCorps-supported organizations (i.e. AmeriCorps programs.) As a general rule, AmeriCorps considers capacity building activities to be *indirect services* that enable AmeriCorps -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.

► **Child Care:** The AmeriCorps Childcare Benefit Program is available for eligible, active, full-time AmeriCorps State and National members who need the benefit to serve. Visit the AmeriCorps Childcare Program website for more information on this member benefit: <https://www.americorpschildcare.com/>

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

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

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

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

- Environmental Stewardship: Evidence Brief: Effective AmeriCorps-Funded Environmental Stewardship Programs
- Economic Opportunity: <https://americorps.gov/evidence-exchange/Evidence-Brief%3A-Effective-CNCS-Funded-Economic-Opportunity-Programs>
- Education: <https://americorps.gov/evidence-exchange/Evidence-Brief%3A-Effective-CNCS-Funded-Education-Programs>
- Healthy Futures: <https://americorps.gov/evidence-exchange/Evidence-Brief%3A-Effective-CNCS-Funded-Healthy-Futures-Programs->

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

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

► **Evidence Tiers:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

► **Focus Areas for National Service.** Congress has directed the federal AmeriCorps agency to focus on some specific areas of need. These categories encompass a broad range of service activities. The focus areas below describe all permitted service activities, and each competition identifies a set as funding priorities.

1. **Disaster Services.** Grants will help individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of disasters and increase community resiliency.

2. **Economic Opportunity.** Grants will improving the economic well-being and security of underserved individuals.
3. **Education.** Grants will improve educational outcomes for underserved people, especially children. AmeriCorps is particularly interested in program designs that support youth engagement and service learning as strategies to achieve high educational outcomes.
4. **Environmental Stewardship.** Grants will support communities to become more resilient through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve land and water, increase renewable energy use and improve at-risk ecosystems, especially in underserved households and communities.
5. **Healthy Futures.** Grants will support health needs within communities, including mitigating the impacts of public health crises, access to care, aging in place, public health, and addressing childhood obesity, especially in underserved communities.
6. **Veterans and Military Families.** Grants will improve the quality of life of veterans and improve military family well-being.

► **Impact evaluation** An evaluation that provides statistical evidence of how well a program achieves its desired outcomes and what effect it has on service recipients and/or service participants compared to what would have happened in the absence of the program. Impact evaluations must be designed to provide evidence of a causal relationship between program activities and outcomes (45 C.F.R. § 2522.700). Grantees must use an experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation design (i.e., the evaluation must include a control group or a statistically matched comparison group).

► **Labor Surplus Area** Civil jurisdictions that have a civilian average annual unemployment rate during the previous two calendar years of 20 percent or more above the average annual civilian unemployment rate for all states during the same 24-month reference period -: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/lisa/pdfs/FY%202023%20LSA.xlsx>. General link to DOL page with info and list is: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/lisa>

► **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, AmeriCorps provides only a portion of the cost of running the program and organizations must raise the additional resources needed to run the program. Programs can access all of the funds, provided they recruit and retain the members supported under the grant based on the MSY level awarded. Professional Corps programs applying for operational funding through a Fixed Amount Grant must submit a budget in support of their request for operational funds.

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

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

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

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

► **National Direct Applicants**

- *Multi-state:* Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state or territory apply directly to AmeriCorps.
- *Federally-recognized Indian Tribes:* Applicants that are Indian Tribes apply directly to AmeriCorps (see the *Eligible Applicants* section in the *Notice*.)
- *State and Territories without Commissions:* Applicants in South Dakota, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands apply directly to AmeriCorps because this State and Territories have not established a State Commission.

► **Operating Site:** An operating site is the organization that manages the AmeriCorps program on behalf of the multi-state recipient of the grant from AmeriCorps. 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.

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

► **Other Revenue:** Funds necessary to operate an AmeriCorps program that are not AmeriCorps 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 AmeriCorps or grantee share amounts in the budget. Fixed amount grantees should enter all non- AmeriCorps funds that support the program in this field. All fixed grants will have other revenue.

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

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

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

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

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

1. Attempting to influence legislation
2. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes
3. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing
4. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements
5. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office
6. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials

7. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization
8. Providing a direct benefit to a. a business organized for profit, b. a labor union, c. a partisan political organization, d. a nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative, and e. an organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph C. 7. above, unless AmeriCorps assistance is not used to support those religious activities
9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using AmeriCorps funds to conduct a voter registration drive
10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services
11. Such other activities as AmeriCorps may prohibit.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

► **Same intervention described in the application:** The intervention evaluated in submitted evaluation reports must match the intervention proposed in the application in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Program Design and Logic Model sections of the application:

- Characteristics of the beneficiary population, including evidence of current or historic inequities facing the population
- Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention
- Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention, including all key components and activities
- The context in which the intervention is delivered
- Outcomes of the intervention

Evaluation reports that do not sufficiently match the intervention proposed by the applicant will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points.

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

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

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

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

Nondisplacement:

- (1) An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- (2) An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- (3) A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
- (4) A participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
- (5) A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that—
 - (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 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.

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.

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

Political activity. Corporation assistance may not be used 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.

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

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

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



Volunteer Maine is the State Service Commission and the partner for the federal agency that funds AmeriCorps. 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 grant program;
- ♦ providing training and technical assistance to National Service programs in Maine; and
- ♦ evaluating, monitoring, and administering grant programs.

All the Commission activities and its funding priorities flow from its Strategic Plan. To learn more about the business side of Commission work, visit www.VolunteerMaine.gov.

II. AmeriCorps, the federal agency



AmeriCorps

In 2020, the federal agency rebranded itself from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to AmeriCorps. The federal agency was established in 1994 and among the grant programs it manages are:

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

AmeriCorps provides grants, training, and technical assistance to state service commissions and national volunteer organizations. It explores, develops, and models effective approaches for using volunteers to meet 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.

AmeriCorps is working from its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. AmeriCorps will execute the following goals to respond to national and local needs and help communities prosper:

- partner with communities to alleviate poverty and advance racial equity;
- enhance the experience for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers;
- unite Americans by bringing them together in service;
- effectively steward federal resources; and
- make AmeriCorps one of the best and most equitable places to work in the federal government.

AmeriCorps will prioritize investment in the most critical issues — public health, climate and the environment, and education and economic opportunity -- and increase efforts to ensure AmeriCorps members, AmeriCorps Senior volunteers, and community-based volunteers reflect the demographic profile of the communities where they serve. It will target investments to communities where the need is greatest, particularly those with populations that face poverty and racial inequality. For more information on AmeriCorps, visit www.AmeriCorps.gov.

B. THIS AMERICORPS COMPETITION

I. Competition Category

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

The second process is used in this competition. The AmeriCorps 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 applications that are high quality and likely to succeed in the national competition are submitted to the federal agency.

This Request for Applications is the first phase.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations to implement evidence-based direct service programs in which AmeriCorps members provide the human resources to carry out the program. The service activities target high priority, critical needs in specific communities with the goal of measurably improving/changing the situation. (The federal agency refers to the service activities as “the intervention.”) AmeriCorps also builds the capacity of the community to meet its own needs by engaging citizens as volunteers who serve alongside the AmeriCorps members. The third goal of AmeriCorps is to develop the skills, knowledge, and abilities of members, not only through their service work but also their community and civic engagement, enabling these individuals to lead community initiatives after their year of service. 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.

Organizations that operate local AmeriCorps programs identify interventions proven to impact the identified need and then design how a team of members will implement the program as they serve full- or part-time for one year.

An AmeriCorps member is an individual enrolled in an approved national service position and spends time delivering a service needed by the community. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award that they can use to pay for post-secondary education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

II. What 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 the AmeriCorps members in those slots during their service terms.

However, AmeriCorps is designed as a public-private partnership that also requires local resources from the grantee and outside parties. 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 needed to cover full implementation of the program.

III. Proposal Categories

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

“NEW” PROPOSALS are from organizations that 1) are applying for the first time OR have only received formula funding in the past; 2) operated grants from AmeriCorps under another funding type (e.g., Senior Corps); or 3) only hosted AmeriCorps members through another organization’s grant.

Existing AmeriCorps grantees may be considered “new” if they are seeking to submit a proposal for a program model that addresses a different issue area with different priorities and different objectives after obtaining prior permission from the Commission and the federal agency.

“**RE-COMPETING PROPOSALS**” are from applicants who have received AmeriCorps State funds within the last five years and propose to operate substantially the same program model for another 3 years.

If a program is currently in its final year of a grant period, the sponsor must submit a full application meeting the current requirements in order to be considered for another round of AmeriCorps funding.

IV. Number of Awards, Size, and Grant Type

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 A MSY in the AmeriCorps world is what a Fulltime Equivalent (FTE) is in the employment world. ***MSYs can be divided into multiple positions.*** There is a table later in this document that shows the service term options and equivalents. In planning the number and types of slots needed based on the program design, new applicants should keep in mind that the federal agency generally limits awards for new AmeriCorps grantees (those with no experience operating a program) to no more than 50 member positions.

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

B. TIMELINE. 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. A program year is 12 months and typically starts on September 1. AmeriCorps members may not start service or be enrolled prior to the grant award start date.

C. GRANT TYPE: There are two options for grants in this competition: **Cost Reimbursement** and **Fixed-amount Grants**. Both support operation of an AmeriCorps program but Fixed-amount grants are only available to re-competing applicants.

The grant period is three years with 12-month budget periods serving as the basis for adding subsequent year funding. If a proposal is selected, only the initial period of funding is awarded. Funding and positions for years 2 and 3 will be awarded under the continuation process.

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.

Cost Reimbursement Grant. AmeriCorps programs with various terms of service for members (full-time, seasonal, part-time, etc.) can apply for *up to* \$25,000 per Member Service Year (the equivalent of 1700 hours of service by one person) and distribute these AmeriCorps funds across all sections of the budget as needed. New grantees must provide at least 30% local share from public and/or private cash or in-kind sources. Over the life of the grant, the legal applicant will be required to comply with financial tracking requirements for federal awards and report the amount and source of any federal dollars from other agencies (Interior, HUD, VA, USDOL, etc.) used for local share.

Full-cost Fixed amount Grants. (Re-competes only) The AmeriCorps proposal can incorporate any term of service that is needed by the program design. The proposal can also request up to \$25,000 per Member Service Year.

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 23 for full list of fractional positions.

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 and reporting requirements; and, 3) is not required to report local resources used to operate the program. Grant recipients receive reimbursement based on their member recruitment and retention rates. If grantees do not achieve full enrollment, the reimbursed funds decrease proportionally.

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 provides the evidence that additional local resources are used to carry out the program.

Special Note About Applications for Same Project. Volunteer Maine will not entertain applications 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 applications 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.

V. Funding Priorities for This Competition

In each national competition, the federal agency identifies funding priorities for AmeriCorps grants. In order to receive priority consideration, the funding priority area must be a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes.

- Organizations leading service in communities with concentrated poverty, rural communities, tribal communities, and those organizations serving historically underrepresented and underserved individuals, including but not limited to communities of color, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, people who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community, people with arrest and/or conviction records, and religious minorities;
- Evidence-based interventions on the [AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange](#) that are assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence. Please note that many of these interventions have demonstrated effectiveness in improving outcomes for individuals living in underserved communities and that the agency has committed resources to supporting grantees seeking to replicate and evaluate these interventions in similar communities;
- Veterans and Military Families, Caregivers, and Survivors – a program model that improves the quality of life of veterans and improves the well-being of military and veteran families, caregivers, and survivors,
- Faith-based organizations;
- Programs that provide additional benefits to AmeriCorps members aimed at enhancing member experience and bolstering member recruitment and retention such as paying more than the minimum living allowance, transportation, housing, food, etc.;
- Programs that create workforce pathways for AmeriCorps members, including deliberate training, certifications, and hiring preferences or support; and
- Environmental Stewardship, including supporting communities to become more resilient through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve land and water, increase renewable energy use and improve at-risk ecosystems, especially in underserved households and communities.
- Community-based programs that enhance and expand services to second chance youth and/or engage those youth as AmeriCorps members.

- Programs that support civic bridgebuilding programs and projects to reduce polarization and community divisions; and providing training in civic bridgebuilding skills and techniques to AmeriCorps members.
- Programs focused on implementing or expanding access to high-quality early learning and those that prepare AmeriCorps members to enter early learning careers.

To receive priority consideration, applicants must show that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes and must include a high-quality program design. Proposing programs that receive priority consideration does not guarantee funding.

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT NATIONAL SERVICE FOCUS AREAS. Congress has directed the federal agency to focus on some specific areas of need. These ‘Focus Areas’ encompass a broad range of service activities that broadly define the range *all permitted* service activities in AmeriCorps programming. Applicants may submit proposals that fall under any of these permitted activities. Applicants benefit from including, but are not limited to, the *identified set of funding priorities described above*. See full descriptions of the Focus Areas for National Service in the Glossary of Terms on p. 5.

VI. Eligible Applicants

Maine public or private non-profits, State/county/local units of government, including school districts, 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.

Applicants must have a valid SAM registration and Unique Entity Identifier to receive an award (see page 35).

Volunteer Maine encourages applications from eligible organizations that are primarily female or minority managed, and from agencies within or primarily recruiting from designated labor surplus areas as referenced in CFR 200.321 (contracting with small and minority businesses, women’s business enterprises, and labor surplus area firm).

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.

Applications that propose to engage in activities that are prohibited under AmeriCorps’ statutes, regulations, or the terms and conditions of its awards are not eligible to receive AmeriCorps funding.

Note that under section 745 of Title VII, Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, if the AmeriCorps agency 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 RFA/Notice.² A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this RFA/Notice.

PREFERENCE: Volunteer Maine will give preference points under program model to applications from partnerships or coalitions whose members represent local organizations working together to implement a common evidence-based approach to a community problem. Partnerships are expected to either build on

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.

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 application 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.

VII. Submission Deadline, Instructions, and Compliance Requirements

All applications must be submitted **no later than 11:59 p.m. local time on November 7, 2023**. Receipt time will be established by the date/time stamp electronically recorded at the time of submission.

1. **Applications Due:** Complete applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of this RFA. Applications received **after** the 11:59 p.m. deadline will be **rejected** without exception.
2. **Complete means** the application is submitted in eGrants (<https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp>) **and** all required additional documents listed on page 43 are submitted by **email** to the email address provided on the RFA Cover Page.
 - a. Only applications received through eGrants and email will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
 - b. Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their email submission: **"RFA# 202309196 Proposal Submission"**. It is recommended the sender request a read receipt on the email(s).
 - c. Applicant submissions are to be broken down into multiple files, with each file named as it is titled in bold below, and include:
 - **File #1 – Bidder Name** *PDF format preferred*
 Completed - Application Cover Page (SF424) printed from eGrants
 Table of Contents
 Organizational Chart
 AmeriCorps Readiness Assessment
 Research studies or evaluations supporting evidence tier (if applicable)
 Evaluation Plan (if applicable – use template in this document)
 Independent or Internal Program Evaluation (if applicable)
 - **File #2 – Bidder Name** *PDF format preferred*
 Labor Union Concurrence or statement of explanation why it is not needed
 Audit PLUS Management Letters and all findings
 Organization's most recently filed Form 990 (not applicable to units of government)
 - **File #3 – Bidder Name** *Word format required per federal instructions*
 Operational and Financial Management Survey
 Explanation if delinquent on Federal Debt (if applicable)
 Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

VIII. Questions Regarding This RFA

Questions about this RFA must be submitted by email to Service.Commission@maine.gov **with the subject line:** "AmeriCorps State Competitive RFA# 202309196. The deadline for written questions is October 24, 2023. Responses will be posted under "Submitted Questions: RFA# 202309196" on the same page as the RFA <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants> and at <http://volunteermaine.gov/grants/funding-proposals-request> .

C. SELECTION PROCESSES

I. Review Process for AmeriCorps Applications

STATE REVIEW.

Volunteer Maine uses selection criteria and a process that incorporates the mandatory AmeriCorps weighting and scoring of various criteria published in the [Code of Federal Regulations](#) as well as its own policies on funding and performance, and the applicable requirements of state procurement.

All AmeriCorps State applications 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 for the grant, fiscal systems, funding priority alignment, program model, competition preferences, past performance in this or other grant programs including those funded by foundations or other government agencies (if applicable), and grant readiness.

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 applications.

The Commission uses the federally mandated 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 report their consensus recommendations to the Commission's Grant Selection and Performance Task Force by assigning each application to one of the following categories:

- ♦ Strongly Recommend for Further Review (A comprehensive and thorough application of exceptional merit with numerous strengths; total score between 90 and 100)
- ♦ Recommend for Further Review (An application 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 (An application 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 (An application with serious shortcomings. There are numerous weaknesses and few strengths. Total score 59 or below)

Applications not recommended for further review are not 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. This review will include documents submitted for this competition plus prior grant performance information and data from information systems including:

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

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

The Task Force will use the following weighting and selection criteria during this phase: 25% Funding Priority Alignment, 10% Program Model, 15% Competition Preferences, 10% Financial Plan, 15% Fiscal Systems, 10% Past Performance, and 15% Grant Readiness for a possible total of 100 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 funding of any applications and may recommend that no proposal be submitted to the federal competition.

COMMISSION VOTE ON APPLICATIONS FOR FEDERAL COMPETITION

The Commission will authorize submitting the applications recommended as Maine entries in the federal competition at the regular December 2023 business meeting.

NATIONAL REVIEW PROCESS FOR COMPETITIVE APPLICATIONS.

The federal AmeriCorps agency has provided an extensive description of their criteria and review process. The weighted selection criteria are 50% for Program Design, 25% for Organizational Capacity, and 25% for Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

The major stages of review are compliance and eligibility, external review, internal review including assessment of budget compliance and review for prohibited activities, risk assessment, consideration of integrity and performance system information, and selection.

Attachment I, page 71, has the text from the federal NOFO that describes the federal agency process. The federal selection process typically concludes in late spring and grant awards are announced in May.

APPLICATION CONTENTS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

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

At the federal level, the following information for new and recompetiting applications will be published on www.americorps.gov/partner/funding-opportunities/funded-grants within 90 business days of grant awards: a list of all compliant applications submitted; executive summaries of all compliant applications; data extracted from the SF-424 Face Sheet; a blank template of the external review worksheet; a list of all external reviewers who completed the review process; and a summary of external reviewer comments for successful applications. Information about funded grants and subgrants is also available in USASpending.gov. Program narratives for successful applicants will be available on request.

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

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

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

III. Appeal of Grant Decisions

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

D. AMERICORPS PROGRAM DESIGN AND OPERATION



AmeriCorps is a national service program with three distinct branches:

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

AmeriCorps

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

The following chart shows a comparison of major program traits.

Comparison of AmeriCorps program types and grants (examples; not complete)	AmeriCorps State/National		AmeriCorps VISTA	AmeriCorps NCCC
	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 their education award to child(ren), stepchild(ren), grandchild(ren), or foster child(ren).	X	X		
There is no citizenship or specified resident status as a requirement for eligibility to serve in the program			X	

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

⁴ See page 25 for exceptions.

Comparison of AmeriCorps program types and grants (examples; not complete)	AmeriCorps State/National		AmeriCorps VISTA	AmeriCorps NCCC
AC State/National Grant types: CR= Cost Reimbursement Grant; FA= Fixed-amount Grant;	CR	FA		
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 25 years of age				X
Members generally need some college or a degree			X	

I. Online AmeriCorps Regulations and Guidance, and Performance Measures

There are two online resources applicants need to consult when designing a program.

OFFICIAL GUIDANCE. All AmeriCorps active Guidance is available on the agency's Guidance webpage: <https://www.americorps.gov/about/agency-overview/official-guidance>.

THE CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS. 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 (<https://ecfr.federalregister.gov/>).

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

National Performance Measures

A text document version of the information can be downloaded using this link:

<https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/FY%202024%20ASN%20Performance%20Measures%20FINAL.508.pdf>

⁵ Note that regulations direct states to establish their own policies in certain areas. This RFA contains applicable details and takes precedence over the minimum federal requirements.

II. AmeriCorps 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 is expanding the number of volunteers. On average, each AmeriCorps member recruits and manages 12 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 in order to overcome unusual demand or delay in accessing the service.
2. Providing new services to an organization’s clients/customers in order to address a new need or issue.
3. Extending a proven program model addressing a critical need to a new population or region.

In rural states, AmeriCorps programs often partner with near-by organizations whose mission and service interests are 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 by the AmeriCorps grantee using criteria outlined in 45 CFR 2522.475:

- a) The quality of the service program proposed to be supported locally by the 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) Such other criteria as the Corporation considers to be appropriate.

Grantee Share of Project. 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 grantee share (aka “match”). The match rate and requirements for Cost-Reimbursement grants are described on page 33 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 grantee share.

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 programs need some cash as part of the grantee 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.

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. 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).)

Some federal agencies have agreed that their funds may be used as part of the AmeriCorps grantee share. Because the allowable funds vary by program within each agency (HUD, OJJDP, Interior, Education, FEMA, etc.) please discuss the use of other federal funds with the awarding federal agency *prior to submitting* your AmeriCorps application. Have the agency document permission or concurrence in writing. Be sure that federal funds passed through by state agencies get the same pre-application permission if they are part of the grantee share.

Grantees that use other federal funds as local share should be aware they will have to track and report the amount and source of other federal funds on quarterly source of funds reports.

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

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

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

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

Recruiting Members. 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 AmeriCorps members understand what their duties will be, what is expected of them, and what training as well as supervision they will receive.

The federal agency has created a central recruiting site for AmeriCorps (see <https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/publicRequestSearch.do>). Funded grantees are able to establish accounts and receive applications from potential members directly through this portal *after* awards are final. There is also a nationwide site, ServiceYear.org, that specializes in connecting young adults with extended (full year or half) service opportunities. Maine AmeriCorps grantees use this site to reach young adults.

Member Service Terms. There are seven options for AmeriCorps members' terms of service, all of which must be completed within 12 months. The duration and intensity of their effort (a few hours a week to 40 hours per week) is determined by the amount and type of activity that needs to be done.

A single Member Service Year (MSY) is at least 1700 hours which a person 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. Some projects have a people who serve 10-12 months and add part-time AmeriCorps members for a "high activity" period. Examples would be weather-dependent service or after school when youth programs are in full operation.

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	33
Three Quarter time	1,200	0.70	No conversion	0.7	30.0	23.1
Half-Time	900	0.50	2 slots	0.5	22.5	17.5
Reduced Half-Time	675	0.381	2 slots	0.381	17	13
Quarter-Time	450	0.265	3 slots	0.265	11.25	9
Minimum-Time	300	0.212	4 slots	0.212	7.25	6

All operating proposals must accommodate at least the equivalent of 10 AmeriCorps Member Service Years (MSY)⁷ 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, AmeriCorps has stated it will award no more than 50 member positions (slots) to *new* grantees.

Service benefits those who serve, as well. Programs are required to provide training and development opportunities that equip AmeriCorps members with skills, knowledge, and abilities that will increase employment opportunities, an ethic of community service, and the leadership skills needed for active civic engagement. This Member Development is found in 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 Attachment H (page 68).

Examples of the essential volunteer program practices that pertain to 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 delivery;
- documentation of hours served and work accomplished;
- assignment to a supervisor; and
- orientation of the supervisor to the program goals and expectations.

III. Regulatory Requirements

45 CFR § 2522.100 (“What are the minimum requirements that every AmeriCorps program, regardless of type, must meet?”) has a description of many requirements. The items below are compiled from other sections and policies.

- An applicant for an operating grant must have completed sufficient planning so that all required program elements are ready to implement.
- Applicants must propose program designs that are either evidence-based or evidence-informed.

⁷ 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.

- The project start date is proposed by the applicant. The date may be delayed if the grant award is not fully executed prior to the proposed start date. AmeriCorps members may not be enrolled in the federal system prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps members may not begin service or have hours certified prior to enrollment.
- 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 funding applications for AmeriCorps or any other federal agency.
- 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. (Note: Because this equates to 340 hours for members in 1700 hour terms, many programs are able to put members through a certificate program related to service and future employment.)
- 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
- AmeriCorps members may not engage in prohibited activities. See page 10, Unallowable Activities. 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.
- All grantees must conduct National Service Criminal History Record Checks (NSCHCs) on any person receiving a living allowance, stipend, or national service education award, and on anyone (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary through a COST REIMBURSEMENT grant program, whether the costs are covered by federal or non-federal matching funds, regardless of their level of contact with a vulnerable population*. See Criminal History Record Check requirements outlined on page 29.

*Individuals under the age of 18 on the first day of service/work are not subject to NSCHC requirements.

An individual is not eligible to work or serve in a position subject to the NSCHC requirements if:

- the individual refuses to consent to a criminal history check;
- makes a false statement in connection with a criminal history check;
- is registered, or is required to be registered, on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; or
- has been convicted of murder, as defined in 18 U.S.C 1111.
- Programs are expected to fill all the member slots awarded in the grant and achieve a very high rate of retention. Continuation and re-competing grantees that have not achieved full enrollment and high retention in the prior year must provide an explanation and corrective action plan. Grantees with a history of under-enrollment and low enrollment are likely to receive a funding and slot decrease in subsequent years. Full-cost Fixed amount grantees are not reimbursed for unfilled positions.
- 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.⁸ Programs may recruit current volunteers to serve in AmeriCorps but may not eliminate the time or effort of volunteers by having AmeriCorps members perform their duties.
- Programs must report on three sets of aligned performance measures: Service activities, member development, and capacity building.

⁸ See 45 CFR 2520.35 for waiver information related to this requirement.

- Program service activities (outputs and outcomes) are to be 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 30 of this document.
- Operating Grants with annual AmeriCorps funding of \$500,000 or more are required to arrange for an independent external program impact evaluation. Grantees with lesser amounts must perform a program evaluation but may use internal resources. Appropriate budgeting for evaluation expense is expected.
- *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.
- There are restrictions on use of federal (AmeriCorps) funds (CFR §2540). See page 10, Unallowable Activities.

IV. Member Eligibility, Selection, and Accommodation

ELIGIBILITY TO SERVE IN AMERICORPS. AmeriCorps defines who may serve and requires grantees to document that Members selected are eligible to serve. An eligible member is an individual who:

- is a U.S. citizen, U.S. national or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States. See 45 CFR §2522.2 for the list of specific documents that are acceptable means of certification;
- is at least 17 years of age at the beginning 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 the member must be between the ages of 16 and 25, inclusive, or
 - b) in a program for economically disadvantaged youth as defined in 42 U.S.C. §12572 (a)(9), in which case they 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 the AmeriCorps agency 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 own members. The selection criteria must align with the program service roles and work to be performed as defined in member position descriptions. In all cases, however, selection must be conducted in a fair and non-discriminatory manner that complies with §2540 of the AmeriCorps rules.

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. Grantees are encouraged to select members who possess leadership potential, show commitment to the goals of the program, and reflect the diversity of the community served. Inclusive

recruitment should give talented candidates equal consideration regardless of education, work experience, economic background, language, age, or other characteristic.

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. Thus, someone who served in another AmeriCorps program may be recruited to serve. There are specific guidelines for determining whether they 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 service programs is an AmeriCorps goal. 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 potential AmeriCorps members can identify opportunities for themselves.

Program sites 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 to provide accommodations for members serving in an AmeriCorps program.

PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME. On June 17, 2008, H.R. 6081: the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act of 2008 (“the HEART Act”) was signed into law, making AmeriCorps more accessible to people with disabilities.

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

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

V. Member Benefits.

MEMBER LIVING ALLOWANCE. Only AmeriCorps members whose service assignments require an intense concentration of time (i.e., 40 hours or more weekly) 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 (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.

For positions requiring less than 1700 hours, the full living allowance is pro-rated. Note that regulations do not require programs pay a living allowance to members serving terms less than 1700 hours but at full-time intensity. Still, doing so is strongly encouraged due to the impact living allowances may have on retention of members. The table showing the number of weeks covered by each term when someone serves at full-time intensity can be found on page 23.

When a member's term of service requires only a few hours per week, a living allowance is not usually provided. College work-study benefits may comprise part of the living allowance for students who are AmeriCorps members. If the work-study benefit does not equal the full living allowance, then the program makes up the difference. In any case, the value of work-study for eligible members can be included as grantee 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. Programs may establish a living allowance based on local cost of living but may not offer different living allowance rates for the same term of service in the program. The cost may be shared between AmeriCorps and the grantee share.

Full-cost Fixed amount grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets but are still required to provide members a living allowance that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements. The budget instructions later in this document describe how to reflect the slots and funds needed.

EXCEPTIONS. Programs existing prior to the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (September 21, 1993) are not required to provide living allowances to members. If you choose to provide living allowances, it is exempt from the minimum requirement but not the maximum.

TERMS OF SERVICE, EDUCATION AWARD*, MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM LIVING ALLOWANCE RATES

SERVICE TERM	EDUCATION AWARD	MINIMUM LIVING ALLOWANCE	MAXIMUM LIVING ALLOWANCE
Full-time at least 1700	\$7,395	\$23,460	\$37,400
Three Quarter-time at least 1200	\$5,176.50	\$16,422 if 40 hrs/wk	\$26,180
Half-time at least 900	\$3,697.50	Not required	\$18,700
Reduced half-time at least 675	\$2,817.50	Not required	\$14,212
Quarter-time at least 450	\$1,959.68	Not required	\$ 9,724
Minimum-time at least 300	\$1,567.74	Not required	\$ 7,854

*The Education Award amounts for 2024-2025 are subject to change.

EDUCATION AWARDS. The value of the Education Awards is tied to the Pell Grant. 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 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 the education award to child(ren), stepchild(ren), grandchild(ren), or foster child(ren). 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: <https://americorps.gov/members-volunteers/segal-americorps-education-award> .

CHILD CARE. For full-time members who need childcare in order to participate, grantees must assist members in accessing the AmeriCorps childcare benefit (either childcare through an eligible provider or a childcare allowance in an amount determined by the federal agency). AmeriCorps makes direct payments to

childcare providers. Therefore, this benefit is **not paid** from the grantee budget and should not be included as an expense.

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

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

Programs may provide health insurance to 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) but 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.

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. Programs may not increase reimbursement amounts to cover the tax.

GRANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS. The AmeriCorps Grant Terms & Conditions and the General Terms and Conditions contain post-award details that should be considered in program design. Applicants should review these documents to understand the administrative systems that will be required. The documents in effect for 2023 are:

AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions:

<https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2023ASNProgram508TC.pdf>

General Terms and Conditions:

<https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/FY2023-General-Terms-Conditions-508-20221028.pdf>

Examples of requirements 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.

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

- ♦ The grantee must have adequate general liability coverage for the organization, employees and members, *including coverage of members* engaged in on- and off-site project activities.
- ♦ The grantee must withhold Federal personal income taxes from member living allowances, requiring each member to complete a W-4 form at the beginning of the term of service and providing a W-2 form at the close of the tax year. The grantee must comply with any applicable state or local tax requirements. Note that members are exempt from state unemployment coverage and not eligible for benefits at the end of service.
- ♦ Workers' Compensation is an allowable cost to the grant. Maine law does not require provision of workers' compensation for members although it is encouraged if the applicant's carrier offers the option. If a program opts not to provide workers' compensation, it must obtain Occupational Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance coverage for members to cover in-service injury or incidents.

- Unless exempted by the IRS, all AmeriCorps programs must pay FICA for any member receiving a living allowance even when AmeriCorps 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 unless Federal Work Study funding is part of the living allowance paid to an eligible work study student.
- Programs need to pay the living allowance in regular increments, such as weekly or bi-weekly. Payments may not fluctuate based on the number of hours served in a particular time period and must cease when a member ends service.
- Only individuals who are enrolled in an AmeriCorps position in a program that has been approved by the Corporation are eligible to receive AmeriCorps member benefits.

VI. Federal Grant Financial Management & Administration Requirements

As with all Federal grant programs, grantees funded by AmeriCorps are responsible for ensuring the appropriate stewardship of Federal funds entrusted to them. Under AmeriCorps 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 AmeriCorps agency regulations issued to implement the Part 200.

All applicants regardless of funding level, are required to submit the federal Operational and Financial Management Survey (Attachment G; page 65) for further information and direction.

Requests for Monitoring or Payment Integrity Information. AmeriCorps will request documentation from award recipients in order to monitor the grantee and award to ensure compliance with legal requirements, including the [Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019](#). Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on manual hold, reimbursement only status, or other remedies may be applied as appropriate.

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 program staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program funded by AmeriCorps. A National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) includes:

- A nationwide name-based check of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW.gov)
- Either a name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the candidate's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve or work; AND
- A fingerprint-based FBI check.

An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such AmeriCorps funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. **Programs should include funds to check each covered position in the program budget.** If these funds are not reflected in the budget, the applicant must state how these costs will be covered. This explanation should be entered under "Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy."

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

All aspects of the background check **MUST** be completed and adjudicated before any paid work or service time is recorded. Inability of a grantee to demonstrate that they have conducted an NSOPW and other required criminal history checks, as specified in AmeriCorps regulations, may result in significant disallowed costs.

See <https://www.americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/history-check> for complete information and FAQs.

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

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

VII. Data Collection and Management 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 the Commission with verifiable 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 Terms and Conditions.

VIII. 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.

IX. Performance Measures

Performance measurement is the process of systematically and regularly collecting and monitoring data related to changes (positive or negative) in communities, members, or end beneficiaries receiving program services. Performance measures track how much is being done (units of service; outputs), how often, for

what duration of time, by how many AmeriCorps members, for how many community beneficiaries, and how much change is occurring as a result (intermediate outcomes).

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

Service Activity options are in the National Performance Measure Instructions (<https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/FY%202024%20ASN%20Performance%20Measures%20FINAL.508.pdf>). Applicants may propose their own aligned set of measures if no suitable National Performance Measure exists. The Service Activity performance measures (output and outcome) must tie to the primary intervention of the program. A second performance measure can be submitted if it reflects an equally significant activity in the program. AmeriCorps does not want applicants to select performance measures for every activity or impact.

For applicant planning purposes, the Post Award performance measures are these:

Member Development (training and professional development), all programs will use these Commission-defined performance measures. Note the measurement instructions.

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

How to calculate/measure: Count of program sponsored/conducted events with pre/post or other assessments showing a majority of participants acquired service-related skills, knowledge, abilities.

How to collect data: To verify occurrence: Event agenda/curriculum outline with enrollment, date, instructor, duration, and location details. To verify increased skills, knowledge, abilities use an assessment of learner change

- **Outcome:** Number of AmeriCorps members demonstrating increased competency in skills or application of knowledge during their service activities.

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

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

For Capacity Building, all programs will use these Commission-defined performance measures. Note the measurement instructions.

- **OUTPUTS:** Number of organizations that applicants anticipate will benefit from volunteers recruited/managed by AmeriCorps members.
- **OUTCOME:** Number of additional direct service activities and/or units completed for organizations by volunteers recruited/managed by AmeriCorps members.

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

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

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

National service participants may not recruit volunteers to do activities that they themselves are prohibited from doing.

Note: All performance measures must be consistent with the program's narrative and logic model. AmeriCorps also values thorough data collection plans which 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 55.

X. Evaluation

EVALUATION VS. PERFORMANCE TRACKING AND DATA. Evaluation is a more in-depth, rigorous effort to measure program impact. It uses scientifically based research methods to assess the effectiveness of programs by comparing the observed outcomes with what would have happened without the program.

REQUIREMENTS DIFFER ACCORDING TO APPLICANT TYPE. AmeriCorps has set different evaluation requirements for the application narrative based on the applicant's experience with AmeriCorps. These differences do not carry over into data collection elements for performance measures and logic models which are universal requirements.

APPLICANT AMERICORPS EXPERIENCE AND EVALUATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

<i>What to submit →</i>	Evaluation Plan	Evaluation Results Report
<i>How to submit →</i>	Use "Evaluation Plan Template" Attachment J	Submit as digital attachment
Applicant with <u>no</u> prior AmeriCorps grant	n/a	n/a
Applicant funded for the first time within the past 5 years; this application is first recompetes and is for same project (see definition of same project on page 14)	X	n/a
Applicant funded for six or more years; this application is recompetes for the same project (see definition of same project on page 14)	X	X

All applicants will enter "N/A" in the eGrants "Evaluation Summary" field. Anyone required to submit evaluation plans must use the template provided (Attachment J, page 74) in this document. Evaluations must cover at least one year of AmeriCorps-funded service activity for the same project. The evaluation plan will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

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

- If the applicant's annual AmeriCorps agency program grant is \$500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external impact evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to AmeriCorps agency for competitive funds as required in §2522.730.

An evaluation is considered independent if it uses an external evaluator who has no formal or personal relationship with, or stake in, the administration, management, or finances of the grantee or of the program being evaluated. An impact evaluation is designed to provide statistical evidence of the impact of the program compared to what would have happened in the absence of the program (i.e. evaluations that include a comparison or control group). The evaluation should provide statistical evidence of how well a program works and what effect it has on service recipients and/or service participants compared to what would have happened in the absence of the program. In addition, high-quality evaluations must be designed to provide evidence of a causal relationship between program activities and outcomes (45 CFR § 2522.700). Grantees must use an experimental or quasi-experimental design. The evaluation method should match the size, scale, and purpose of the program. An impact evaluation should be guided by measurable and clearly defined research questions that identify the effect of program

participation on program service recipients and/or service participants for specific outcomes. The research questions and outcomes should be identified in the evaluation plan.

- If the applicant's annual AmeriCorps 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 AmeriCorps agency for competitive funds as required in §2522.730. The evaluation does not need to be an impact evaluation.

An evaluation is considered internal if it is conducted by an individual from the grantee's own organization or other stakeholders, such as board members, partners, or volunteer affiliates. Small grantees are not required to work with an external individual or entity, such as a university or research firm, to conduct their evaluation. However, grantees are encouraged to use evaluators with training and/or experience with rigorous evaluations and may use an independent evaluator, if preferred.

While AmeriCorps encourages small grantees to use the most rigorous evaluation design feasible, they are not required to conduct an experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation. When selecting a study design, grantees should consider the various options and select the design most appropriate for the program. Grantees may opt for a process, implementation, or impact evaluation

EVALUATIONS FOR RECOMPETING APPLICANTS. Grantees who continue to recompile for funding must continue to submit evaluation plans for each grant period, as well as evaluation reports documenting the results of their most recent evaluation, with their recompile applications. AmeriCorps expects that each subsequent evaluation will be developmentally appropriate for the program's lifecycle and will build on the findings from previous evaluation efforts in order to strengthen the evidence base for the program and make continuous improvements to the program.

ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPROACH. Recompeting state Grantees may be eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. Eligible applicants should submit an Evaluation Plan (Attachment J, page 74) plus the Alternative Evaluation Approach Request Form as additional documents. More information on alternative evaluation approaches and the request form can be found at:

https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2021_06_29_Alternative_Evaluation_Approach_Guidance_ASN.pdf

XI. 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. Include these tasks in the required host site agreements.

XII. Cost-per-Member

AmeriCorps 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 2024, these amounts are:

- Cost Reimbursement Grant - \$25,000 per MSY
- Fixed Price Grant - \$25,000 per MSY

XIII. Grantee Share 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 21.

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

The cost share between AmeriCorps and the grantee/applicant is figured using the total project cost.

Required Grantee Share Rates for Maine AmeriCorps State Operating Grants.

Grant Cycle	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
New Applicant First Operating Grant	70% AmeriCorps share 30% Grantee share	70% AmeriCorps share 30% Grantee share	70% AmeriCorps share 30% Grantee share
First Re-compete Grant Second Operating Grant	60% AmeriCorps share 40% Grantee share	60% AmeriCorps share 40% Grantee share	60% AmeriCorps share 40% Grantee share
Second Re-compete Grant Third Operating Grant	45% AmeriCorps share 55% Grantee share	45% AmeriCorps share 55% Grantee share	45% AmeriCorps share 55% Grantee share
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% AmeriCorps share, 60% Grantee share		

E. APPLICATION CONTENTS

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

I. eGrants Application System

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

Application narratives and budgets must be submitted through eGrants, the on-line grant application and management system developed by AmeriCorps. The system operates over the internet and can be accessed at <https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp>.

Applications received through eGrants will be reviewed, assessed, accepted or rejected by Volunteer Maine. Although the applications are submitted on the federal eGrants system, the federal agency does not have access to, nor the ability to view, applications 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) and select Option 3. They are available on the following schedule: Mon - Thurs, 9 am – 7 pm ET. Be prepared to provide your Application ID, your organization's name and the name of the federal NOFO (AmeriCorps State and National Competitive) to which your organization is applying.

II. Preparations

UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER AND SAM. Applications must include a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), which is generated as part of the SAM registration process.

All applicants must register with the federal System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/> and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If an applicant is awarded a grant, it must maintain an active SAM registration throughout the life of the award. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees.

SAM registration must be renewed annually. AmeriCorps suggests that applicants finalize a new registration or renew an existing one at least three weeks before the application deadline, to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. **Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and physical address on all grant applications to AmeriCorps. The legal applicant's name and physical address in eGrants must match exactly the applicant's SAM-registered information.**

AmeriCorps will not make awards to entities that do not have a valid SAM registration and Unique Entity Identifier. If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the time AmeriCorps is ready to make a federal award, AmeriCorps may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

The Grantee Administrator role in eGrants is the only user that can add the UEI to eGrants. The UEI is added to the organizational attributes page, and then will automatically populate onto all of the applications that are tied to the organization.

III. Starting an Application in eGrants

Applicants will need to establish an eGrants account if they have not submitted an application to AmeriCorps agency in another competition.

To set up a new eGrants account, an authorized person

1. goes to <https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp>
2. finds the gray text (middle of page) "Don't have an eGrants account? Create an account"
3. on the next screen, selects "Create a Grantee account" and follow the prompts.
4. information you will need to complete registration includes your organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) and Unique Entity Identifier.

Notes: Applicants are strongly encouraged to visit this eGrants **early** and set up the account. ***Anyone within the 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 text in parentheses are guides for making selections from the menus or lists.

- Under the header "Creating An Application" in the bottom left of your screen
 - Select
 - "New" if you are applying to AmeriCorps for the first time, are recompeting, or have been funded as a Formula program anytime in the last 5 years.
 - Select a program area (AmeriCorps)
 - *FY 2024 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission (New and Cont)* for Cost Reimbursement applications
 - Or
 - *"FY 2024 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission Fixed Amount, EAP (New and Cont)"* for Fixed amount applications
 - Select the state (Maine)
 - Select the State Prime ID (use the pull-down menu; there should be one Maine choice only)

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

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW. This Notice is **not** subject to [Executive Order 12372](#), “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

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

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

ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED IN EGRANTS. Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF424 Facesheet.

I. Applicant Info

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

II. Application Info

In the Application Info Section enter:

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

III. Narratives

IV. Logic Model

V. Performance Measures

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

VII. Continuation Changes

VIII. Clarification

IX. 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

- Be clear and succinct. Address the criteria in the order presented. Reviewers are interested in learning precisely what you intend to do, and how your project responds to the selection criteria. They want to understand the severity or prevalence of the need in your target geographic area not a national description of the problem. 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.
- 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.
- Don't make assumptions. *Most peer reviewers are not from Maine.* Do not assume application 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.
- 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.
- Use only uppercase letters for all section headings. Because eGrants is web-based, it does not recognize text formatting. Bold, bullets, underlines, or other types of text formatting as well as charts, diagrams, and tables DO NOT copy into eGrants. Do not use any of these in your application.

Application Page Limitations

- **Applications are limited to 10 double-spaced pages for the Narratives.** Sections included in this page count are SF424 Facesheet, the Executive Summary, Program Design, Organizational Capacity, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy sections **as the pages print out from eGrants.** To check the length, go to Review menu and use "View/Print" option.
- This limit **does not include** the Evaluation Summary and Plan narrative, Logic Model, Budget, Performance Measures, nor required supplementary digital materials. Do not submit items not required, they will not be considered or returned.
 - The Logic Model has its own specific 8-page limit. (Note each field in the logic model allows 3,990 characters. If all text remains within one row then you will find that your logic model is cut off at 6 1/4 pages. In order to have a full 8 pages you'll need to add rows.) Again, print using the menu option under Review.
- Reviewers will consider the number of pages as they print out from the Review tab in eGrants when determining compliance with any page limits and will not consider material submitted over the page limits, even if eGrants allows you to enter and submit text over the limit.
- *Note:* eGrants handles text differently than word processing programs so the page lengths are not comparable. The Commission will not consider the results of any alternate printing methods in determining whether an application complies with the page limits.

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

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

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

Please **enter N/A in these fields**. The verification step in eGrants will not allow you to submit unless this notation (N/A) is entered. These sections are not included in the page count.

Narrative Content

The outline below reflects aspects of AmeriCorps program design and operation that are most indicative of the likely success of an application. 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 (e.g., the commitment to include AmeriCorps in the program name and forming a community advisory board). Reviewers will also consider the weights assigned to each criterion.

Categories/Subcategories	Percentage
Executive Summary	0
Program Design	50
• Community and Logic Model	24
• Evidence Tier	12
• Evidence Quality	8
• Notice Priority	0
• Member Experience	6
Organizational Capability	25
• Organizational Background and Staffing	15
• Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility	4
• Member Supervision	6
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	25
• Member Recruitment	7
• Member Retention	8
• Data Collection	7
• Budget Alignment to Program Design	3

A. Executive Summary – (0 percent)

Do not deviate from this template. Fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary.

The [Name of the organization] will 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]. The AmeriCorps investment 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 enter the total amounts from the Source of Funds section of the budget narrative so the additional resources needed to operate the program are evident. See Sources of Funds section on p. 52.

In the interest of transparency and Open Government, AmeriCorps will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on <https://americorps.gov/partner/funding-opportunities/funded-grants>.

B. Program Design (50 percent/points)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the criteria below. Therefore, note the criteria and literally respond to it. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value. Be sure the Community and Logic Model incorporates the federal priorities of supporting communities historically excluded and/or

underserved from government services, addressing structural and institutional inequities, or increasing opportunity in order to achieve sustainable change in communities.

1. Community and Logic Model (24 points)

The applicant will provide a detailed summary of the community problem, including:

- The role current or historical inequities faced by underserved communities may play in contributing to the problem.
- The community need as it relates to the [CDC's Social Vulnerability Index and to communicate the severity and prevalence of the problem](#).

The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the organization's Logic Model. No narrative is needed other than what is contained within the logic model.

The applicant will depict in the Logic Model:

- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
 - Locations or sites in which members will provide services
 - Context in which the intervention is delivered (e.g., the setting where the intervention is delivered)
 - Number of AmeriCorps members who will deliver the intervention
 - Characteristics of AmeriCorps members, including specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required to implement the intervention
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
 - Duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention)
 - Dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)
 - Target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level)
- The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e., number of beneficiaries served, types and number of activities conducted, equity gaps closed). If applicable, identify which [National Performance Measures](#) will be used as output indicators.
- Outcomes that demonstrate meaningful changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur as a result of the intervention. If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators.

Note: The Logic Model is a visual representation of the applicant's program design. Applicants should include short, medium, or long-term outcomes in the Logic Model. Applicants are not required to measure all components of their Logic Model. The applicant's performance measures should be consistent with the program's Logic Model and should represent significant program activities.

Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization's performance data (e.g., program data observed over time that suggests targets are reasonable), relevant research (e.g. targets documented by organizations running similar programs with similar populations), or prior program evaluation findings.

Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention. Logic Model content that exceeds 8 pages will not be reviewed.

3. Evidence Base (20 points)

The assessment of an applicant's evidence base has two parts. First, the applicant will be assigned to an evidence tier (see definition of tiers, page 5). Second, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the degree to which it supports the proposed program design, including alignment with priority areas, will be assessed and scored.

Evidence Tier (12 points):

An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of understanding the relative strength of each applicant's evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the Logic Model.

In 2023, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 25 percent, Moderate 12 percent, Preliminary 20 percent, and Pre-Preliminary 43 percent. As these figures indicate, AmeriCorps values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. **Thus, applicants should not be deterred from applying for funding due to their current evidence level.**

Applicants who have outcome or impact evaluation reports of the same intervention described in the application (see Glossary, Terms and Definitions, page 5) may submit up to 2 of those reports, plus (if applicable) the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle, to qualify for the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tier. In order to qualify for consideration, the intervention evaluated in the submitted report(s) must match the intervention proposed by the applicant in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Community and Logic Model sections of the application:

- Characteristics of the beneficiary population including evidence of current or historic inequities facing the population;
- Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention;
- Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention, including all key components and activities;
- The context in which the intervention is delivered; and
- Outcomes of the intervention.

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

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

- (1) summarize the study design and key findings of any outcome or impact evaluation report(s) submitted and
- (2) describe any other evidence that supports their program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform their program design.

Applicants who submit evaluation reports for consideration must also describe, in the Evidence Base section of the application narrative, how the intervention described in the submitted reports is the same as the intervention described in the application.

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

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

If the evaluation reports submitted by the applicant do not meet the definitions in the definitions starting on page 5, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier.

Evidence Quality (8 points)

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

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

- The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.);

- The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years;
- The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries or AmeriCorps members in at least one key outcome of interest.

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

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

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

4. Notice Priority (0 points)

The narrative indicates whether the proposed program

- fits within one or more of the AmeriCorps funding priorities (see page 14).
- meets all requirements listed for that funding priority.

5. Member Experience (6 points)

In the narrative demonstrate how

- AmeriCorps members will be provided an opportunity to be leaders and gain skills during their term of service that will be valued by future employers (e.g., workforce pathways, increasing levels of responsibility and leadership roles for members).
- The applicant details how AmeriCorps members will be provided a high quality orientation to the community they will serve in that is from an asset based frame and guided and informed by the community.

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 (15 points)

In the narrative detail:

- The roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing, providing oversight, and monitoring the program.
- How the applicant has facilitated, partnered, or participated in educational or workforce development programs (including pre-apprenticeship or registered apprenticeship programs, work experience and job training programs, or other workforce training and development programs).
- The organization's mission and relevant experience in areas such as volunteer recruitment and management, community outreach, overcoming project implementation challenges, etc. names and credentials/qualifications of staff who will lead the program. If individuals are not known, the qualifications the organization will use to select the program leadership.

3. Member Supervision (6 points)

In the narrative demonstrate how

- AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service (e.g., structure for member supervision; cadence and format of supervisor/AmeriCorps

member check-ins, member and supervisor opportunities to assess strengths and opportunities for growth, member training plan, etc).

- AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations (e.g., structure for support of supervisors, training plan for supervisors related to supervision and AmeriCorps rules and regulations, cadence and format of AmeriCorps supervisors/their supervisors check ins, opportunities to assess strengths and opportunities for growth of supervisors, etc.).

D. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

Reviewers will assess the quality of the application's response using the following criteria.

1. Member Recruitment (7 points)

In the narrative describe how

- Budget expenses support successful recruitment of AmeriCorps members best suited to serve the community, for example from geographic or demographic communities in which the program operates.

2. Member Retention (8 points)

In the narrative describe how

- Budget expenses support retention of AmeriCorps members (e.g., additional member benefits such as increasing above the minimum living allowance, supporting workforce pathways, certifications, coaching for members, resume building, individual benefit as well as community building, network building, member recognition, alumni programming, etc.).

3. Data Collection (7 points)

In the narrative describe how

- Budget expenses support data collection, continuous improvement activities, and evaluation in service to evaluating the interventions and impact on the community and the member experience).

4. Budget Alignment to Program Design (3 points)

In the narrative describe how

- The applicant's budget is aligned to the program design outlined in the narrative, meaning activities discussed in the narrative are incorporated in the budget in the agency or applicant share.

Notes:

Volunteer Maine requires a minimum living allowance (\$23,460) above the Federal minimum living allowance (\$18,700). Applicants should specify the minimum living allowance offered to members.

Fixed amount grantees will not submit a detailed budget, however, the narrative should discuss how "other income" will support the items listed above.

E. Evaluation Summary or Plan

Read the information on page 32 to determine what evaluation requirements apply to your application.

All applicants will enter "N/A" in the eGrants "Evaluation Summary" field. Anyone required to submit evaluation plans must use the template provided (Attachment J, page 74) in this document. Evaluations must cover at least one year of AmeriCorps-funded service activity for the same project.

Evaluation Plans or Evaluations (when required) are submitted with additional required documents as described in part VIII Documents, below.

The evaluation plan will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

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 55, 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 AmeriCorps' assessment of the any strategic considerations or special initiatives.

For guidance and instructions on required service activity, member development, and capacity building performance measures, see page 30 of this document. To determine which service activity performance measures are appropriate for your proposal, follow this link to the federal menu of performance measures: https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/ASN_FY2023_PerformanceMeasures_508_072722.pdf

VII. Program Information

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

AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

Check priority area(s) that apply to the proposed program. Only select Priorities (see page 14) if they are described in the narratives, included in the logic model and outcomes, represent a significant part of the program focus, and reflect high quality program design. If the application is a local priority not related to the AmeriCorps priorities, select "No NOFO priority area."

Grant Characteristics

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

VIII. Documents

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

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

These documents must be submitted as email attachments by the application deadline. See page 16 for specific instructions on compiling, emailing, and labeling. Only emailed documents will be accepted.

- a. A copy of the program's SF424 facesheet printed from eGrants. This is the application cover page.
- b. A list of the documents you have submitted.
- c. Organizational chart for legal applicant showing where the proposed AmeriCorps program would reside.
- d. AmeriCorps Readiness Assessment (Attachment H, page 68)
- e. Research studies or evaluations *[for applicants claiming evidence tiers for the proposed program model of preliminary, strong, or moderate]*
- f. Evaluation Plan using federal form, if applicable (Attachment J, page 74)
- g. Independent or Internal Program Evaluation, if applicable

- h. Audit (with management letters and all findings) of legal applicant for the last completed fiscal year.
- i. Organization's most recently filed 990, if applicable
- j. A copy of the organization's negotiated indirect cost rate. If the applicant does not have one, please include a statement to this effect and indicate if the applicant organization has a cost allocation plan.
- k. Operational and Financial Management Survey (Attachment G, page 65)
- l. 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 AmeriCorps Office of Grants Management.
- m. Labor Union Concurrence or Displacement Assurance (if applicable; if not applicable, please include an explanation statement in order to avoid the appearance of omitting this consideration)

Labor Union Concurrence applies:

1) If a program applicant:

- a) Proposes to serve as the placement site for AmeriCorps members; and
- b) Has employees engaged in the same or substantially similar work as that proposed to be carried out by AmeriCorps members; and
- c) Those employees are represented by a local labor organization, then the application must include the written concurrence of the local labor organization representing those employees. Written concurrence can be in the form of a letter or e-mail from the local union leadership.

2) If a program applicant:

- a) Proposes to place AmeriCorps members at sites where they will be engaged in the same or substantially similar work as employees represented by a local labor organization, then the applicant must submit a written description of how it will ensure that:
 - i) AmeriCorps members won't be placed in positions that were recently occupied by paid staff
 - ii) No AmeriCorps member will be placed into a position for which a recently resigned or discharged employee has recall rights as a result of a collective bargaining agreement, from which a recently resigned or discharged employee was removed as a result of a reduction in force, or from which a recently resigned/discharged employee is on leave or strike.

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

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

IX. Funding and Demographics

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

- Other Revenue funds. Enter the amount of funds that your program uses to run the program that are not identified on the application budget as AmeriCorps share or grantee share (match). The amount should be the same as the amount entered as the total under Sources of Funds.
Note: Programs should not enter the total operating budget for their organization unless the entire operating budget supports the AmeriCorps program.
- Number of Volunteers Generated by AmeriCorps members. Please enter the number of volunteers participating in one day service projects or ongoing volunteer commitments that the proposed AmeriCorps members will generate.

X. Operating Sites

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

F. BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS: FIXED-AMOUNT GRANTS

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

Full-cost Fixed Amount Grant applicants request a fixed amount of funding per MSY. Therefore, these applicants are not required to complete a detailed budget or complete the “Grantee Share” column. However, you **must** select the **“Enter Source of Funds”** link at the top of the budget entry screen and identify all the source(s) and amount(s) of the additional revenue you will use to operate the program. Identify each 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-AmeriCorps resources supporting the proposed program.

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

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

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

MEMBER POSITIONS		CALCULATION STATEMENT			RESULTING MSYs
Number	Type	Number	Fractional value		
_____	1700 hours	_____	X 1.000	=	_____
_____	1200 hours	_____	X 0.700	=	_____
_____	900 hours	_____	X 0.500	=	_____
_____	675 hours	_____	X 0.3809524	=	_____
_____	450 hours	_____	X 0.26455027	=	_____
_____	300 hours	_____	X 0.21164022	=	_____
_____	100 hours	_____	X 0.07054674	=	_____
			Total Program MSYs		_____

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

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

_____ Total MSY X \$ _____ /MSY = _____ AmeriCorps Share

Under “Calculation,” you will enter the calculation for your grant request. Full-cost Fixed amount grants may request *up to* \$ 25,000 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 \$20,000 per MSY. Be sure to enter \$0 in the Grantee Share column or the system will not process the calculation.

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share	edit	del
Program Grant Request	21 MSY X \$20,000/MSY	\$ 420,000	\$ 420,000	\$0	view	
Subtotal		\$ 420,000	\$ 420,000	\$0		

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

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

G. BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS: COST REIMBURSEMENT

If you are applying for the first time, you must provide a Grantee Share (aka match) with cash or in-kind contributions at least 30% of the project's total cost. Total cost means Operating Costs (Section I) plus Member Costs (Section II) plus Administrative Costs (Section III). If you are recompeting, please see page 33 for the match schedule. For guidance on sources and types of local share/match, see page 21.

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

Notes:

- 1) The Corporation's legislation permits the use of non-AmeriCorps federal funds on the grantee share of the budget. The quarterly program income reports and Aggregate Financial Report (AFR) will be used to collect the data on use of other federal funds.
- 2) The value of the Segal Education Awards that members earn for their service **is not** part of the application 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.

Follow the detailed budget instructions below to prepare your budget. It is recommended you prepare your budget in the same order as indicated in the Budget Worksheets in Attachment D, page 58, because the format parallels the budget narrative section of eGrants. The eGrants system will create the budget summary automatically from the detailed budget narrative information you enter.

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

As you prepare your budget:

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

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

Section I. Program Operating Costs

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

A. Personnel Expenses

Under “Position/Title Description,” list each staff position separately and provide salary and percentage of effort as percentage of FTE devoted to this award. Each staff person’s role listed in the budget must be described in the application narrative and each staff person mentioned in the narrative must be listed in the budget as either AmeriCorps or Grantee share. Note: all personnel in the program, 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 the benefits 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 AmeriCorps -sponsored events/meetings. These include the Annual Grantee Training (central Maine), the Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference (October in central Maine), AmeriCorps Service Commitment Ceremony (fall), National Service Day at the Capitol (late winter), and quarterly in-person grantee meetings. Attendance at the regional conference of AmeriCorps grantees (Minneapolis in 2024) is required for program staff and fiscal staff of the legal applicant who are responsible for grant finances.

Sample Travel calculation: 2 staff to the Regional Conference in Minneapolis: (1 staff X \$1000 airfare) + (3 day @ \$400/day shared lodging + \$35 per diem per person) + \$50 shared ground transportation =\$2,355 for regional conference.

C. 2. Member Travel

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

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

D. Equipment

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

E. Supplies

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

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 without the logo must be purchased with non- AmeriCorps agency funds.

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.

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, human resource management, volunteer administration, etc.) If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate.

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

G. 2. Member Training

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

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

H. Evaluation

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

I. Other Program Operating Costs

Allowable costs in this budget category should include when applicable:

- NSOPW and criminal history background checks are required for all members and for all employees or other individuals who receive a salary, education award, living allowance, or stipend or similar payment from the grant (federal or non-federal/ match share and personnel included as in-kind). Include the cost for these checks for staff and members. Program consultants and contractors are not required to have criminal history background checks. If the number of positions under personnel and members does not equal the funding budgeted, add an explanation of the difference in the formula field. The NSOPW cost is \$7.50 per person and \$39 per person will cover a criminal history background check.
- Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
- Utilities, telephone, Internet and similar expenses that are specifically used for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps project staff and are not part of the organization's indirect cost/admin cost allocation pool. If such expenses are budgeted and shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
- Recognition costs for members. List each item and provide a justification in the budget narrative. Gifts, including gift cards, 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." The grantee share 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 portions between AmeriCorps Share and grantee share as needed. The minimum and maximum living allowance amounts can be found in the table on [page 27](#).

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 the slot and education award by entering the number of members in each category under "without living allowance."

B. Member Support Costs

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

- **FICA for Members.** Unless exempted by the IRS, all projects must pay FICA for any member receiving a living allowance, even when the Corporation does not supply the living allowance. If exempted, please note in the narrative. In the first column next to FICA, indicate the number of

members who will receive FICA. Calculate the FICA at 7.65% of the total amount of the living allowance.

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

Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs

Definitions

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

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

Applicants choose one of three methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a AmeriCorps -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 AmeriCorps's regulations at 45 C.F.R. 2517.710, no more than 5% of the total AmeriCorps funds actually expended may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants. Applicants with negotiated indirect cost rates can apply to grantee share, the difference between the full indirect amount and the 5% AmeriCorps claim.

Applicants who chose to use the Corporation Fixed Percentage will enter the line item details in Section III.A. Applicants who have a Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate or are using a De Minimis Rate will enter the line item details in Section III.B.

Option A. Corporation-Fixed Percentage Method

Five Percent Fixed Administrative Costs Option

The AmeriCorps -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 fixed percentage rate method (Section IIIA in eGrants), administrative costs are charged at a fixed 5% of the total of the AmeriCorps 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 AmeriCorps grant share for Section III and at the same time determine the allocation between the grantee and Commission use these formulas:

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

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

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 AmeriCorps 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 AmeriCorps 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 AmeriCorps. 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.). AmeriCorps 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 de minimis rate, including both the CNCS and Grantee shares. MTDC includes all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs. Once you determine the base, multiply the appropriate costs by 0.10. This will determine the total amount of costs allowable in this section.

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

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

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

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

3. To determine the Grantee match share: Subtract the total amount calculated in step 2 (the AmeriCorps 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 Applications, paragraph (d)(1)(B)) and who receive less than \$35 million in direct federal funding, may indefinitely use a de minimus rate of 10%. Under AmeriCorps rules, the calculation of the 5% maximum AmeriCorps share *does* include member living allowances and benefits BUT the grantee share must use modified total direct costs which exclude those items.

Section IV. Source of Funds

After completing indirect cost information in Section III of the budget, complete the Sources of Funds section. Identify each source of the grantee share separately and provide a brief description of the source. Include dollar amount, the match classification (Cash, In-kind, or Not Available), source type (Private, State/Local, Federal, Other or Not Available), and status (secured, proposed) for your **entire Grantee Share- cash and in-kind**. 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 subsequent years, are maintained. See match rates for recompetiting applicants on page 33. (45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90 has the regulatory minimums).

H. REVIEW, AUTHORIZE, AND SUBMIT EGRANTS SECTIONS

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

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

- Review
- Authorize
- Assurances (<https://egrants.cns.gov/cnsmisc/EASSUR.HTM>)
- Certifications (<https://egrants.cns.gov/cnsmisc/eCerts.htm>)
- 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 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 the applicant's authorized representative is not the author of the grant application, the authorized representative 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 other name that may appear and show on the application as the Authorized Representative.

ATTACHMENT A: SAMPLE VIEW OF FACESHEET GENERATED BY EGRANTS (EGRANTS INSERTS DATA USING APPLICANT INFO AND APPLICATION INFO SECTIONS)

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

Standard Form 424 (Rev. 2-2007) Prescribed by OMB Circular A-102

1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION:

☒ Application ☒ Non-Construction

2. a. DATE SUBMITTED:

3. a. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE:

3. b. STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:

2. b. APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:

4. a. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:

4. b. FEDERAL IDENTIFIER: (Staff Only)

5. APPLICANT INFORMATION

5. a. LEGAL NAME:
5. b. ORGANIZATIONAL DUNS:
5. c. ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT (DEPARTMENT/DIVISION):

5. e. NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF PERSON TO BE CONTACTED
ON
MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area code):
NAME:

5. d. ADDRESS (give street address, city, county, state and zip code):
STREET:
CITY: COUNTY:
STATE: COUNTRY:

TELEPHONE NUMBER: () -
FAX NUMBER: () - EMAIL:
INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS:
WEBSITE:

6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN):

7. a. TYPE OF APPLICANT: (enter appropriate letter in box)

A. State H. Independent School District ☐
B. County I. State Controlled Institution of Higher
Learning
C. Municipal J. Private University
D. Township K. Indian Tribe
E. Interstate L. Individual
F. Intermunicipal M. Profit Organization
G. Special District N. Private Non-Profit Organization
O. Federal Government P. HQ Internal Organizations
Q. State Education Agency R. Territory
S. Other (specify) _____
7. b. CNCS APPLICANT CHARACTERISTICS Enter appropriate codes:

8. TYPE OF APPLICATION

☐ NEW ☐ NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE
☐ CONTINUATION ☐ REVISION

If Revision, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es):

A. AUGMENTATION B. BUDGET REVISION:

C. NO COST EXTENSION to (enter date)

E. OTHER (specify)

9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY:

Corporation for National and Community Service

10. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER:

11. a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT:

12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):

13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE:

ENDING DATE:

14. Performance Period (Staff Use Only)

15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Check applicable box: Yr 1: ☐ Yr.2: ☐ Yr. 3: ☐

a. FEDERAL	\$
b. APPLICANT	\$
c. STATE	\$
d. LOCAL	\$
e. OTHER	\$
f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$
g. TOTAL	\$

16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS?

a. YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE

TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS

FOR

REVIEW ON:
DATE

b. NO. ☒ PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372

17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT?

☐ YES If "Yes," attach an explanation. ☐ NO

18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.

a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:

b. TITLE:

c. TELEPHONE NUMBER:

d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:

e. DATE SIGNED:

ATTACHMENT B: COMMUNITY AND 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 8 page limit.** See page 39 for Community and Logic Model Criteria.

Problem	Project Resources	Service Activity/ Intervention	Evidence of Project Implementation and Participation	Evidence of Change		
PROBLEM	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES		
				Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
<i>The community problem that the program activities (interventions) are designed to address</i>	<i># and slot type of AmeriCorps members and characteristics of AmeriCorps members including specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required to implement the intervention</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 of 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 FOR 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 AmeriCorps focus areas and objectives.
- Show MSY and member allocations.
- Create the required performance measure(s).
- Set targets and describe data collection instruments and strategies for your performance measures.

Home Page

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

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

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

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

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

Objectives Tab

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

An expandable list of AmeriCorps focus areas appears on this tab. When you click on a focus area, a list of objectives appears. A list of common interventions appears under each objective. First click on a focus area. Then click on an objective. Only the performance measures that correspond to the objectives you select on this tab will be available for selection as you continue through this module. To see which performance measures correspond to which objective, refer to the Performance Measure Instructions.

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

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

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

MSYs/Members Tab

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

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

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

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

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

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

Performance Measure Tab

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

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

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

Provide a short, descriptive title for your performance measure.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Data Collection Tab

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

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

Expand each output and outcome and enter data collection information.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Summary Tab

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

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

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

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

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

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

ATTACHMENT D: COST REIMBURSEMENT BUDGET WORKSHEET

Section I. Program Operating Costs

A. Personnel Expenses

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

B. Personnel Fringe Benefits

Purpose/Description	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals				

C.1. Staff Travel

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals				

C. 2. Member Travel –

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals				

D. Equipment

Purpose	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

E. Supplies

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals				

F. Contractual and Consultant Services

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

G.1. Staff Training

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

G.2. Member Training

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

H. Evaluation

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

I. Other Program Operating Costs

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

Subtotal Section I:	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share

ATTACHMENT E: FIXED AMOUNT GRANT BUDGET WORKSHEET

Complete the fields for the # w/o Allowance and Allowance Rate only.

Member Positions

Item	# Mbrs	Allowance Rate	# w/o Allow	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share		
Full-time (1700 hrs)								
Three quarter-time (1200 hrs)								
Half-time (900 hrs)								
Reduced Half-time (675 hrs)								
Quarter-time (450 hrs)								
Minimum-time (300 hrs)								
Abbreviated-time (100 hrs)								
Subtotal							M S Y	Co st/ MS Y

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Program Grant Request				
Subtotal				

Source of Funds

Match	Description

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

A feature in eGrants allows users to input Indirect Cost Rate information into their eGrants account. Grantees claiming indirect costs on AmeriCorps 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](#)).

Item	# Mbrs	Allowance Rate	# w/o Allow	Total Amount	CNC S Share	Grantee Share		
Full-time (1700 hrs)								
Three quarter-time (1200 hrs)								
Half-time (900 hrs)								
Reduced Half-time (675 hrs)								
Quarter-time (450 hrs)								
Minimum-time (300 hrs)								
Abbreviated-time (100 hrs)								
Subtotal							MSY	Cost/MSY

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:

Managing My Account

Click on the links below to access common account functions.

My Account ➔

Commission Input on National Applicants ➔

Commission Competitive Subapplication Ranking ➔

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**

My Account

cancel

Add and View Indirect Cost Rate

To view an existing indirect cost rate for your organization click, 'view'. To add a new rate click, 'add a new'. Once a rate is saved it cannot be modified. If you identify a rate already saved that does not present accurate information, correct the record by using the "add a new" function to re-enter the accurate information. The saved date for the new information will identify that the more recent entry presents the more recent accurate information.

Indirect Cost Rate ? **add a new**

Saved Date	Rate Type	Start Date	End Date	Extended ?	Rate as %	view

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

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

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

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

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

5) Rate Type:
Federally Negotiated – select if your rate has been negotiated by your cognizant federal agency. Cognizance is determined by the agency which provides the highest amount of direct federal funding;
State Negotiated – select if your rate has been negotiated by a state agency or other pass through entity; or
10% of MTDC – select if your organization qualifies for & elects to use the 10% *de minimus* rate of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). Organizations qualify for this rate if they have

NEVER had a federally negotiated rate. State entities must also not receive more than \$35 million in direct federal funding.

Rates must be used consistently across ALL federal awards.

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

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

7) Acceptance Date. Enter a valid date.

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

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

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

9) Effective From. Enter a valid date.

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

10) Effective To. Enter a valid date.

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

11) No Expiration. Check or leave unchecked.

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

12) Extended? Respond Yes or No.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

17) Order of Rates - Once an entry is saved, users will be able to see the rates they have entered.

Rates will display in the order of entry. Entry of rates will provide users and AmeriCorps with a historical record which can be used to clarify indirect cost rate inquiries for monitoring, consistent record maintenance, and audits.

ATTACHMENT G: OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SURVEY

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

General Information	
Organization Legal Name	
Date of Survey	
EIN	
City, State Associated with EIN	
UEI (Unique Entity Identifier) Number	
CFDA Number Associated with Funding Opportunity	
Operational Management	
<p>The policies identified below address some of the most critical elements for administration of a federal grant. As a recipient of federal funds, organizations are required to have a full complement of programmatic, financial, and administrative policies, as well as internal controls in place, as applicable. Policies and procedures should be reviewed and refined, as applicable, at least once every two years. Should the applicant receive federal funding from the AmeriCorps agency, full copies of the policies and procedures may be requested for monitoring purposes.</p> <p>Please indicate whether the organization has current written policies and procedures in the following areas (answer Yes or No):</p>	
Personnel/Employee Handbook	
Financial/Internal Controls	
Sub-award Monitoring and Oversight	
Timekeeping	
Travel Guidance, including purchase/travel credit card use	
Procurement	
Standards for Use of Federal Funds	
Code(s) of Conduct/Ethics, applicable to employment/purchasing	
Document Retention	
<p>Please indicate the training areas below that are provided to employees by the organization (answer Yes or No)</p>	
Personnel/HR Issues	
Financial Accounting	
Risk Management	
Cyber-security	
Fraud, Waste, and Abuse	
Is the organization familiar with the cost principles (Uniform Guidance – 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?	
Financial Management	
	(Yes, No, narrative text)
Are financial reports (profit and loss, budget vs. actual, etc.) provided to and reviewed by leadership level staff, at least quarterly?	
Does the organization use an automated accounting system?	
Is there a chart of accounts?	
What books of account are maintained: General Ledger, Project Cost Ledger, Cash Receipts Journal, Cash Disbursements Journal, Payroll	

Journal, Income (sales) journal, Purchase Journal, General Journal, Other	
Can the organization's accounting system separate the receipts and payments of a federal grant from the receipts and payments of the organization's other activities supported by separate funding streams?	
If a separate account is not maintained, can the federal grant/cooperative agreement funds and related expenses be readily identified?	
Does the accounting system provide for documenting and recording the in-kind value or goods and services contributed to grant or contract projects?	
Can the organization's accounting system summarize expenditures from a federal grant according to different budget categories such as salaries, rent, supplies, and equipment?	
How often does the organization post transactions to the accounting system ledger(s)? (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually)	
Are time distribution records maintained for each employee to account for total effort (100%)?	
Does the organization use an automated payroll system?	
Does your organization use electronic fund transfers to make or receive payments?	
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	
Has the organization issued loans to an employee or officer of the organization or forgiven/written-off any loans or debts in the last year?	
Please identify who is authorized to write-off any debt owed to the organization as a bad debt. (accountant, CFO, CEO/ED, Board Committee, Board Chair)	
Has the organization experienced cash flow deficits at any point in the previous 2 years?	
Please indicate whether organizational leadership approval is required for any of the following financial transactions (answer Yes or No):	
Opening/Closing Bank Accounts	
Opening Lines of Credit	
Assigning Credit Cards	
Buying/Selling Property	
Financial Investment/Divestment	
Are the duties of the bookkeeper/record keeper separated from cash functions (receipt or payment of cash)?	
Are checks signed by individuals whose duties exclude recording cash received, approving vouchers for payment and payroll preparation?	
Are accounting entries supported by appropriate documentation (e.g., purchase orders, vouchers, etc.)?	
Are employees who handle funds bonded against loss by reasons of fraud or dishonesty?	
Compliance	
Has the organization received federal funds for similar programs or projects?	
If so, has your organization met federal program requirements for similar programs?	
Has an audit been performed on the organization's financial accounts?	
If so, when?	
If so, what was the audit opinion? (modified, unmodified, adverse, n/a)	

Was this audit conducted in accordance with OMB Uniform Guidance?	
If no, what procedures were followed?	
If applicable, has the organization addressed any outstanding deficiencies identified in the most recent audit?	
Please provide any clarifications or similar remarks/information in the section below (optional):	
Accounting System	
General Information	
Has your organization received a federal cost-reimbursement award in the last two years?	
If yes, what is your cognizant federal oversight agency? (provide agency name, telephone, contact name, and email)	
Please indicate the fiscal year of your organization:	
What is the audit schedule for your organization (annual, biennial, other)?	
Does your organization have a negotiated indirect cost rate with a state or federal agency?	
If yes, what is the cognizant agency?	
Please attach a copy of your most recent letter form this agency	
Has the Internal Revenue Service granted final approval for tax exempt status?	
Under which IRS code did your organization file? (501©3, 501©4, other)	
Please provide a copy of your organization's Articles of Incorporation or governing document in which its purpose and mission is codified.	Comments:
On what date was your organization's last 990 filed?	
Does the name of the organization filing the 990 exactly match the name of the legal applicant submitting this proposal?	
If no, what name does appear on the 990?	
Preparer's Certification	
Preparer's Name (First, Last)	
Preparer's Position Title	
I certify that the above information is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and ability.	
Date of Certification	

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

ATTACHMENT H: AMERICORPS READINESS ASSESSMENT

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

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

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

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

			26. Does your organization have more than 2 significant sources of operating funds?
			27. Does your organization have an active board of directors or other governing body?
			28. Does your organization have written administrative and personnel policies and procedures?
			29. Does staff understand and consistently follow the written policies and procedures?

Section 2. Grant Management Experience

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

Title of Grant described in this report:

Funder name:

Public or Private:

Funder address:

Funder Program or Grant Officer (name):

Email of Program or Grant Officer:

Business phone of Program or Grant Officer:

Total Grant Performance Period (start and end dates):

Grant Finances:

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

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

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

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

Number of beneficiaries served during grant period:

Were local volunteers involved in conducting activities under this grant?

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

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

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

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

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

Section 3. Essential Practices of Volunteer Management

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

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

ATTACHMENT I: FEDERAL APPLICATION REVIEW

I. Review and Selection Process

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

a. Review and Selection Process

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

b. Compliance and Eligibility Review

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

- Is an eligible organization.
- Is eligible to apply to apply for a full cost fixed grant
- Is eligible to submit directly to AmeriCorps.
- submitted an application by the submission deadline.

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

c. Application Review

External Review.

External Reviewers will assess applications based on the Program Design, Organizational Capability, Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, and Evidence Selection Criteria (E.1). AmeriCorps will recruit and select reviewers on the basis of demonstrated expertise in AmeriCorps State and National programming and/or the Focus Areas, as well as experience assessing applications. All External Reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

Internal Review

AmeriCorps will review and assess the input from State Service Commissions regarding National Direct applications. Staff will also assess budget compliance and review for prohibited activities.

Post-Review Quality Control

After the initial review process is complete, AmeriCorps staff will review the initial results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Post-Review Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review will be used to ensure fairness and provide assurances that an application was not disadvantaged in the original review.

Pre-Award Risk Assessment

AmeriCorps staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant to assess an applicant's ability to manage federal funds. This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If AmeriCorps determines that an award will be made to an applicant with assessed risks, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. Applicants may not be selected for funding if AmeriCorps determines that the applicants risks cannot be mitigated.

In evaluating risks, AmeriCorps may consider the following, but not limited to:

Due diligence:

- Federal debt delinquency.
- Suspension and debarment.

- Information available through OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
 - US Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services.
 - “Do Not Pay”
 - System for Award Management (SAM).
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance and findings of any other available audits or investigations.
- IRS Tax Form 990.
- Oversight.gov
- Public Litigation Records.

Operational and financial management

- Financial stability.
- Operational and Financial Management Survey.

Past Performance

- the applicant's record in managing previous AmeriCorps agency awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
 - Timely compliance with applicable reporting requirements.
 - Accuracy of data reported.
 - Validity of performance measure data reported
 - Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients.
 - Timely closeout of other awards.
 - Meeting match requirements.
 - Extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards.
 - Meeting national service criminal history check compliance.

Other Programmatic Risk, Financial, Organizational, Compliance, and Fraud including:

- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website.

f. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information.

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

Any applicant may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM.gov 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 SAM.gov.

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

II. Selection for Funding

The review and selection process is designed to:

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

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

- AmeriCorps Funding Priorities
- Meaningful representation of
 - Rural communities
 - innovative community strategies
- CEO discretion to advance strategic goals

AmeriCorps will assess an applicant's strategic considerations. Applicants must check the relevant boxes in the Program Information tab in AmeriCorps' web-based management system. Applicants should only check the boxes if the strategic consideration is a significant and intentional part of their program design and if implementation strategies are described in the application.

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.

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

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

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

III. Applicant Resolution

AmeriCorps may ask an applicant for information after notification of competition results to resolve any issues prior to award. AmeriCorps will ask all grantees for a written compliance implementation plan that includes notification of waste, fraud, and abuse to the agency's OIG. An applicant's failure to respond adequately and in a timely manner may result in the removal of its application from the award process.

IV. Feedback to Applicants

Each compliant applicant will receive feedback from the review of its application

V. Transparency in Grant-making

AmeriCorps is committed to transparency in grant-making. A list of all approved applications for new and re-competing applications will be published on [AmeriCorps Funded Grants](#) within 90 business days after all grants are awarded.

Submitted program narratives, executive summaries, a blank template of the external review worksheet, and a list of all external reviewers who completed the review process for successful applications will be available upon request via email to AmeriCorpsOGA@cns.gov.

Further information about funded grants and subgrants is also available in [USASpending.gov](https://www.usaspending.gov).

ATTACHMENT J: EVALUATION PLAN

Organization Name: *Click or tap here to enter text.*

Program Name: *Click or tap here to enter text.*

Application ID: *Click or tap here to enter text.*

Instructions: Fill in the relevant sections of your evaluation plan under the headings below (you may delete the italicized text). If you wish to request an Alternative Evaluation Approach (AEA), an AEA Request Form must be submitted in addition to this document.

Introductory Sections and Program Description

1.1 Theory of Change

Describe the nature of your service activities (interventions) and why they are expected to produce the desired outcomes. This section should be short but include enough detail to assess how well the proposed evaluation aligns with your program model. The content of this section can be adapted from the Theory of Change section of your grant application.

1.2 Scope of the Evaluation

State concisely the goal(s) of the evaluation and specify which service activity/ies will be assessed. AmeriCorps does not require you to evaluate all components of your theory of change; your evaluation may focus on a sub-set of program activities.

2. Evaluation Outcome(s) of Interest

List the outcome(s) your evaluation will measure. Outcomes must align with the theory of change and scope in #1 and must be feasible to measure, based on the source(s) of data needed and level of effort required. Given the length of a single grant cycle, it can be challenging to evaluate long-term program outcomes; evaluating short- and medium-term program outcomes may be more practical.

For impact evaluations and non-experimental outcome evaluations, outcomes must involve a change in knowledge, attitude, behavior, or condition. Metrics that measure the amount of service provided (e.g. number of students tutored/volunteers recruited/organizations served) should not be listed as outcomes for this type of evaluation.

3. Research Question(s)

List the research question(s) that will guide your evaluation. Research questions must be clearly connected to the outcomes in #2 and aligned with the theory of change and scope in #1.

For impact evaluations, research questions must:

- involve a comparison between beneficiaries receiving the intervention or aspect of the intervention being studied (program/treatment group) and those that do not receive the intervention or aspect of the intervention (comparison/control group)
- compare data on the outcome(s) of interest for both groups (i.e., program/treatment and comparison/control) at two different time points, preferably at baseline (pre-intervention) and follow-up (post-intervention)

4. Evaluation Design

4.1 Evaluation type

State the type(s) of evaluation design that will be used, and explain why this is the most appropriate design to achieve the evaluation goal(s) in #1 and answer the research question(s) in #3. Possible evaluation designs include but are not limited to:

- Process or implementation evaluation
- Non-experimental outcome evaluation
- Quasi-experimental design (QED) evaluation
- Randomized controlled trial (RCT) evaluation

For impact evaluations, the evaluation must include a QED or RCT design.

4.2 Control or Comparison Group Formation (if applicable)

For a non-experimental evaluation that will use a comparison group, describe the group that will be used and explain why this selection is appropriate.

For a QED study, describe the approach for identifying a matched comparison group (e.g., propensity score matching, nearest-neighbor matching, etc.). Include the procedures for identifying a pool of similar individuals, organizations, or locations from which to draw a comparison group. Also include a description of the procedures and a list of the variables (covariates) you will use to match treatment and comparison groups, including either a baseline measure of the outcome (e.g., pre-intervention outcome score) or a proxy measure for the outcome of interest (e.g., grade point average to estimate future HS graduation).

For an RCT study, describe the eligibility criteria for inclusion in the study and the randomization process, which will result in two or more study groups (i.e., treatment and control).

5. Sampling Methods

5.1 Sample Selection

Describe the population from which the sample will be drawn, the estimated sample sizes for treatment and (if applicable) comparison groups, and how the sample will be selected (i.e., sampling procedures and/or eligibility criteria). Specify any consent procedures (i.e., parental/guardian consent, opt-in/opt-out) or data use agreements that will be necessary to gather or obtain data.

5.2 Sample Size Justification

For non-experimental evaluations, explain the basis for selecting the sample sizes in #5.1 and how the size will be adequate to answer the research questions.

For impact evaluations, describe how a power analysis was used to determine (1) how large a sample is needed to enable statistical tests that are accurate and reliable (i.e., required minimum sample size), and (2) the likelihood the statistical tests used in the analysis will be able to detect effects of a given size in a particular situation. Include detail on the assumptions used to conduct the power analysis (including how a minimum detectable effect size (MDES) was identified) and specify the results of the power analysis. If subgroup analyses are anticipated, ensure that the sample size is sufficient to allow for these analyses.

6. Data Collection Procedures, Data Sources, and Measurement Tools

Describe each data source and measurement tool and the procedures that will be used to collect or extract data, including when, how often, and by what mode (i.e., paper/pencil, phone, or web survey; administrative data extract). Explain how the proposed data sources and tools are adequate for addressing all of the research question(s) and how the data align with the evaluation's outcome(s) of interest.

7. Analysis Plan

Describe an analysis that is appropriate for the evaluation's design and data sources (e.g., statistical testing for quantitative data or descriptive analysis methods for qualitative data). Explain how the analysis will address all of the evaluation's research questions.

For impact evaluations:

- Describe how you will use multivariate analysis techniques (e.g., M/ANOVA or ANCOVA or regression models) for analyzing the pre-post data for the purpose of answering the research questions; t-tests of statistical significance are not sufficient because covariates cannot be utilized for these statistical tests.
- Describe how baseline equivalency test(s) will be conducted to demonstrate that the sample groups (i.e., treatment and comparison/control) do not differ significantly at baseline or, if differences exist, how the necessary statistical adjustment will be made to address any group differences identified.

8. Evaluator Qualifications

Describe how the person(s) who will conduct the evaluation are sufficiently qualified to conduct the proposed evaluation (e.g., have experience and technical qualifications that align with the planned evaluation design). If the evaluator is not yet identified or hired, describe the required and/or preferred qualifications for an evaluator.

For impact evaluations, an external evaluator is strongly recommended and may be required by the terms of your grant award.

9. Timeline

Provide a timeline for all of the major evaluation activities (e.g., finalizing evaluation design, hiring evaluator, developing data collection instruments, collecting pre-intervention data, collecting post-intervention data, analyzing data, writing report). Delineate the timeline by month and year or on a quarterly basis (e.g., fall 2020, spring 2020). The timeline must show how all evaluation activities and a final report will be completed before your next recompetes application.

AmeriCorps recommends using the first program year for evaluation planning (including gaining final approval of the plan) and data collection instrument development; the second program year for data collection; and the remaining time in the third program year to analyze data and complete the evaluation report. Since grantees have unique programs and recompetes application deadlines may vary by state, exact evaluation timelines may vary.

10. Budget

Specify the overall budget allotted for the evaluation, including the cost of engaging an external evaluator if applicable. If you will be utilizing staff time for conducting an internal evaluation, provide a description of those in-kind resources.