AmeriCorps

RFA #202601014

MAINE AMERICORPS STATE COMPETITIVE GRANTS

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES

RFA Coordinator	*All communication regarding this RFA <u>must</u> be made through the RFA Coordinator identified below.* **Name:** Jamie McFaul **Title:** Proposal Coordinator **Contact Information:** service.commission@maine.gov 32 Blossom Lane, 105 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0105 207-624-7792
Information Session	*There will be a virtual information session to answer questions about AmeriCorps and this grant application. Registration is required and can be done via the link below.* **Date:** February 12 at 11:00 am - 12:00 pm, local time **Registration link:** https://mainestate.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Hk0ltIMQQF6JAD673LOceg
Submitted Questions Due	*All questions <u>must</u> be received by the RFA Coordinator identified above by:* **Date:** February 17, 2026, no later than 4:00 p.m., local time
Proposal Submission	*Proposals <u>must</u> be received by the Division of Procurement Services by:* **Submission Deadline:** February 24, 2026, no later than 4:00 p.m., local time. *Proposals <u>must</u> be submitted electronically in the federal eGrants system and additional documents must be submitted on VSS:* Vendor Self Service System

From the time this RFA is issued until proposal 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 bidding process, at the State's discretion.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

The following terms and acronyms in this RFA shall have the meaning indicated below:

The **AmeriCorps State and National Mandatory Supplemental Information** *is intended to provide applicants with additional information for the preparation of their applications under the AmeriCorps State and National Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity. The Supplemental Information provides both detailed definitions of certain terms included in the Notice as well as additional details regarding how to properly file an application under the Notice. This Supplemental Information is incorporated by reference in the Notice, and applicants must comply with any requirements stated in this Supplemental Information.*

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.

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 Generally, 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 must:

1) 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.
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.

Cost Reimbursement Grants: These grants fund a portion of program operating costs and AmeriCorps 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.

Disadvantaged youth: The term "disadvantaged youth" includes those youth who are economically disadvantaged and 1 or more of the following: (A) Who are out-of-school youth, including out-of school youth who are unemployed. (B) Who are in or aging out of foster care. (C) Who have limited English proficiency. (D) Who are homeless or who have run away from home. (E) Who are at-risk to leave secondary school without a diploma. (F) Who are former juvenile offenders or at risk of delinquency. (G) Who are individuals with disabilities.

Economically Disadvantaged: The term "economically disadvantaged" means, with respect to an individual, an individual who is determined by the Chief Executive Officer to be low-income according to the latest available data from the Department of Commerce.

Enrollment Rate: The AmeriCorps member 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 <u>Evidence Exchange.</u>

Evidence-based interventions include but are not limited to the following:

- Economic Opportunity: Evidence Brief: Effective CNCS-Funded Economic Opportunity Programs
- Education: Evidence Brief: Effective CNCS-Funded Education Programs
- Healthy Futures: Evidence Brief: Effective CNCS-Funded Healthy Futures Programs

Interventions funded in FY 2022 assessed as having strong or moderate evidence include:

- Evaluation of College Possible's College-Fit Initiative 2018-2020
- REACH Corps FY19 End of Grant Evaluation
- Teach For America National AmeriCorps Evaluation: 2017–18 and 2018–19 School Years
- Birth and Beyond AmeriCorps: AmeriCorps Quasi- Experimental Program Evaluation 2018-2021

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

    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.

    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.

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(1) of the two(2) reports allowed for the Moderate evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three (3) 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(2) reports will not be considered.

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(1) of the two(2) 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(2) reports will not be considered.

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).

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 challenges 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.

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 the funds, provided they recruit and retain the members supported under the grant based on the MSY level awarded. Professional Corps programs applying for operational funding through a Fixed Amount grant must submit a budget in support of their request for operational funds.

- **Full-cost Fixed Amount grants:** Fixed Amount grants are available for programs that enroll all types of member slots <u>and use their own resources to cover all other costs</u>. 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 all types of member slots, <u>and use their own resources to cover all other costs</u>. Programs can access funds under the grant based on enrolling the full complement of members supported under the grant. As with full-cost 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 from single state applicants that are not competitive planning grants.

Match Waiver: Can be requested to decrease the required match amount. Please see the Match Waiver information for AmeriCorps State and National Grantees located on the AmeriCorps website's [Manage Your Grant](#) webpage.

Member Service Location: A member service location is the site at which an AmeriCorps member is placed to provide their service to the community.

Member Service Year (MSY): One Member Service Year (MSY) is equivalent to a full-time AmeriCorps position (at least 1,700 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 Native Nations 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.

Note: All applicants must select the correct NOFA in eGrants that corresponds to their national direct applicant status as listed above.

New Applicant: For the purposes of determining eligibility for a full cost fixed price grant, AmeriCorps defines "new applicant" as an applicant that is applying for an AmeriCorps State and National grant for the first time or is a former grantee (non-formula) whose last AmeriCorps State and National grant was received more than five years ago. Current formula grantees applying for the first time for a full cost fixed grant are not considered new applicants.

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.

AmeriCorps anticipates that applicants have a carefully considered plan for their project implementation and have identified operating sites based on demonstrated community needs. AmeriCorps expects the sites proposed at the time of application to align with those involved in project implementation. However, if necessary, applicants 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.

Planning Grants: A planning grant provides support to a grant recipient to develop an AmeriCorps program that will engage AmeriCorps members in implementing evidence-based interventions to solve community problems. Grant recipients are awarded up to $240,000 for a 12-month planning period and

are expected to be better prepared to compete for an AmeriCorps program grant in the following grant cycle. A planning grant may <u>not</u> be used to support AmeriCorps members. Applicants must apply for a Cost Reimbursement grant. The project period is no more than a year, with a start date proposed by the applicant. The project start date may <u>not</u> occur prior to the date AmeriCorps awards the grant.

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 amount 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 if 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 operational 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 exceeds 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: The AmeriCorps member retention rate is calculated as the number of members exited with education award (full or partial award) divided by the number of members enrolled.

Rural Communities: 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](#).

The Office of Regional Operations uses Beale Codes when assessing alternative match requirements as required by Statue (45 CFR 2521.60(c)).

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.

Existing grantees must get approval from agency 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 agency 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, agency staff will create a new project in eGrants. Applicants must request new projects significantly in advance of their application deadline.

Single-State Applicants Definition for the Competitive NOFO: 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 AmeriCorps 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.](#)

Single-State Applicants Definition for the AmeriCorps State and National Planning Grants NOFO: Single-state applicants are organizations that propose to operate in only one state; they must apply directly to AmeriCorps as a National Direct.

Slot types

Competitive and formula continuation applicants (those in program year two(2) or three(3) in FY 2026) may request the slot types below:

Slot Type	Hours Required
FT (Full-time)	1700
TQT (Three-quarter-time)	1200
HT (1-year half-time)	900
RHT (Reduced half-time)	675
QT (Quarter-time)	450

MT (Minimum-time)	300
AT (Abbreviated-time)	100

Competitive and formula new and recompete applicants in FY 2026 may request the slot types below:

Slot Type	Hours Required
FT (Full-time)	1700
TQT (Three-quarter-time)	1200
HT (1-year half-time)	900
QT (Quarter-time)	450
MT (Minimum-time)	300

All applicants in FY 2027 and later may request the slot types below:

Slot Type	Hours Required
FT (Full-time)	1700
TQT (Three-quarter-time)	1200
HT (1-year half-time)	900
QT (Quarter-time)	450

MT (Minimum-time)	
	300

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.

PART I. OVERVIEW OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY

A. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

I. PROGRAM GRANTS ARE A FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIP

Volunteer Maine (The Maine Commission for Community Service)

Volunteer Maine is the state government partner for the federal AmeriCorps agency. It builds capacity and sustainability in Maine's volunteer and service communities by funding programs, developing volunteer managers, fostering adoption of high-quality volunteer management practices, raising awareness of sector issues, and promoting service as a strategy.

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

As the State of Maine partner for the federal agency, AmeriCorps, Volunteer Maine has several very specific legal responsibilities related to AmeriCorps and National Service. These include:

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

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

AmeriCorps, the federal agency

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 programs, and AmeriCorps State/National (the crew program).

The federal agency mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities and fortify the civic health of the United States.

To accomplish these goals, AmeriCorps provides grants as well as training and technical assistance to volunteer organizations. It explores, develops, and models effective approaches for using volunteers to meet the nation's human needs and conducts and disseminates research that encourages learning for enhancing the effectiveness of national and community service programs.

For more information on AmeriCorps, visit AmeriCorps.gov.

II. COMPETITION PURPOSE

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.

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.

The AmeriCorps Agency will identify specific areas of interest, known as "priorities' in each national competition. It is not required that applicants propose programs within the priority areas if they are within the broader Focus Areas. Still, the funding priority area must be a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes, in order to request priority consideration.

For this funding opportunity, AmeriCorps will prioritize consideration from organizations that:

Faith-Based:
- Organizations that are faith-based.

Serve Communities:

- Serve communities with concentrated poverty, rural communities, and tribal communities.
- Implement programs for or expand access to high-quality youth mental health and substance use recovery services and prepare AmeriCorps members to enter behavioral health careers. These may include individuals who have experienced substance use and mental health challenges.
- Focus on improving quality of life for veterans, active-duty members of the Armed Forces, and their families through models that provide effective interventions or services or that are designed to recruit veterans, military spouses, and their older children into national service, e.g., veterans serving in mentorship roles.
- Focus on public safety, crime prevention, and/or partnerships between law enforcement and the community.
- Focus on expanding outdoor recreation opportunities for future generations by maintaining public lands; supporting wildland fire mitigation and sustainable forest management; and providing reforestation services.
- Create workforce pathways for AmeriCorps members, including deliberate training, such as pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities, certifications, and hiring preferences or support;
- Focus on strengthening families, e.g., activities that aim to support low-income parents through parenting education, responsible parenting and healthy relationship skills.

Benefit AmeriCorps Members:
- Enhanced member experience by providing opportunities for skill attainment, personal growth and connection to the community they are serving in support of a lifetime of civic participation.
- Enhance and expand services to formerly incarcerated and at-risk youth and/or engage those youth as AmeriCorps members.

Use Evidence:
- Utilize reports from the AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange on programs assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence to scale, replicate, or adapt the intervention.

To receive priority consideration, applicants must show the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes. Priority consideration does not guarantee funding.

III. PROGRAM INFORMATION

AmeriCorps' Three Programs: Check that this grant is the one you want.

AmeriCorps is a national service program with three distinct branches:
- AmeriCorps State and National (team-based programs),
- AmeriCorps VISTA, and
- the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC).

The following chart shows a comparison of program traits. AmeriCorps VISTA and National Civilian Community Corps proposals are submitted directly to the federal agency. AmeriCorps National programs are multi-state or national nonprofit organizations that also submit proposals directly to AmeriCorps.

Instructions in this document are for AmeriCorps State, meaning the proposal would operate a program only in Maine and the Commission will be responsible for issuing the grant cooperative agreement as well as compliance oversight.

Comparison of AmeriCorps program types and grants (examples; not complete)	AmeriCorps State/Nat'l	AmeriCorps VISTA	AmeriCorps NCCC
Grant $$ are awarded to local or national agencies	X		
Grants consist of 1) multiple AmeriCorps positions (a team) needed to achieve performance measure targets and 2) federal funds to support members in the positions	X		
Grants include only authorization (allocation) of AmeriCorps positions. Grantees may be required to reimburse the federal agency for living allowance expense of some AmeriCorps positions.		X	
Payment of AmeriCorps member stipends and benefits is handled directly by the federal agency		X	X
Grant requires that local cash and in-kind resources to carry out program direct service activities.	X		
Categories of community needs addressed include Healthy Futures, Education, Veterans and Military Families, Economic Opportunity, Disaster Services, Environmental Stewardship, Capacity Building	X	X	
Primary mission is poverty alleviation		X	
Primary mission is disaster response and recovery			X
Grantees are required to mobilize local volunteers who become the future providers of the service	X		
Program is required to use one set (output, outcome) of the standardized national performance measures for intervention and capacity building.	X		
Members serve in teams	X		X
Members can serve terms of less than 1700 hours over a 12-month period except in the Rural State AmeriCorps model.	X		
Members who successfully complete service always qualify for an education award	X	may choose cash stipend	X
Members may have other employment or be in college if it does not interfere with their service term	X	X	
Members must be between 18 and 24 years of age			X
Members must be at least 17 years of age and out of school. There is no upper age limit.	X		
Members generally need some college or a degree		X	
Members who are 55 years of age or older at the start of service and successfully complete their service may transfer the use of the Education Award to a child, grandchild, or foster child.	X		

AmeriCorps State Program Overview

The AmeriCorps State program is referred to as the "Domestic Peace Corps." Grants are awarded to eligible organizations to implement evidence-based direct service programs in which AmeriCorps members provide the human resources 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 and be more resilient. It does so 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 those who serve. The development focuses not only on the service work but also community and civic engagement, enabling these individuals to lead community initiatives after their year of service.

Organizations that operate local AmeriCorps programs identify solutions proven to impact the need they intend to address. They design how a team of members will implement the program as they serve full- or part-time for one year or during a season. The activities related to this competition require at least 17,000 hours of service each year by the team of at least 20 AmeriCorps members. A Member Service Year (MSY) is to the AmeriCorps world what a Fulltime Equivalent (FTE) is to the employment world. MSYs can be divided into multiple positions.

Terms of full-time service for each member may be 1700, 1200, 900, 450, or 300 hours. The length of a term will depend on the program design. Seasonal winter or summer programs generally use terms that are 900 hours or less. School year programs typically rely on 1200-hour terms.

AmeriCorps members serve with a single organization and help in one of three ways:
1. Increase the amount of service provided through an evidence-based program to overcome unusual demand or delay in accessing the service.
2. Provide new services to an organization's clients/customers through an evidence-based program to address an unmet need.
3. Extend to a new population or region a proven program model that addresses a local need.

An AmeriCorps member is an individual who is enrolled in an approved national service position and engages in community service. Members serving full-time receive a living allowance and other benefits. The organizations that receive grants are responsible for recruiting, selecting, and supervising AmeriCorps members to serve in their programs. They must provide the members with full role descriptions and work plans in addition to documenting the eligibility of AmeriCorps members to serve and receive the federal benefits, including the education award. They help members acquire skills, training, education, certifications, and experience which they can carry into the workforce and future service to their communities.

Note that AmeriCorps members *may not* do research, strategic planning, grant-writing, or other indirect service activities that AmeriCorps VISTA members do. At least 80% of members' time supported by this competition must be spent on *direct* service to the public.

One way to discern direct from indirect service is to ask, who is the primary beneficiary? If it is the organization in which the AmeriCorps member serves, then it is *indirect*. As an example, the organization has a better ability to meet its mission because AmeriCorps developed new resources, or researched community needs, or supported agency planning activities.
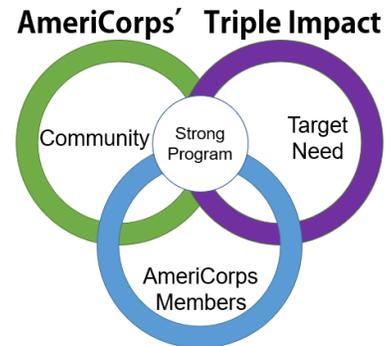
If the primary beneficiary is a customer/client/community, then the service is *direct.* For example, the community or people who come to the organization for assistance receive the help they seek because AmeriCorps is adding human resources to the organization and increasing its ability to provide services.

AmeriCorps direct service may occur at the grantee organization's site, or it may occur out in the community. For instance, a program for diabetics that combines meal planning, nutrition education, and exercise may occur at sites where participants can conveniently gather. Still, the members are directed in their work by the grantee and the program is tightly identified as "belonging" to the grantee. In another example, a school district may decide to formalize and strengthen how it brings volunteers into schools to assist. The AmeriCorps members might work with staff in several locations to identify volunteer roles, describe positions, recruit new people, and set up other systems. Even though the AmeriCorps members help staff in several school buildings, they are still serving in one district, under one supervisor, with one work plan.

As AmeriCorps members carry out the direct service, they also build the capacity of the grant recipient to sustain the work after the start-up and implementation "boost" from AmeriCorps. During their service, AmeriCorps members recruit community volunteers to serve alongside them and implement volunteer management systems that help the agency document volunteer contributions to service accomplishments.

AmeriCorps grantees receive training and technical assistance from the Volunteer Maine staff to build their internal capacity. Thus, Maine AmeriCorps represents a "quadruple bottom line" because those who benefit from the services are changed; the community is changed; AmeriCorps members who serve change; and the grantee organization is changed.

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

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

a) The quality of the national service program proposed to be supported by a grant.

b) The innovative aspects of the national service program, and the feasibility of replicating the program.

c) The sustainability of the national service program.

d) The quality of the leadership, the past performance, and the extent to which the program builds on existing programs.

e) The extent to which participants of the national service program are recruited from among residents of the communities in which projects are to be conducted, and the extent to which participants and community residents are involved in the design, leadership, and operation of the program.

f) The extent to which projects would be conducted in one of the areas listed in §2522.450(c)(1) through (5) of this subpart.

g) The extent to which the application is consistent with the application [approved by] the State in which the projects would be conducted.

h) Such other criteria as the Corporation considers to be appropriate.

Recruiting Members.

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

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 36 in this document.

In AmeriCorps, the term "in-kind" is restricted to non-cash resources provided to the program by third parties. Resources paid by the applicant organization from unrestricted funds (space, office supplies, etc.) are considered cash support because these can be identified in the agency accounting system. Both in-kind and cash typically make up the local grantee share.

The program must raise some non-federal cash as part of the local share. State or municipal public funds as well as private donations from corporate, philanthropic, nonprofit, or individuals can be used as match.

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 Fixed amount grants are not required to match AmeriCorps funds and, therefore, there is no restriction on the mix or type of federal, state, public, private, cash or in-kind support used to operate the program.

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).)

Internal Planning.

A critical element to success in AmeriCorps is planning how the additional human resources (members serving) will be integrated into agency operations through recruitment, selection, orientation, supervision, responsibilities, training, daily schedule and tasks, who they will need access to and when, performance evaluation, etc. A solid plan that is ready for implementation has involved all critical internal agency partners in the preparations. Risk management is apprised of the tasks and confirms AmeriCorps members will be covered by insurance. Financial staff understand the regulations around living allowances, reimbursements, policies, and procedures related to AmeriCorps. Senior leadership agrees to commit the local resources necessary, and marketing agree to help educate the agency constituents and public about the program's presence.

Because part of their assignment will be engaging community members as volunteers to assist with the program, the organization also needs to have a clear assessment of internal support and systems that will permit volunteers to contribute. This assessment also reveals the program operating elements an applicant needs to implement during AmeriCorps start-up. 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 930).

Examples of the essential volunteer program practices that required by AmeriCorps include

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

Determining the AmeriCorps team size

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

A single Member Service Year (MSY) is at least 1700 hours which a person serving full-time completes within 12 months (52 weeks). An MSY 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 to complete term if serving 40 hrs/wk	# hours/week required if term of service is 1 yr (52 wks)
Full-time	1,700	1.00	--------------	--------------	42.5 weeks	33 hrs/wk
Three Quarter time	1,200	0.70	No conversion	0.7 MSY	30.0 weeks	23.1 hrs/wk
Half-Time	900	0.50	2 slots	0.5 MSY	22.5 weeks	17.5 hrs/wk
Quarter-Time	450	0.265	3 slots	0.265 MSY	11.25 weeks	9 hrs/wk
Minimum-Time	300	0.212	4 slots	0.212 MSY	7.25 weeks	6 hrs/wk

All operating proposals must accommodate at least the equivalent of 10 AmeriCorps Member Service Years* (MSY)[1] *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.

IV. ADDITIONAL PROGRAM ELEMENTS

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 has done sufficient planning such that all is ready to implement the required program elements for AmeriCorps.

- **The program name must include "AmeriCorps"** and must be fully spelled out, so it is evident to the public, members, partners, and beneficiaries of program services.

- The project start date is proposed by the applicant. The project start date may not occur prior to the date of the grant award. AmeriCorps members may not enroll prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period stated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.

- Applicants must propose program designs that are evidence-based, meaning proven by a rigorous evaluation to be effective for the community need targeted by program service activities.

- Grantees must design training, coaching, and educational opportunities that help AmeriCorps members develop an ethic of service, civic leadership skills, and technical skills including certifications that will be valuable for future employment. Up to 20% of a program's aggregate member service hours may be spent in training or professional development or education related to their service assignment. Training that qualifies as a pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship is encouraged when appropriate.

- 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:

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[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.

- o any portion of the match for AmeriCorps member living allowances or benefit
  - o the sponsor's general operating expenses or an endowment
  - o any facet of preparing grant application for funding by AmeriCorps or any other federal agency

- Members are prohibited by law from doing a specific set of activities. See page 10-**Error! Bookmark not defined.** for the list and how it extends to any official service activity with community volunteers. 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.

- 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.[2] Programs may recruit and enroll AmeriCorps members from their current volunteers but may not eliminate the time or effort of volunteers by having AmeriCorps members perform their duties.

- 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 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 on page 37.

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

  An individual is <u>not eligible</u> to work or serve in a position subject to the NSCHC requirements if:
  - o the individual refuses to consent to a criminal history check
  - o makes a false statement in connection with a criminal history check
  - o is registered, or is required to be registered, on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; or
  - o has been convicted of murder, as defined in 18 U.S.C 1111.

- Programs are expected to fill (enroll) all the member slots awarded in the grant. Enrollment rates have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in continuation (budget years 2 and 3) as well as in re-competition. Full-cost Fixed amount grantees are not reimbursed for unfilled positions.

- Programs are expected to pursue very high retention rates. These will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and recompete processes. Successful applicants that do not retain their members are likely to receive a decrease in funding in subsequent years. They will also be required to submit an explanation and corrective action plan with continuation or recompete applications. Full-cost Fixed amount grantees cannot draw down full funding for slots that end early.

- *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.

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[2] See 45 CFR 2520.35 for waiver information related to this requirement.

- Programs may institute "fee for service" practices so long as the service activities relate to the program performance measures and the fees collected are used only to finance the match share of the AmeriCorps program costs.

- 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.

  o There are very specific AmeriCorps Rules related to tutoring programs. See 45 CFR §2522.900-2522.950

- Programs must report on three sets of aligned performance measures:

  o Program service activities (outputs and outcomes) are selected from the National Performance Measures and entered in eGrants. Programs whose service activities are not covered by the National Performance Measures may propose self-determined measures.

  o Member Development and Capacity Building performance measures (outputs and outcomes) are **prescribed by the Commission**. They appear on page 39.

- 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 an expectation.

IV. AMERICORPS MEMBER INFORMATION

MEMBER RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND ACCOMMODATION

Recruitment.

Organizations with AmeriCorps grants are responsible for recruiting the AmeriCorps members to serve in their program. The recruitment plan must actively seek applicants whose demographics reflect those of the community residents. They may be from the communities in which the program will operate as well as individuals from other areas. Programs are required to develop separate role descriptions for each service position type in their program design (e.g., tutor, health educator, coach) so applicants understand eligibility, duties, service activities, duration and location, expectations, and training as well as supervision offered.

The federal agency has created a central recruiting site for AmeriCorps (see https://my.americorps.gov/). (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.

Maine AmeriCorps programs have had success there as well as on Idealist.org, Craigslist, and job sites that permit volunteer listings, as well as working with college recruitment sites such as Handshake and through relationships with university placement offices and state career centers.

Maine AmeriCorps programs also have had success on MANP's job board that permits volunteer listings (https://www.nonprofitmaine.org/job-board). Volunteer Maine hosts a Volunteer Matching site, ServeMaine.org, that funded Maine programs also use to post open positions. The Serve in Maine page on the Volunteer Maine website points prospective members to the ServeMaine site.

Eligibility to Serve in AmeriCorps.

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

- is a U.S. citizen, U.S. national or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States. See 45 CFR §2522.2 for documents that are acceptable means of certification is at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service unless the member is out of school and participating in a program described in § 2522.110(b)(3) or (g), or
- 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 AmeriCorps 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 *(nsopw.gov)*

Selection.

Each AmeriCorps program selects its members at the local level and the selection criteria may vary according to the program service roles and work to be performed. In all cases, however, selection must be conducted in a fair, non-discriminatory manner that complies with §2540 of the AmeriCorps rules.

Programs must establish minimum qualifications (skills, knowledge, abilities) for service positions and base the qualifications on the service activities. In addition, the corps should offer members of differing ages and with different educational, work, or economic experiences an opportunity to serve together and learn from each other.

Position qualifications along with responsibilities or duties and essential as well as desired functions must be stated in a member role description (similar to a standard volunteer role description). Successful completion of an AmeriCorps orientation period is a mandatory qualification for members.

Eligibility for Additional Terms.

An individual may serve up to the number of terms it takes to earn up to the equivalent value of two full education awards.

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

Reasonable Accommodation for People with Disabilities.

Increasing the participation of people with disabilities in national and community service programs is a key interest of AmeriCorps. In fact, its commitment to including people with disabilities in service has been expressed in providing programs with additional positions and funding during second and third years of grants. In addition, not only are AmeriCorps programs encouraged to actively reach out to and include people with disabilities, but role descriptions must identify

essential and desired functions so that potential AmeriCorps members can identify opportunities for themselves.

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

Participation of Individuals Receiving Supplemental Security Income.

On June 17, 2008, H.R. 6081: the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act of 2008 ("the HEART Act") was signed into law, making AmeriCorps more accessible to people with disabilities.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a Federal program that provides a monthly cash benefit to low-income individuals who are aged, blind, or who have a disability. In the past, receiving an AmeriCorps living allowance could disqualify an individual from eligibility. The Heart Act directs the Social Security Administration to ignore an individual's receipt of AmeriCorps benefits for purposes of SSI eligibility. The Act excludes "any benefit (whether cash or in-kind)" and so covers the living allowance, health insurance, childcare, and the education award (and related interest payments). This brings all AmeriCorps members under one treatment of benefits rule for SSI. Note the law does not change how AmeriCorps benefits could impact SSDI. The exclusion of AmeriCorps benefits took effect for benefits payable after August 16, 2008.

MEMBER BENEFITS.

Member Living Allowance.

Only AmeriCorps members whose service assignments require an intense concentration of time (i.e., 37 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 (minimum hours and position description) and does not vary according to the person's skills, prior experience, service assignment in your program, or prior experience in AmeriCorps. In Maine, by law, members are not employees and do not qualify for unemployment insurance.

Grantees must offer a living allowance for members serving full-time. It cannot be any less than $20,400 for 1700 hr terms and the maximum is $40,800 per 1700 hr term of service. For positions requiring less than 1700 hours, the full living allowance is pro-rated.

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

SERVICE TERM	# OF HOURS	IF SERVE 40HR/WK, WEEKS TO COMPLETE	EDUCATION AWARD 2025-26	MINIMUM LIVING ALLOWANCE	MAXIMUM LIVING ALLOWANCE
Full-time	at least 1700	43	$7,395	$20,400	$ 40,800

Three Quarter - time	at least 1200	30	$5,176.50	$16,838 if 40 hrs/wk	$ 28,560
Half-time	at least 900	22.5	$3,697.50	Not required; if offered multiplier is 0.5	$ 20,400
Quarter-time	at least 450	12	$1,956.35	Not required; if offered multiplier is 0.265	$ 10,608
Minimum-time	at least 300	8	$1,565.08	Not required; if offered multiplier is 0.212	$ 8,568

***Housing*.**

Housing is not a required benefit, but programs are strongly encouraged to develop options as it is the most valued local benefit among AmeriCorps members. It is valued so much that it influences the number of applicants for positions. Examples of what Maine programs have done include housing stipends paid to landlords, organizing co-housing among members, locating "host families" or deeply discounted housing. Housing support or housing assistance are not considered part of the living allowance if paid separately but may be taxable income if paid to the member rather than a landlord.

***Education Awards*.**

Funds for Education Awards are <u>not part of program budgets</u>. Congress makes a direct appropriation to the National Service Trust for these congruent with the amount of the Pell Grant Award level for that budget year. The value of the education award for the 2025-2026 education award is $ 7,395 for the 1700-hour service year. This amount may increase with the approval of a new federal budget.

AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will receive education awards for each term up to the regulatory limit. Members may not earn more than the equivalent of two full-time education awards over multiple service terms at any combination of service locations or programs.

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

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

***Student Loan Forbearance*.**

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.

Service in AmeriCorps *does count* under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. Individuals may want to weigh the benefits of forbearance against the payment requirements of this program. For information, visit https://studentaid.gov/help-center/answers/article/pslf-credit-during-volunteer-service-period .

For additional information: Education award, forbearance, and the National Service Trust,

Childcare.

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). The federal agency 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. The federal agency will not cover healthcare costs for dependent coverage.

Programs <u>may</u> 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. It is not permissible to increase reimbursement amounts to cover the tax.

B. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. From the time this RFA is issued until award notification is made, <u>all</u> contact with the State regarding this RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of this RFA. No other person/State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFA. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the application process, at the State's discretion.
2. Issuance of the RFA does not commit the Department to issue an award or to pay expenses incurred by an Applicant in the preparation of a response to the RFA. This includes attendance at personal interviews or other meetings, where applicable.
3. All applications must adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in the RFA and all written supplements and amendments (such as the Summary of Questions and Answers), issued by the Department. Applications are to follow the format and respond to all questions and instructions specified in Part III of the RFA.

4. Applicants will take careful note that in evaluating an application submitted in response to this RFA, the Department will consider materials provided in the application, information obtained through interviews/presentations (if any), and internal Departmental information of previous contract history with the Applicant (if any). The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating the Applicant's experience and capabilities.

5. The application must be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the Applicant and must contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid and binding for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.

6. The RFA and the awarded Applicant's proposal, including all appendices or attachments, will be the basis for the final contract, as determined by the Department.

7. Following announcement of an award decision, all submissions in response to this RFA will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) (1 M.R.S. § 401 et seq.). State contracts and information related to contracts, including application submissions, are generally public records per FOAA.

8. In the event that an Applicant believes any information that it submits in response to this RFA is confidential, it must mark that information accordingly, and include citation to legal authority in support of the Applicant's claim of confidentiality. In the event that the Department receives a FOAA request that includes submissions marked as confidential, the Department shall evaluate the information and any legal authority from the Applicant to determine whether the information is an exception to FOAA's definition of public record. If the Department determines to release information that an Applicant has marked confidential, it shall provide advance notice to the Applicant to allow for them to seek legal relief.

9. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in applications received in response to the RFA.

10. If awarded a contract resulting from this RFA, vendors shall be required to disclose, in writing and in accordance with applicable Maine law, any actual or potential conflicts of interest. Such disclosure must include any financial, professional, or personal relationships that could give rise to a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. Failure to disclose a known conflict or appearance of conflict may result in disqualification, contract termination, or other remedies as provided by law.

11. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, shall be included by this reference. It shall be the Applicant's responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

C. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

I. ORGANIZATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

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.

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 AmeriCorps 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.[3] A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this RFA/Notice.

Special Note about proposals submitted to both AmeriCorps National and AmeriCorps State competitions. Volunteer Maine will not entertain proposals for the same project if an applicant submits to both the AmeriCorps National and AmeriCorps State competition since both competitions occur simultaneously and a project may not be funded from both sources for concurrent operation. See page 11 for "same project" definition criteria.

II. PROPOSAL CATEGORIES

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

"New" proposals fit one of the following AmeriCorps criteria for "new":
- Applicant is applying for the first time OR has only received formula OR planning grant funding in the past.
- Applicant has operated grants from AmeriCorps under another funding type (e.g., Senior Corps)

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[3] 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.

- Applicant has hosted AmeriCorps members only 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" come from applicants who have received AmeriCorps Formula State funds within the last five(5) 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 as a re-competing program following the current guidelines in order to be considered for another round of AmeriCorps funding.

III. NUMBER OF AWARDS, SIZE, AND GRANT TYPES

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.

All proposals must plan for *at least 17,000 hours of service activity* which is the equivalent of *8 AmeriCorps Member Service Years* (MSYs). 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.*

GRANT TYPES

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 24% 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.

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.

A grant period is three (3) years with 12-month annual budget periods serving as the basis for adding funds. If a proposal is selected, only the initial period of funding will be awarded. Funding and positions for years 2 and 3 will be awarded under a continuation application process. Each time, the Commission reviews program operations and performance to determine whether another year of resources is merited.

Applicants may propose any project start date that fits their program design. The period of performance may not start before July 1, 2026. AmeriCorps members may <u>not</u> start service or be enrolled prior to the grant award start date. Recruitment of members is <u>a task which should start as soon as the applicant learns their proposal has been selected</u>.

The amount and duration of any grant, as well as the final decision to issue a grant award, is subject to the availability of funds as determined by Congressional appropriations, grantee compliance with program regulations, fund management, and grantee performance. Decisions on all grant awards are not final until the federal agency formally awards AmeriCorps funds to Volunteer Maine. Programs are expected to begin soon after.

IV. AMERICORPS STATE GRANTS AWARD TWO KINDS OF RESOURCES

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.

V. COST-PER-MEMBER

AmeriCorps annually sets a maximum cost per Member Service Year (MSY = 1700 hours) that it will award.

In 2025, these amounts are:

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

The size of a grant request is easily determined by multiplying the number of MSY by the maximum cost-per-member: ___ MSY X $25,000 = _____

VI. 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, 77 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of contract award.

VII. FEDERAL REFERENCE MATERIALS

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

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

Key to Selected Program Elements in the AmeriCorps Regulations[4]

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

Grant Terms and Conditions, Policies.   The AmeriCorps Grant Terms & Conditions and the federal General Terms and Conditions contain post-award details that should be considered in program design. Applicants would do well to review these documents in order to gauge the administrative systems that will be required.

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[4] 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.

General Terms and Conditions LINK:
https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2026-01/FY_2026-General-TC.pdf

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.

- Programs should pay the living allowance in regular increments, such as weekly or bi-weekly, paying an increased increment only on the basis of increased living expenses such as food, housing, or transportation. Payments should not fluctuate based on the number of hours served in a particular time period and must cease when a member ends service.

- Grantees who enroll Federal Work Study students as AmeriCorps members are subject to an exception to the hourly basis rule. Federal Work Study regulations allow AmeriCorps members to be paid on an hourly basis**.** The Corporation does not consider a wage under the Federal Work Study program to be a living allowance for purposes of the National and Community Service Act. The grantee is not required to report such wages in the AmeriCorps grant.

- Only individuals who enroll in an AmeriCorps position in a program that has been approved by the Corporation are eligible to receive AmeriCorps member benefits. All benefits described above must end or cease being funded under the grant award, whether from federal or local share.

The National Performance Measures

All applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (output paired with outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. This may be a National Performance Measure or an applicant-determined measure depending on the program's theory of change.

National Performance Measure Instructions can be found at:
https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2026-01/2026-AmeriCorps-State-and-National-Performance_Measure-Instructions.pdf

Additional information related to applicant -Determined measures can be found here:
https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2026-01/2026-Applicant-Determined-Performance-Measures.pdf

PART II. ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS

A. FEDERAL GRANT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

I. FIXED AMOUNT GRANTS.

Fixed amount grants provide a specific dollar amount per MSY to an organization. In order to access all of the funds provided, programs must recruit and retain all AmeriCorps members supported under the grant based on the MSY level awarded. The grant does not use a line-item budget, match or expense reporting. The use of funds is not restricted or directed but reimbursement is made after a grantee submits an invoice that includes the names of members serving during the invoiced period along with the number of hours each of those members served. The grant management system calculates a reimbursable amount based on those metrics.

Fixed Amount grantees do not submit expense reports or Federal Financial Reports. The Commission does require quarterly reports of sources of funds used to support the program. These would include public and private external as well as allocated internal resources. This report confirms there are adequate resources to support the service members and activities for which the grant was made.

II. COST REIMBURSEMENT GRANTS.

Cost Reimbursement grants can apply for any amount up to the maximum cost per MSY (see page 33). Applicants complete a detailed line-item budget, including both a federal share and a local share, sometimes called "match". This local share can be made up of cash, in-kind, or some combination thereof.

The advantage of this type of funding is the 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 grantees submit monthly expense reports and quarterly revenue reports along with the various programmatic reports submitted by all AmeriCorps programs.

III. 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 Cost Reimbursement Grants.

Grant Cycle	First 3-Year Cycle	Second 3-Year Cycle	Third 3-Year Cycle	Later cycles
Minimum Grantee (local) share required	76% AmeriCorps share *24% Grantee share*	74% AmeriCorps share *26% Grantee share*	72% AmeriCorps share *28% Grantee share*	70% AmeriCorps share *30% Grantee share*

Match Waiver Option: Please use the Match Waiver information for AmeriCorps State and National Grantees located on the AmeriCorps.gov [Manage Your Grant](#) webpage. AmeriCorps encourages Tribal Nations to request match waivers to reduce barriers. Every effort will be made to reduce the match requirements to improve accessibility to funding.

IV. TIMELY AND COMPLIANT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION.

Programs will still use the AmeriCorps online system to offer a position to an applicant and the applicant will use the system to respond with an acceptance. Then the system will automatically use other federal databases to confirm identity using social security numbers and birthdates. If verification cannot be done using the automated system (e.g., applicant uses different surname due to marriage or adoption), documents must be submitted manually, and a manual check will be done. This can take up to two weeks. No applicant may be enrolled or start service until eligibility is verified. Recruitment plans *must provide sufficient time for this step to be completed before the member starts service.*

V. NATIONAL SERVICE CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK REQUIREMENTS.

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving AmeriCorps funds. Checks must be conducted, received, and reviewed PRIOR to service or employment.

All National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC) must include:
- A nationwide name-based check of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW)
- 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
- 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."

Special Note For Fixed Amount Awards: Because there is no line-item budget, program staff are not required to have a NSCHC but all individuals selected as AmeriCorps members **must** be checked.

Fixed Award applicants **must plan to fund checks for each position** even though the program budget is not part of the application. Commission compliance monitoring will include review of NSCHCs and a comparison of the service start date with the date they were done, reviewed, and a determination made.

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. (In certain circumstances, programs may use the federally designated fingerprint check vendor. 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[5] before any paid work or service time is recorded. See 45 C.F.R. § 2540.200–§ 2540.207 and https://americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/history-check for complete information and FAQs.

If a grantee is not able to prove that they have conducted an NSOPW and other required criminal history checks, the consequence may be *disallowance of all or part of the costs* associated with the instance of noncompliance.

Sharing Award Products**.** To the extent practicable, the recipient agrees to make products produced under the award available at the cost of reproduction to others in the field.

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.

VI. RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF AMERICORPS FUNDS (45 CFR §2540.100) & MEMBER PROHIBITIONS (§2520.65)

AmeriCorps identifies a set of Unallowable uses for its funding and a separate set of Prohibited activities which AmeriCorps members or staff funded with agency funds, or with matching dollars in a cost reimbursement grant, may not engage in while accruing time under a grant.

These are described in full in the Glossary section on pages **Error! Bookmark not defined.** and **Error! Bookmark not defined.**.

All staff, supervisors, and members should be aware of unallowable use and must be trained on Prohibited Activities as part of orientation.

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[5] In this context, adjudicated means the program/grantee makes and documents a formal judgment or decision about the person's qualification to serve based on local and AmeriCorps policies.

VII. LABOR UNION CONCURRENCE

Applicants must obtain a statement of concurrence and submit it with the proposal if either of the following are true:

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 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.

VIII. REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Every program must develop policies and a system for collecting, organizing, and analyzing data on an ongoing basis. The categories of data include member records, service activities and impact, identities of partners, as well as financial (in-kind and cash). The most common reporting mechanisms are fiscal reports, quarterly progress reports, income reports, and final closeout reports at the end of year 3.

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 high quality programmatic and financial data.

At a minimum, grantees should have policies and practices which address the following five aspects of data quality:

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

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

IX. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

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

In continuation applications, the results of continuous improvement systems are used to explain changes in program operations, services, or plans.

X. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

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

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

Service Activity options can be found in the National Performance Measures, or an applicant can develop their own. The federal agency uses National PM's to gather data across multiple programs so selecting one is generally a good strategic choice.

National Performance Measure Instructions can be found at:
https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2026-01/2026-AmeriCorps-State-and-National-Performance_Measure-Instructions.pdf

Additional information related to Applicant -Determined measures can be found here:

https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2026-01/2026-Applicant-Determined-Performance-Measures.pdf

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. Do not select performance measures for every activity or impact.

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

For AmeriCorps Member Development (training and professional development), use these state-defined performance measures and note the measurement instructions:
- *Output*: Number of AmeriCorps program training and other formal development activities that result in increased AmeriCorps member skills, knowledge, and abilities related to the service assignment (community, tasks, and sector).

- *How to calculate/measure*: Count of program sponsored/conducted events with pre/post or other assessments showing number of participants who acquired service-related skills, knowledge, abilities.
- *How to collect data*: Event agenda/curriculum outline with enrollment, date, instructor, duration, and location details. To verify increased skills, knowledge, abilities use an assessment of change in the learner's knowledge or skill.

- *Outcome*: Number of AmeriCorps members demonstrating increased competency in skills or application of knowledge.
  - *How to calculate/measure:* Unduplicated count of members who demonstrate increased competency while carrying out their service assignment.
  - *How to collect data:* Documented assessment(s) of training events certified by supervisor or program staff of competencies and represented in Member mid-term and/or final evaluations.

For Capacity Building, applicants will measure state-defined performance measures as described below.

- *Output*. Number of organizations that benefit from volunteers recruited/managed by AmeriCorps members.

  - *How to calculate/measure:* The total number of organizations should be an unduplicated count of agencies that receive service provided by local volunteers because of the AmeriCorps member efforts. Applicants/grantees should control for double counting across multiple members' efforts.
  - *How to collect data:* Organizations can include host sites and other community agencies and should be documented by a grantee designed registry tool.

- *Outcome*: Number of additional service activities and/or units of service 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 (meals prepared, students supported or mentored, miles of trail cleared), that must be performed by the individual in order for him or her to be counted as a recruited volunteer. In selecting a common target measure, the program should identify a unit type closely tied with the program's intended impact.
  - 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 including but not limited to: the volunteer's name, relevant demographic information, method of recruitment, participation in orientation and/or training activities, planned and actual role, assignment(s) or activities, start and end dates of service, accomplished tasks/units, and hours served related to the program that the capacity building activities were intended to support or enhance.

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

- NOTE: The number of 1) volunteers recruited and/or managed *and* 2) hours those contributed to program or host site services by those volunteers are reported quarterly. Applicants should also plan for this data collection.

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

All performance measures must be consistent with the program's Theory of Change as described in the narrative and reflected in the logic model. AmeriCorps also values thorough data collection plans. These must be outlined in the application logic model and performance measurement fields. Instructions for completing the application's performance measure section can be found in Attachment C, page 73.

XI. EVALUATION AND DATA COLLECTION

All applicants will enter "N/A" in the eGrants "Evaluation Summary" field.

Applicants who have received **three(3) or more years** of competitive funding for the same project being proposed should also provide an: Evaluation plan summary using the evaluation plan summary template. If applicable, submit the section in the template for an Alternative Evaluation Approach (AEA) request. Evaluation plans are not scored and will not be assessed. Applicants approved for funding will be responsible for confirming they meet all evaluation requirements. Only AEA requests (if applicable) will be reviewed for approval after funding decisions are made.

Applicants who have received **six or more years** of competitive funding for the same project being proposed should also provide an Evaluation report. Please submit in Microsoft Word. The evaluation report should include a title page with:

- the AmeriCorps grant number for the project that was evaluated,
- the name of the project,
- the date of completion of the report,
- the evaluator name(s),
- evaluator organization name and,
- evaluator type (internal or external).

If any of this required information is missing, the applicant may not receive credit for meeting their evaluation requirements.

Additional documents for entities applying on behalf of a Federally Recognized Tribe, new and recompeting:

Tribal organization eligibility documentation

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 plus the Alternative Evaluation Approach Request Form as additional documents. https://www.americorps.gov/funding-opportunity/fy-2026-americorps-state-national-grants#eval

More information on alternative evaluation approaches and the request form can be found at:

https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2026-01/FY26-Alternative-Evaluation-Approach-Guidance.pdf

XII. DATA COLLECTION TRAINING FOR SITES AND MEMBERS

All programs must develop processes to train and support those responsible for collecting and reporting data that will be used by the program. All members should be aware of the program's

intended objectives, performance measures, continuous quality improvement system, and evaluation plan and should be trained in collecting relevant data.

Note that Part D.3 of the application narratives requires a description of data collection for performance measure, continuous improvement activities, and when applicable evaluation.

Program models that propose to locate members in partner host organizations to perform service should orient and train host supervisors, in addition to members, on the program's outcomes, performance measures, continuous quality improvement data, and evaluation plan.

Experience shows that most data is collected at the host sites as part of the service activities. Therefore, the most critical players in a program's data collection need to have a thorough understanding of what information is needed, the format, the source, who needs to provide it, the frequency, and the methods by which it will be collected at the program level. These elements should be included in the required host site agreements.

PART III. KEY PROCESS EVENTS

A. VENDOR SELF SERVICE (VSS)

1. The Office of State Procurement Services Vendor Self Service System website is found at the link below: https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/vendor-self-service-system
2. A copy of the RFA and all associated documents will be published in VSS.
3. Only documents published in VSS will be considered binding.
4. Any interested party may view open solicitations in VSS using the Public Access feature.
5. Vendors <u>must</u> have an active User ID and password in VSS to submit questions and respond to solicitations, including this RFA.
   a. Vendor registration instructions and User Guide may be found at the link above, which include steps for searching for an existing account/User ID, or registering for a new account/User ID.
   b. <u>Vendors interested in responding to a solicitation are encouraged to obtain a User ID and password for VSS as soon as possible.</u>

VENDORS <u>MUST</u> HAVE AN ACTIVE VENDOR CODE (VC OR VS) TO CONTRACT WITH THE DEPARTMENT.

B. INFORMATION SESSION

A virtual information session will take place for interested applicants. Details and the registration link are on the cover of this RFA. The purpose of the Informational Session is to answer and/or field questions, clarify for Applicants any aspect of the RFA that may be necessary, and provide supplemental information to assist potential Applicants in submitting responses to the RFA. Although attendance at the Informational Session is not mandatory, it is <u>strongly encouraged</u> that interested Applicants attend.

C. QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFA

I. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

It is the responsibility of all Applicants and other interested parties to examine the entire RFA and to seek clarification, in writing, if they do not understand any information or instructions.

   c. Questions must be submitted in VSS as soon as possible but no later than the date and time published in VSS.
   d. Questions should be clearly stated and reference the applicable section and/or page number of the RFA.
   e. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time transmission and receipt.

II. QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY

Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and published in VSS no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the Application Submission Deadline. It is the responsibility of all interested

parties to go to VSS to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing in VSS will be considered binding.

D. SUBMISSION DEADLINE, INSTRUCTIONS, AND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

I. SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Complete proposals must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of this RFA. Receipt time will be established by the date/time stamp electronically recorded at the time of submission. Proposals received after the 4:00 p.m. deadline will be rejected without exception.

II. DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS AND CONTENT

Complete means the proposal is submitted in eGrants https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp **and** all required additional documents listed below are submitted in VSS.

    a. Only proposals received through eGrants and via VSS will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete receipt.

        i. Submissions containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only application submissions that have the actual requested files attached will be accepted.

    b. Encrypted submissions received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted. Applicants should work with their Information Technology team to ensure that the application submission will not be encrypted due to any security settings.

    c. File size limits are 15MB per file.

    d. Applicant document submissions are to be compiled into three files, with each file named as it is titled in bold below, and include:

        - **File #1- – Bidder Name** *PDF format preferred*
- Proposal Cover Page SF424 (only) printed out from eGrants
- Table of Contents
- Organizational Chart showing the relationship of the program staff and AmeriCorps members to the rest of the organization
- AmeriCorps Readiness Survey & Program Start-up Plan -- (Attachment H)
- Program Evaluation (If applicable)
- Independent or Internal Program Evaluation (if applicable)

        - **File #2 – Bidder Name** *PDF format preferred*
- Audit *PLUS* Management Letters and all findings
- Organization's most recently filed Form 990 (if applicable)
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (if applicable)

        - **File #3 – Bidder Name** Word format required per federal instructions
- Operational and Financial Management Survey (Attachment G)
- Explanation if delinquent on Federal Debt (if applicable)
- Labor Union Concurrence (If applicable. If not applicable, please include an explanation statement in order to avoid the appearance of omitting this consideration.)

PART IV. APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SELECTION

A. EVALUATION

I. PROCESS AND CRITERIA

State Review by Volunteer Maine, the state service commission

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

All AmeriCorps proposals are evaluated by the Commission's Grant Selection and Performance Task Force using a two-phase process.

Phase One. Peer Review of application narrative, budget, and performance measure components using federally required scoring system. Reviewers are community service practitioners and individuals with relevant expertise. They evaluate the quality of the proposals.

Volunteer Maine uses the mandated AmeriCorps 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 express their consensus recommendations to the Commissions' Grant Selection and Performance Task Force by assigning each proposal to one of the following categories:
- Strongly Recommend for Further Review (A comprehensive and thorough proposal of exceptional merit with numerous strengths; total score between 90 and 100)
- Recommend for Further Review (A proposal that demonstrates overall competence and is worthy of support; it has some weaknesses. Total score between 80 and 89)
- Recommend for Further Review with Hesitation (A proposal with approximately equal strengths and weaknesses. Total score between 60 and 79.)
- Do Not Recommend for Further Review (A proposal with serious shortcomings. There are numerous weaknesses and few strengths. Total score 59 or below)

Applications not recommended for further review will be excluded from Phase Two consideration.

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

- Public registries such as the 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. It also will consider information gathered in **a structured interview** of representatives

of the grant applicant. The representatives must include the proposed project director plus personnel responsible for finances and human resources. The interview will be conducted through remote technology and recorded. Task Force members will review the recording during their assessment.

The Task Force will use the following weighting and selection criteria during this phase:
- 25 points   Funding Priority Alignment
- 10 points   Program Model
- 15 points   Commission Preferences (rural, partnerships, marginalized communities)
- 10 points   Financial Plan
- 15 points   Fiscal Systems
- 10 points   Past Performance
- 15 points   Grant Readiness

for a possible total of 100 points.

Upon completion of the Task Force review, the scores from Phase One and Phase Two 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.

B. SELECTION

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 March 2026 business meeting. Any changes or clarifications required by the Commission as part of its vote will be resolved before the grant agreement is submitted. The Commission Grant Officer and Training Officer will work with applicants on these resolutions.

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, has the text from the federal NOFO that describes the federal agency process. Successful applicants will be notified by **mid-June 2026**

The proposals selected for grant awards by the federal AmeriCorps agency will be required to execute a Cooperative Grant Agreement after the federal agency makes awards by **mid-August 2026**.

Grant Agreements are not considered fully executed and valid until approved by the State Procurement Review Committee and funds are encumbered. No grant will be approved based on an RFA which has an effective date less than fourteen (14) calendar days after award notification to Applicants. (Referenced in the regulations of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Chapter 110, § 3(B)(i)). This provision means that a grant cannot be final until at least 14 calendar days after award notification.

PART V. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

The following application instructions describe what AmeriCorps grant applicants must provide in their funding applications. The key difference in application content for each type of grant (cost reimbursement options or fixed-amount) lies in the budget detail. these differences are noted in the budget instructions.

A. eGRANTS APPLICATION SYSTEM

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

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

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

The eGrants Help Desk is limited to the mechanical operation of the system. The Help Desk staff are not familiar with the various application instructions and cannot answer questions about content or interpret any portion of the instructions. Should you need technical assistance, the Help Desk is available by webform email at all times and by phone via the National Service Hotline (1-800-942-2677) Mon - Fri, 8 am – 8 pm ET. Be prepared to provide your Application ID and your organization's name.

NOTE: If you intend to submit a proposal, visit eGrants *early* and set up your organization's identity, user name, and password.

I. 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 Identify. 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.

II. STARTING AN APPLICATION IN EGRANTS

Applicants will need to establish an eGrants account if they have not submitted an application to the federal agency in another competition. Applicants *must use* their SAM-registered legal name and address on all grant AmeriCorps applications. Characters, abbreviations, and capitalization must match SAM exactly because the SAM database information will be compared to the AmeriCorps database.

To set up a new 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 UEI number.

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 hierarchy, applicants should review their agency policies and internal controls to determine who should initiate set up.

Note: Anyone within your organization who will be entering information in the application at any point during application preparation and submission in the eGrants system must have their own eGrants account.

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

- Under the header "Creating An Application" in the bottom left of your screen
  - Select
    - "New" if you are applying for the first time, were a Maine Rural State grantee anytime in the last 5 years, or were an AmeriCorps Planning Grant recipient anytime in the last 5 years.
    - "Continuation/Renewal" if you have operated a Standard AmeriCorps program anytime in the last 5 years.
  - Under "Select a NOFA." select AmeriCorps from the drop-down menu. A list will appear.

  - Select a NOFA. (ignore the due dates. The federal agency does not edit the date text for state competitions) This competition is EITHER:

- FY 2026 AmeriCorps State and Territory <u>Commission Fixed</u> and EAP (New and Cont) [*for fixed price applicants*], OR
- FY 2026 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission (New and Cont) [for cost reimbursement applicants]
  - o Select the state (Maine)
  - o Select the State Prime ID (using the pull-down menu; there should be one choice only.)

Once these steps are completed, you can 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."

B. APPLICATION CONTENTS (EGRANTS AND ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS)

Your application consists of information submitted through the eGrants system <u>AND</u> additional documents that must be submitted electronically (email) to the Maine Division of Procurement Services by the submission deadline. If <u>any</u> required component is not received at the time applications close – <u>that application will be rejected and not considered</u>. 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.

I. EGRANTS PARTS OF APPLICATION (ITEMS A-J)

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

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

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

C. Narratives
D. Logic Model
E. Performance Measures
F. Program Information

G. **Documents** (list of additional documents submitted)
H. **Budget Narrative** (Budget Summary form is automatically created by eGrants from budget narrative)
I. **Funding/Demographics**
J. **Review, Authorize, Submit**

II. 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. Answer the questions – don't waste space.** Reviewers want the answers to the questions asked, in the order in which they are asked, and without distracting stories or unrelated data. Use local not national data.
- **Don't make assumptions.** Do not assume proposal reviewers know anything about your organization, its programs, the geographic area you intend to serve, the local issues, your partners, or your beneficiaries. Avoid overuse of acronyms.
- **Use an impartial proofreader.** Before you submit your application, let someone who is completely unfamiliar with the project read the selection criteria and critique the narrative.
- **Follow the instructions and discuss each criterion in the order they are presented in the instructions.** Use headings to differentiate narrative sections according to the criteria.
- **eGrants does not recognize any text formatting.** To indicate headings, use CAPS; for lists use dashes rather than bullets. Bulleted lists, bold or emphasized text, indentations (outlines), charts, tables, diagrams, and other formatting WILL NOT copy into eGrants.
- **Prepare and save your application first as a word processing document** prior to uploading it into eGrants. Then, copy and paste the text into eGrants. Finally, print out the eGrants narrative to ensure all text made it into the system and the page limit was not exceeded. The text in eGrants will print as if it is double spaced.
- **Enter proposal components into eGrants at least one week before the submission deadline.** Applicants are strongly urged to start entering narrative and budget into the eGrant system very early.

Application Page Limitations
- **Applications are limited to 11 pages.** 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.
- Reviewers will only read the 11 pages as they print out from eGrants. Any excess pages beyond 11 will be removed, even if eGrants allows you to enter and submit text over the limit.
- *Note:* eGrants handles text differently than word processing programs so even if your paragraph style is set to double space, the page lengths are not comparable. Volunteer Maine will not consider the results of any alternate printing methods in determining whether an application complies with the page limits.
- This page limit **does not include** the Evaluation Plan Summary (if applicable), Logic Model, Budget, Performance Measures, nor required additional documents. 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. To have a full 8 pages you'll need to add rows.) Print using the menu option under Review.

In eGrants, each of the narrative sections is a text box field in your application's narrative record.
- Executive Summary
- Program Design
- Organizational Capability
- Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
- Evaluation Summary and Plan

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

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

Narrative Content

The outline below reflects aspects of AmeriCorps program design and operation that are most indicative of the likely success of a proposal. Peer reviewers will assess each application against the selection criteria noted below.

Categories/Subcategories	Percentage
Executive Summary	**0**
Program Design	**50**
• **Community and Logic Model**	20
• **Evidence Tier**	12
• **Evidence Quality**	8
• **Notice Priority**	4
• **Member Experience**	6
Organizational Capability	**25**
• **Organizational Background and Staffing**	15
• **Member Supervision**	10
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	**25**
• **Member Recruitment**	**8**
• **Member Retention**	**9**
• **Data Collection**	**8**

A. Executive Summary – required (0 percent)

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. There are <u>two options</u> for the second paragraph; please choose the appropriate language for your application. Do not deviate from this template:

"The [Name of the organization] will have [Number of] AmeriCorps members in [the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve, e.g. – City, State or State(s)]. AmeriCorps members will [service activities the members will do]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage [number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable] who will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing].

Cost Reimbursement grant applicants add:

*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."*

<u>*Fixed amount grant applicants add*</u> (e.g., EAP, Full-Cost Fixed, No Cost Slots):

In addition to the AmeriCorps investment, $[amount of local, state, and Federal Funds] in public funding and $[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding will support the project."

The local matching fund total should match the information in the Source of Funds section of the budget.

The federal agency will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on www.AmeriCorps.gov in the interest of transparency and Open Government. The Commission will use the Executive Summary on its website directory of AmeriCorps programs in Maine.

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.

<u>1. Community and Logic Model, 20 points.</u>

- The applicant will provide a detailed summary of the community problem, and an explanation of how the applicant's intervention(s) will lead to the outcomes identified in the Logic Model.

The applicant must describe in the Logic Model

➢ The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
  o Locations or sites in which members will provide services.
  o Setting and community condition where the intervention is delivered.
  o Number of AmeriCorps members who will deliver the intervention.
  o Characteristics of AmeriCorps members, including specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required to implement the intervention.
➢ The core activities that members will deliver as part of the intervention including:
  o Length of each activity (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions, or months of the intervention).
  o Dosage of each activity (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week).
  o 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). If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as output indicators.

> ➢ Outcomes that result from the intervention, including meaningful changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition. If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators.

Programs should include short, medium, or long-term outcomes. 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.

Applicants with multiple interventions should include the above information for each intervention in the logic model.

2. 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. 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):
Each applicant will receive an evidence tier assessment. This is based on the relative strength of the applicant's evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to the outcomes identified in the Logic Model narrative.

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**. In 2024, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 55 percent, Moderate 16 percent, Preliminary 19 percent, and Pre-Preliminary 11 percent**.**

To qualify for the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tier, applicants may submit up to two evidence documents, plus the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle, if applicable. If multiple evidence documents are submitted by the applicant, the most recent – as measured by the date of completion or publication– will be reviewed first, and any documents submitted beyond the allowable number will not be reviewed.

The intervention evaluated in the submitted evidence documents must match the intervention proposed by the applicant in the Community and Logic Model sections of the application (see Glossary, p. 5 for a definition of same intervention). Applicants must meet all requirements of an evidence tier to be considered for that tier.

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

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

- summarize the study design and key findings of the evidence documents submitted, plus, if applicable, the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle; and

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

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 to be considered for that tier.

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

Evidence Quality (8 points)

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

Standards for scoring in the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tiers:
Submitted evidence documents:
- 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.
- Describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years; and
- Show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries or AmeriCorps members in at least one key outcome of interest.

Standards for scoring in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier:
- 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; and
- 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.

3. Notice Priority (4 points)
The narrative indicates whether the proposed program
- fits within one or more of the AmeriCorps funding priorities (see page 16).

4. Member Experience (6 points)
In the narrative demonstrate how
- AmeriCorps members will be provided leadership and skill development opportunities.
- The applicant describes how the organization will provide members an asset-based orientation to 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 applicant describes:
- The roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing and providing oversight of the program.
- Their organization's mission and relevant experience in areas such as volunteer recruitment and management, community outreach, overcoming project implementation challenges, etc.
- Their organization's experience with managing grants, especially federal or state grants. Include your past performance in meeting:
  - o Grant goals and objectives.
  - o Compliance and reporting requirements.

Note: if you do not have experience with managing grants, please indicate that.

- Whether applicant has facilitated, partnered, or participated in educational, or workforce development programs e.g. work experience or job training programs, etc.

2. Member Supervision (10 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 strengthens 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 (8 points)

In the narrative the applicant describes:

- How budget expenses to support recruitment of AmeriCorps members best suited to serve the community e.g. from geographic or demographic communities in which the program operates.

- How the AmeriCorps member living allowance and other benefits are adjusted within the maximum and minimum living allowance to accommodate for regional variations in contributing to cost of living including: housing, transportation, food, and other expenses. This may vary depending on a program's type of member slots, e.g. FT, PT, RPT, etc.

2. Member Retention (9 points)

In the narrative the applicant:

- Provides a description of budget expenses to support retention of AmeriCorps members. E.g., additional member benefits such as paying 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 (8 points)

In the narrative the applicant:

- The applicant provides a description of budget expenses to support data collection, continuous improvement activities, and evaluation of the interventions and impact on the community and the member experience.

Notes:

Volunteer Maine requires a minimum living allowance ($24,905). Applicants should specify the minimum living allowance offered to members as an additional benefit above the federal minimum.

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

E. Evaluation Summary or Plan

Required for recompeting applicants:

If the applicant has previously received three or more years of competitive funding for the same project being proposed, the applicant must submit an <u>evaluation plan summary template (which includes Alternative Evaluation Approach request if applicable)</u> Refer to <u>Additional Documents</u> for instructions for submitting the evaluation plan.

Applicants must use the <u>evaluation plan</u> summary template found on the Notice webpage to craft their evaluation plans. The evaluation plan will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

All applicants enter N/A in the *Evaluation Summary or Plan* field of the Narrative. Any other text entered in this field will not be reviewed.

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 will be utilized should an applicant be funded.

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

III. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

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

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

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

To determine which service activity performance measures are appropriate for your proposal, follow this link to the federal menu of performance measures: https://www.americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2026-01/2026-AmeriCorps-State-and-National-Performance_Measure-Instructions.pdf

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IV. PROGRAM INFORMATION

In the **Program Information** Section, applicants should only check the characteristics that represent a *significant* part of the program. There are no points for selecting traits the program doesn't have.

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

V. DOCUMENTS

See page 44 for the list of required documents along with instructions on compiling them, labeling the email subject line, and submitting the document package by email.

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

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

VI. FUNDING AND DEMOGRAPHICS

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

- Other Revenue funds. Enter the amount of non-AmeriCorps funds used to operate the program. All fixed grants will have other revenue. The amount entered in this field should be equal 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. Enter a target number of volunteers recruited or managed by AmeriCorps members for single event service projects or ongoing volunteer commitments at the service site(s).

VII. OPERATING SITES

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

C. BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS: FIXED-AMOUNT GRANTS

These instructions apply only to applicants for fixed-amount grants. A worksheet for Fixed Amount Budgets is included as Attachment E.

I. SOURCE OF FUNDS

Select the "**Enter Source of Funds**" link at the top of the budget entry screen. Identify all the source(s) and amount(s) of the non-AmeriCorps revenue you will use to operate the program. Identify each source separately, indicate if it is secured or proposed, enter dollar amount, the classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal).

This field has a character limit. Please ensure your full description is included by reviewing the Budget Narrative under the REVIEW: View/Print your application option in eGrants prior to submission.

II. BUDGET SECTION 2: FIXED-AMOUNT GRANTS

Fixed Amount Grant applicants request a fixed amount of funding per MSY. Do not complete the "Grantee Share" column.

Please note these grants are paid as reimbursements and calculated using the number of hours members served during the period invoiced by the program. The final amount that a grantee receives will be adjusted to reflect actual hours served if a member does not serve the minimum hours for a term of service (i.e., leaves early).

The instructions for this section are written to make the eGrants system calculate the correct total funds requested. Because the award is based on the number of MSYs, it must be forced to use the "without allowance line." The request for living allowance on a different line permits the applicant to show the proposal complies with the minimum and may be offering more.

1. Identify the number of members you are requesting by category (i.e. full-time, three quarter-time, half-time, reduced half-time, quarter-time, minimum-time) and list under the column labeled "**#Mbrs w/o Allow**" (without AmeriCorps-funded living allowance.)
2. In the **Allowance Rate** field, enter the average amount of the living allowance for each type of member. Enter zero in the column labeled "#Mbrs w/ Allow". **Leave all other columns blank**. See screenshot below:

The total number of member service years (MSY) will **automatically calculate** at the bottom of the Member Positions chart. Use this chart to determine the total MSY:

Member Positions	Calculation	MSY
_____Full-time (1700 hours)	(_____ members x 1.000)	= _____
_____Three quarter-time (1200 hours)	(_____ members x 0.7000)	= _____
_____Half-time (900 hours)	(_____ members x 0.5000)	= _____
_____Quarter-time (450 hours)	(_____ members x 0.26455027)	= _____
_____Minimum-time (300 hours)	(_____ members x 0.21164022)	= _____
	Total MSY	= _____

Fixed amount grants may request *up to* $25,000 per MSY. Using the "Total MSY" figure, enter a calculation to explain the total amount of funds requested. A mock eGrants budget entry screen follows. Be sure to underline 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	10 MSY X $25,000/MSY	$ 250,000	$ 250,000	$0	view	
Subtotal		$ 250,000	$ 250,000	$0		

After the Source of Funds and Budget Narrative section are saved, the Budget Form (a summary by category) will generate automatically in the eGrants system. No further action is required.

NOTES: 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 comparable to the 1% Commission share of indirect that is claimed on cost reimbursement grants.

Although applicants do not submit a detailed budget, there are expenses that grantees must budget for that will not be covered under the cost/msy formula.

All applicants should expect to cover costs for staff and site staff to attend Commission and AmeriCorps-sponsored events/meetings. These include the Annual New Grantee Training (central Maine), the Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference (August in central Maine), National Service Day at the Capitol [including the AmeriCorps Service Commitment Ceremony] (late winter, in Augusta), and quarterly in-person grantee meetings. Attendance at the National conference of AmeriCorps grantees (rotates around the country -- Atlanta in 2025, Dallas in 2026) is required for program staff.

Programs should also plan for Member travel costs associated with local travel, such as bus passes to local sites, mileage reimbursement for use of car, etc. Member travel should also support member attendance at the Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference, AmeriCorps Service Commitment Ceremony, and the fall AmeriCorps Member Conference.

Programs should also anticipate member training costs, other necessary supplies, and any overhead costs such as space, computer access, and phone costs.

NSOPW and criminal history background checks are required for all members. Program staff, consultants and contractors are not required to have criminal history background checks. The NSOPW cost is $7.50 per person and $45 per person will cover the other required criminal history background checks

AmeriCorps members must wear an AmeriCorps logo daily – preferably clothing with the AmeriCorps logo. The items with the AmeriCorps logo are a required expense. Grantees may add the AmeriCorps logo to their own local program uniform items using federal funds.

D. BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS: COST REIMBURSEMENT GRANTS

These instructions apply only to applicants for Cost Reimbursement grants

If you are applying for the first time, you must provide a Grantee Share (aka match) with cash or in-kind contributions at least 24% of the project's <u>total</u> 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 36 for the match schedule. For guidance on sources and types of local share/match, see page 21.

> To determine the 24% target match amount use the following formula
> **a.** Cost/msy x number of MSY = total federal share.
> **b.** Total federal share x 0.3158 = 24% match amount
> **c.** Total federal share + match amount = total program budget amount

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 E, page 81, 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).

SECTION I. PROGRAM OPERATING COSTS

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 $1,000,000 in federal funds as required in § 200.501. 2 CFR Part 200 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 in Attachment E on page 81 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 and 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 New Grantee Training (central Maine), the Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference (August in central

Maine), National Service Day at the Capitol [including the AmeriCorps Service Commitment Ceremony] (late winter, in Augusta), and quarterly in-person grantee meetings. Attendance at the National conference of AmeriCorps grantees (Dallas in 2026) 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 Dallas: 2 staff (X $400 airfare) + (3 day @ $200/day shared lodging + $70 per diem per person) + $50 shared ground transportation =$1,870 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, and the fall 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 <u>per unit</u>** (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 daily – preferably clothing with the AmeriCorps logo. The items with the AmeriCorps logo are a required budget expense. Please include the cost of the item with the AmeriCorps logo in your budget <u>or</u> 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-grant 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 National meeting ($250 pp), Maine Volunteer Leadership Conference ($75 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 ($60 pp) as well as the 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 $45 per person will cover the other required criminal history background checks.

- Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects. This must be adequately documented in financial records.

- 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 has 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. Less-than-fulltime members who are serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period (such as a full-time summer project) are eligible for health care benefits. 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. 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.
  - o The Federal share of healthcare costs may not exceed 85% of this budget item

- **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 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, 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 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:

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

([Total AmeriCorps **share of Section I] + [Total** AmeriCorps **share of Section II] x 0.0526) x (0.80) =** 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, 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 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:

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

([Total AmeriCorps share of Section I] + [Total AmeriCorps share of Section II] x 0.0526) x (0.80) = 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. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget sections, as long as the minimum match of 24% for the first three years, and the increasing minimums in subsequent years, are maintained. See match rates for recompeting applicants on page 36. (45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90 lists the regulatory minimums).

D. 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 eGrants:
- Review
- Verify Budget, Performance Measures, and Narrative contents
- Authorize
- Assurances: https://egrants.cns.gov/cnsmisc/EASSUR.HTM
- Certifications: https://egrants.cns.gov/cnsmisc/eCerts.htm
- Submit

Each assurance or certification must be <u>opened and read before</u> 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.

If the grant author is not the applicant's authorized representative, that authorized representative must log into their eGrants account and proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, his/her name will override any previous signatory that may appear and show on the application as the Authorized Representative.

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

ATTACHMENT A: SAMPLE VIEW OF FACESHEET GENERATED BY EGRANTS

(eGrants Inserts Data Using Applicant Info and Application Info Sections)

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

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE Standard Form 424 (Rev. 2-2007) Prescribed by OMB Circular A-102	**1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION:** ☒ 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. d. ADDRESS *(give street address, city, county, state and zip code)*: STREET: CITY: COUNTY: STATE: COUNTRY:	5. e. NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION *(give area code)*: NAME: 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: ☐		**16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS?**

a. FEDERAL	$	a. YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE
		    TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR
		      REVIEW ON:
		      DATE _____

b. APPLICANT	$	
c. STATE	$	b. NO. ☒ PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372
d. LOCAL	$	
e. OTHER	$	**17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT?** ☐ YES If "Yes," attach an explanation. ☐ NO
f. PROGRAM INCOME	$	
g. TOTAL	$	

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

a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:	b. TITLE:	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER:
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED:

ATTACHMENT B: LOGIC MODEL CHART

Use the format below to prepare the logic model for entry into the eGrants Logic Model Section. ***Do not*** enter text as paragraphs but use an 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. **Print the eGrants logic model before submitting and check it does not exceed the 8-page limit**.

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

ATTACHMENT C: PERFORMANCE MEASURES INSTRUCTIONS (EGRANTS PERFORMANCE MEASURES MODULE)

I. Performance Measurement Module of eGrants

In the performance measures module, you will:
- Provide information about your program's connection to 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 from the AmeriCorps strategic plan appears. A list of common interventions appears under each objective
First click on a focus area. Then click on an objective. Only the performance measures that correspond to the objectives you select on this tab will be available for selection as you continue through this module. To see which performance measures correspond to which objective, refer to the AmeriCorps 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 also.

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

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

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

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

Provide a short, descriptive title for your performance measure.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Expand each output and outcome and enter data collection information.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Summary Tab
The summary tab shows all of the information you have entered in the module.
- To print a summary of all performance measures, click "Print PDF for all Performance Measures."
- To print one performance measure, expand the measure and click "Print This Measure."
- Click "Edit Performance Measure" to return to the Performance Measure tab.
- Click "Edit Data Collection" to return to the Data Collection tab.
- "Click Validate Performance Measures" to validate this module prior to submitting your application. You should also use the Performance Measures Checklist in Appendix B of the Performance Measure Instructions to self-assess your measure(s) prior to submission.

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

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

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

Objective #1: K-12 Success							
Type of Member	MSY Multiplier for Type	x	Number of Members for Type	x	% of Member Time for Objective	=	MSY Allocation
FT	1	x	100	x	.50	=	50
TQT	.7	x	0	x	0	=	
HT	.5	x	5	x	.80	=	2
QT	.26455027	x	10	x	1.00	=	2.65
MT	.21164022	x	10	x	1.00	=	2.17
	Total Members		125		Total MSYs		56.82

Objective #2: School Readiness							
Type of Member	MSY Multiplier for Type	x	Number of Members for Type	x	% of Member Time for Objective	=	MSY Allocation
FT	1	x	100	x	.50	=	50
TQT	.7	x	0	x	0	=	
HT	.5	x	5	x	.20	=	.5

QT	.26455027	x	10	x	0	=
MT	.21164022	x	10	x	0	=
	Total Members		**125**		**Total MSYs**	**50.5**

How It Looks on the MSY Tab

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

How It Looks in the 424 PDF

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

MSYs by Focus Area

100%

■ Education:111.13

Table1:   MSYs by Focus Areas

Focus Area	% MSYs
Education	100%

Table4: No of MSY and Members by Objective

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

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

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

Because some members are performing service related to both K-12 Success and School Readiness, the total number of members listed in this table (240) is greater than the total number of slots the program is requesting (135).

This is OK; *individual members* can be counted more than once if they contribute to more than one objective.

In contrast, *MSY*s cannot be counted more than once, because they represent the amount of member time spent on a particular objective. As a result, the total number of MSYs listed in this table must be equal to the total MSYs the program is requesting (111.13).

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

How To Assign MSYs to Performance Measures

When a program creates an aligned performance measure, it must indicate how many MSYs and how many members will

MSYs by Objective

45%   55%

■ K-12 Success:60.63   ■ School Readiness:50.5

Table2: MSYs by Objectives

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

contribute to the outcomes of the aligned measure. Based on the MSY allocations already entered for the sample program, the program may allocate no more than 60.63 MSYs to K-12 Success performance measures, and no more than 50.5 MSYs to School Readiness performance measures. However, programs are not required to measure all of their activities, so it is possible that not all of these MSYs will be allocated to performance measures.
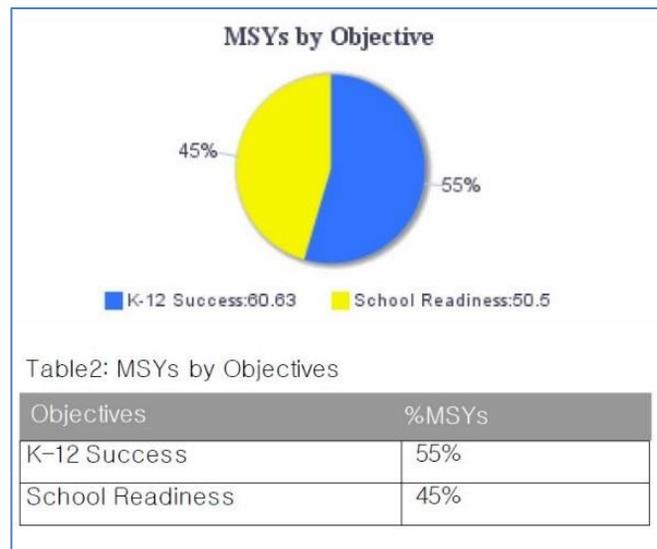
Our sample program has three performance measures, one for the K-12 Success objective and two for the School Readiness objective.

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

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

% of MSY NPM VS Applicant VS Not in ANY

14%   11%

75%

■ Applicant:12.62   ■ National:83.35   ■ Not in ANY:15.16

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

% MSYs	NPM	Applicant	Not in ANY
	75%	11%	14%
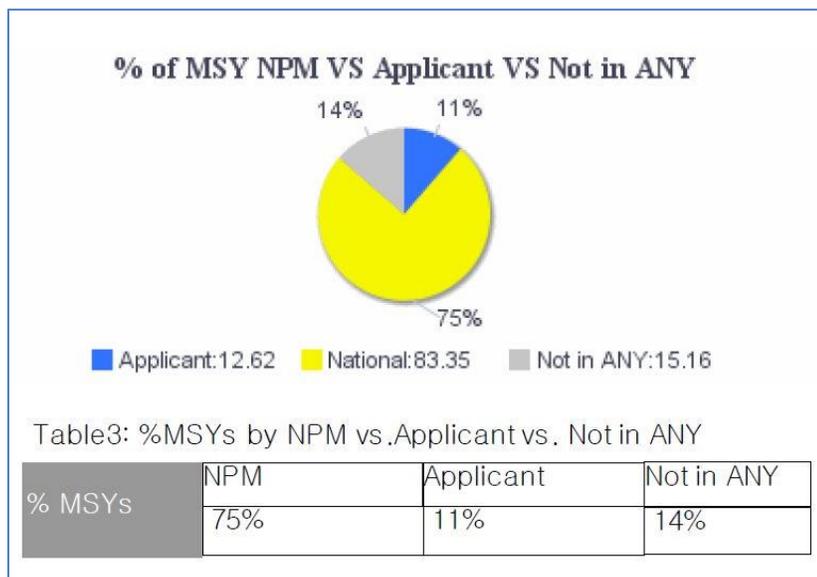
How It Looks in the 424 PDF

Table 3 and its corresponding pie chart in the 424 PDF report shows the percentage of MSYs allocated to National Performance Measures, applicant-determined performance measures, or to no performance measures.

As seen in the table above, the program has two National Performance Measures (ED3A/4A/27A and ED20/21/23), accounting for 75% of total MSYs.

The program has one applicant-determined measure, and a small percentage of program activity is not being measured.

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

ATTACHMENT D: COST REIMBURSEMENT BUDGET WORKSHEET

Section I. Program Operating Costs

A. Personnel Expenses

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

B. Personnel Fringe Benefits

Purpose/Description	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals				

C.1. Staff Travel

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals				

C. 2. Member Travel –

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals				

D. Equipment

Purpose	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

E. Supplies

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share

Totals				

F. Contractual and Consultant Services

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

G.1. Staff Training

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

G.2. Member Training

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

H. Evaluation

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

I. Other Program Operating Costs

Purpose	Calculation	Daily Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Totals					

	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Subtotal Section I:			

Section II. Member Costs --

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

A. Living Allowance

Item	# Members	Living Allowance Rate	# w/o Allowance	Total Amount	CNCS $ Share	Grantee $ Share
Full Time (1700 hrs)						
Three Quarter Time (1200 hrs)						
Half Time (900 hrs)						
Quarter Time (450 hrs)						
Minimum Time (300 hrs)						
			Totals			

B. Member Support Costs

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
	Totals			

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

Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs

A. CNCS Fixed Percentage Method

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

OR

B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate Method

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

OR

C. De Minimus Rate Method

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
	Totals			

	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Total Sections I + II + III:			

NOTE – CNCS share divided by the total number of requested MSY cannot exceed the max cost/msy, page 33

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

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

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

ATTACHMENT E: FIXED AMOUNT GRANT BUDGET WORKSHEET

A. Member Positions

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

Item		# of Mbrs by type	Allowance Rate	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Full-time (1700 hrs)	Mbrs w/allow.					
	without allow.					
Three quarter-time (1200 hrs)	Mbrs w/allow.					
	without allow.					
Half-time (900 hrs)	Mbrs w/allow.					
	without allow.					
Quarter-time (450 hrs)	Mbrs w/allow.					
	without allow.					
Minimum-time (300 hrs)	Mbrs w/allow.					
	without allow.					
Category Totals						

B. Fixed Award

Complete the calculation using the total available Cost per MSY and **NOT** the amount you have entered for the living stipend.

Purpose Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Program Grant Request			
Member Positions: _____ x $25,000/MSY			
Totals			

C. Source of Funds

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

Section	Match Description
AmeriCorps Member Positions	

NOTE: This field has a character limit. Please ensure your full description is included by reviewing the Budget Narrative under the REVIEW: View/Print your application option in eGrants prior to submission.

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.

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 <u>required</u> 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 <u>45CFR §§2521.95</u> and <u>2540.110</u>).

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.

<u>Entry for the IDCR screen can be accessed using the following steps:</u>
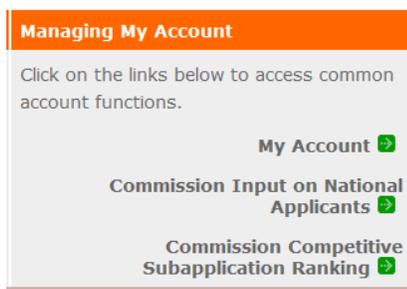
1) From the **eGrants Home** screen, in the lower panel under **Managing My Account**, click on **My Account**

2) From the **My Account** screen, under **Edit My Organization Info**, click on **Add and View Indirect Cost Rate**
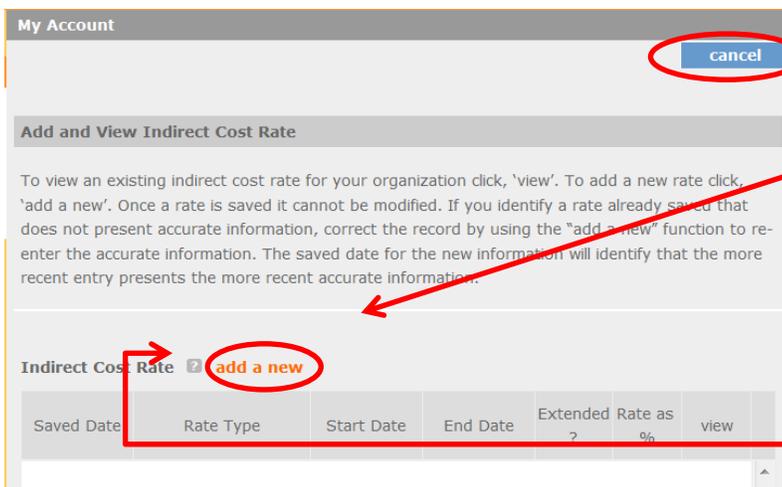
3) From the **Add and View Indirect Cost Rate** screen, select **add a new** to add a rate or **cancel** to back out of the screen.

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

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

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

If your organization will be claiming a current, approved indirect cost rate on any 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. This is determined by the agency which provides the highest amount of direct federal funding;
or

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) **A 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	
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. Please indicate whether the organization has current **written policies and procedures** in the following areas (answer Yes or No):	
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	
Please indicate the **training** areas below that are **provided to employees** by the organization (answer Yes or No)	
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 an 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		
Is your organization's accounting system manual, automated, or a combination?		
Is there a chart of accounts?		
Check the functions your accounting system maintains	☐	General Ledger
	☐	Project Cost Ledger
	☐	Cash Receipts Journal
	☐	Cash Disbursements Journal
	☐	Payroll Journal
	☐	Income (Sales) Journal
	☐	Purchase Journal
	☐	General Journal
Other (specify):		
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? (501c3, 501c4, 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.

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. Is the strategic plan linked to the overall mission, vision and purpose of the organization?
			6. Is the strategic plan broadly known by the staff and board?
			7. Is this annual plan consistently used at all levels of the organization to direct operations?
			8. Does your organization conduct frequent assessments of the community needs?
			9. Does your organization analyze the results of needs assessments and implement changes?
			10. Does the organization have a track record of growing and/or creating programs to meet needs of its customers/clients/constituents?
			12. Do you have and use an evaluation system to measure the impact of programs and services?
			13. Do you analyze evaluation or performance data and report findings to stakeholders in a timely manner? (e.g. issue a public annual report)
			14. Does the organization conduct frequent assessment of existing programs' effectiveness in meeting recipient needs AND identify areas for improvement?
			15. Does the organization assess internal operations to assess efficiency and effectiveness?
			16. If yes to questions 15-16, are adjustments and/or improvements always made?
			17. Does your organization have networked computing hardware with a comprehensive range of up-to-date business software applications?
			18. Does every key staff member have a computer with up-to-date software?
			19. Does every key staff member have internet access and e-mail capabilities?
			20. Is computer technology used regularly by staff?
			21. Does the organization have a documented (written) process to recruit, develop and retain employees?
			22. Does the organization provide relevant and regular internal and external training?
			23. Are employee performance appraisals done annually, consistently, and in writing?
			24. Does the organization recruit, develop, and deploy volunteers to deliver mission-related services to its customers/constituents?
			25. Does your organization have more than 2 significant sources of operating funds?
			26. Does your organization have an active board of directors or other governing body?

Section 2. 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 regarding 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			

Section 3. AmeriCorps Program Start-up Plan

The list below outlines the elements that need to be in place for a successful AmeriCorps program operation. Some items may already exist in organizations that handle other federal programs or have well-developed volunteer programs. The list only covers tasks that need to occur early in program start-up and does not cover the full year of a program's operation.

Indicate the date an item will be completed or was completed and the person who was responsible.

Proposed Program Start Date:	Responsible Person	Completion Date
Administrative		
Meet with agency finance and human resource staff to review grant requirements and budget		
Set up accounting system to track program expenses		
Conduct National Service Criminal History background checks on every employee who will be supported by AmeriCorps funds or shown as grantee share on budget		
Modify time/effort reporting of employees working on grant to record time devoted to this grant (see Uniform Guidance for requirements)		
Determine whether organization needs permission to incur costs ahead of grant start date and take appropriate action		
Complete "Signature Authorization Form" to let Commission know what names/signatures should appear on grant agreement		
Determine what agency human resource policies will apply to AmeriCorps members (travel reimbursement, building access, use of technology, confidentiality, access to their records, health and safety requirements, etc.). Include review of any differences in conducting background checks and review of social media or other publicly available information sources.		
Register Human Resource, Financial, and Program staff for the Commission grantee training sessions and attend		
Consult with worker compensation and liability insurance company to determine if members will be covered or if alternative coverage must be obtained.		
Check health insurance options and determine what will be offered by program.		
Establish program policies and procedures for the issues that are not covered by standard agency policies or procedures. If accompaniment will be required, establish policy and procedure for complying.		
Complete/submit to Commission OnCorps Report Authorization form.		
➢ **Member Management**		
Identify the basic qualifications required/essential for selection to serve in the program. Include any background check findings that would disqualify someone from service (e.g., driving under the influence for a position that will transport students).		
Develop the member training plan starting with orientation and going through the year of growing member skills, knowledge, and abilities related to service, the community, and citizenship. Leave some time for opportunities that will emerge during the year.		

Proposed Program Start Date:	Responsible Person	Completion Date
Using the template from the Commission, create a service position description for each different type of Member (e.g., nutrition educator, fall prevention educator) using basic qualifications as the foundation for adding specific qualifications, responsibilities, service term, etc. Factor training to be provided into essential and preferred/desired qualifications.		
Develop selection process including application (if using supplement to federal portal), releases, interview protocol, process for determining eligibility, process for making decision to offer, and all the steps through enrollment. Be sure to include process for showing how findings in background check were applied to selection especially if applicant has a record or conviction. Engage agency HR leader in design of this process, especially in how to document steps, decisions, and compliance with equal opportunity laws.		
Develop application tracking system that will flag critical time requirements and prevent overlooking significant detail. Include all steps for background checks including calling references (even those who submitted written ones).		
Extract from service position description the details required in the federal MyAmeriCorps portal used for final selection and enrollment. Enter information in the portal which uses the language "service opportunity."		
Outline recruitment plan to include balance of local, regional, national avenues as well as targeted outreach to communities that could bring diverse perspectives to effort		
Add position description to your own website.		
Develop recruitment postings for ServeMaine.org and other recruitment sites or opportunities. Distribute according to plan.		
Review agency code of conduct and code of ethics and determine if modifications/adaptation is needed for AmeriCorps members.		
Develop grievance policy and procedure for AmeriCorps members. It may be a modification/adaptation of agency policy.		
Review agency policy and procedure for employee disciplinary actions. Modify and adapt to AmeriCorps members.		
Create AmeriCorps Member agreement using template from Commission. Check Cooperative Agreement including terms and conditions for information/updates on member management issues that impact member agreement.		
Develop AmeriCorps Member handbook with policies, procedures, program information they will need.		
Set up record keeping system that protects PII and other information submitted as part of applying to program.		
Learn Member record and reporting interface in OnCorps and determine which of the timesheet options best suits program.		
Create AmeriCorps member orientation covering program purpose, service activities, AmeriCorps requirements, member roles and responsibilities, introduction to agency (and supervisors if serving at host sites), etc.		
Learn National Service Trust portal workflow for inviting applicant to accept position, getting citizenship clearance, enrollment, and site assignment.		
Set up MEVHCS account and Truescreen account and become familiar with how the systems work		
Conduct interview and selection process for applicants to serve.		
Enroll AmeriCorps members in National Service Trust (portal).		
Download Trust information and import into OnCorps.		
Complete OnCorps program management set-up: Enter Member position descriptions, host sites (if applicable), member information, site supervisors, program budget, and program performance measures.		

Proposed Program Start Date:	Responsible Person	Completion Date
Establish calendar for member supervision, meetings, site visits (if they will serve at other locations), submission of service timesheets, member reports, all-team community service projects, trainings, and member evaluations.		
Develop Member evaluation process and assessment tool for use at mid-term and end-of-term performance review.		
➤ **Program Management**		
If members will serve at locations other than grantee facility:		
Develop host site agreement detailing what program will do, what member will do, and what site will do. Under site responsibilities, include orientation to agency/facility, regular supervision meetings, verification of service reported by member, provision of tools/materials to accomplish service, access to pertinent training or coaching, enforcement of prohibited activities, AmeriCorps identification, in-kind documentation (if applicable), cost share and payments (if applicable), attendance at program meetings, etc.		
Identify supervisor at host site and ensure the person has appropriate credentials.		
Develop site supervisor guide with checklist for site orientation, schedule for approving time logs, meeting dates, etc.		
Plan and conduct host site supervisor training. Include review of program, goals, performance measures, site agreement, supervisor role in program compliance and success, supervision basics (many supervisors have not held this role before), AmeriCorps introduction and regulatory requirements of sites.		
Establish schedule of check-ins between program director and site supervisors. Determine support needs of supervisors in the context of program. Plan appropriate training/coaching.		
All programs		
Develop a clear understanding of the tasks to be done in the portal and what tasks are done in OnCorps		
Complete tutorials on using OnCorps platform.		
Review reports in portal under S&N Reports menu and determine schedule for running them to check federal data against your records.		
Copy approved grant budget into OnCorps so finance official can request reimbursements.		
Develop data collection plan in preparations for progress reporting and evaluation.		
Design feedback/assessment survey for service beneficiaries to use in giving feedback on experience or quality.		
Determine membership of advisory council, meeting schedule, and procedures for getting their assistance on securing resources, reviewing survey feedback, assessing/promoting community awareness, conducting days of service, etc.		

ATTACHMENT I: FEDERAL APPLICATION REVIEW

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.

Review and Selection Process

AmeriCorps will engage reviewers with relevant expertise to assess the eligible applications. The determinations made by AmeriCorps reviewers may be different from what the applicant self-determined upon submission of its application. The stages of the review and selection process follow:

a. Initial Application Compliance and Eligibility Review

AmeriCorps will do an initial compliance and eligibility check before reviewing applications. To pass this check, applicants must:
- Be an eligible organization,
- Be eligible to apply for a Full Cost Fixed Grant,
- Be eligible to submit directly to AmeriCorps,
- Have an active SAM registration, and
- Submit an application by the submission deadline.

Eligibility assessment is intended to ensure that only those applications that are eligible for award are reviewed. However, determinations of eligibility can take place at any point during the application review and selection process. Applicants that are determined to be ineligible will not receive an award.

b. Application Review

Review

Reviewers will assess applications based on the Program Design, Organizational Capability, Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, and Evidence Selection Criteria.

AmeriCorps will also review and assess the input from the State Service Commissions about multi-state National Direct applications. Staff will also assess budget compliance, and review for prohibited activities.

Post-Review Quality Control

AmeriCorps staff will review the initial results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Post-Review Quality Control assessment.

c. Pre-Award Risk Assessment

AmeriCorps staff will assess the risks posed by each applicant. Results from this assessment will inform funding decisions. If AmeriCorps determines that an award will be made to an applicant with risks, special conditions may be applied to the award. AmeriCorps may decide to not fund an applicant based on the level of risk.

In assessing risks, AmeriCorps may consider:

1. Due Diligence, including
- Federal debt delinquency;
- Suspension and debarment;
- Information available through Office of Management and Budget (OMB)- designated sources of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
  - U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services;
  - System for Award Management (SAM); and
  - Do Not Pay.
- 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; and
- Public Litigation Records.

2. Operational and Financial Management, including:
- Financial stability; and
- Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS)

3. Past Performance, including:
- Applicant's record in managing previous AmeriCorps awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
  - Timely compliance with applicable reporting requirements;
  - Accuracy of data reported;
  - Validity of performance measure data reported;
  - Conformity to the terms and conditions of previous Federal awards;
  - Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients;
  - Timely closeout of other awards;
  - Meeting matching requirements;
  - Extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards; and
  - Meeting National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) compliance.

4. Other Programmatic Risks, Financial, Organizational, Compliance, and Fraud including:
- Publicly available information, including from the applicant organization's website;
- Amount of funding requested by the organization; and
- Other elements, such as keyword searches for prohibited activities.

d. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information.

Before making any award that exceeds $250,000, AmeriCorps must consider information about the applicant from the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov.

Any applicant may comment upon information previously entered by another Federal agency in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM.gov.

AmeriCorps may consider applicant comments when completing its review of risk. AmeriCorps may also consider other information about any applicant receiving an award, including those under $250,000.

e. Selection for Funding

The review and selection process are designed to:
- Identify how well eligible applications are aligned with the application selection criteria.
- Build a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
  - AmeriCorps Funding Priorities;
  - Meaningful representation of:
    - rural communities, and
    - innovative community strategies; and
  - CEO discretion to advance strategic goals.

In selecting applicants to receive awards under this Notice, the Chief Executive Officer will try to include a diverse portfolio of applications based on staff recommendations, alignment with selection criteria, and strategic considerations.

AmeriCorps reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, if unforeseen circumstances make it impossible, impracticable, or inefficient to conduct the review process

as planned. AmeriCorps reserves the right to re-focus program dollars under this Notice in the event of disaster or other compelling needs.

An applicant denied any portion of funding may request reconsideration of a funding decision within 5 business days of receiving notice of their denial. Reconsideration will only be granted if there is clear and substantial error. Any reconsideration of denied applications is entirely subject to the agency's discretion.

f. Applicant Resolution

After the application review process, before any grant awards are issued, AmeriCorps may ask an applicant for additional information to address any application compliance or risk issues. If an applicant does not respond promptly to these requests, then the applicant may be denied funding.

AmeriCorps will ask all grantees for a written compliance implementation plan that includes notification of waste, fraud, and abuse to the agency's Office of Inspector General.

Feedback to Applicants

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

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.

Further information about funded grants and subgrants is also available in USASpending.gov.