

**2018-2019 AmeriCorps*State 2
Request for New & Re-competing
Formula and Planning Grant Applications**



ISSUED: April 4, 2018
DEADLINE: May 17, 2018 - 5:00 pm CST

State Capitol, 6th Floor West
P.O. Box 98927
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509—8927
Phone: 402-471-6249 or 800-291-8911
www.serve.nebraska.gov

CFDA: 94.006
OMB Control #: 3045-0047
Expiration Date: 1/31/2018

Important Dates and Key Factors should be considered in crafting your application:

- Read the Notice of Funding Opportunity and attachments fully and carefully before beginning to work on grant application.
- Release of Notice for Formula and Planning grant request for applications **April 4, 2018**.
- One representative from your organization must attend at least one informational session:

- **4/9/18: Webinar @ 11:30am-12:30pm**

Topic: Informational Session #1

Host: Audrey Jackson

Date: Monday, April 9, 2018

Time: 11:30 am, Central Daylight Time (Chicago, GMT-05:00)

Session number: 923 830 124

Session password: kwSSbtvP

To join the training session

1. Go to <https://nvcn-cio.webex.com/nvcn-cio/k2/j.php?MTID=tcb2adbc47db2a91965e6531f1567cb77>

2. Enter your name and email address.

3. Enter the session password: kwSSbtvP.

4. Click "Join Now".

5. Follow the instructions that appear on your screen.

To view in other time zones or languages, please click the link

<https://nvcn-cio.webex.com/nvcn-cio/k2/j.php?MTID=t1e4bff203446da06775a4615f2cb7bfa>

To join the session by phone only

To receive a call back, provide your phone number when you join the training session, or call the number below and enter the access code.

USA Toll: 1-240-454-0879

Access code: 923 830 124

- **4/17/18: Webinar @ 12:00pm-1:00pm**

Topic: Informational Session #2

Host: Audrey Jackson

Date: Tuesday, April 17, 2018

Time: 12:00 pm, Central Daylight Time (Chicago, GMT-05:00)

Session number: 923 521 903

Session password: Ga92sgsz

To join the training session

1. Go to <https://nvcn-cio.webex.com/nvcn-cio/k2/j.php?MTID=t4d7f8c08e29958a7989eed5614e3ca3>

2. Enter your name and email address.

3. Enter the session password: Ga92sgsz.

4. Click "Join Now".

5. Follow the instructions that appear on your screen.

To view in other time zones or languages, please click the link

<https://nvcn-cio.webex.com/nvcn-cio/k2/j.php?MTID=tc3c76cb0fce5226a6a085ab3b21ac2db>

To join the session by phone only

To receive a call back, provide your phone number when you join the training session, or call the number below and enter the access code.

USA Toll: 1-240-454-0879

- Mandatory notification of intent to apply due to ServeNebraska on **April 20, 2018 by 5:00pm CST**.
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018-2019-2intenttoapply>

- Formula and Planning grant applications due to ServeNebraska in a word document, performance measure template, and budget template to dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov by **May 17, 2018**.
- Funding letters to programs with clarifications, changes, and updates. **May 31-June 6, 2018**.
- Clarifications, changes, and updates due to ServeNebraska **June 10, 2018 by 5:00pm CST**.
- Programs will submit grant application packages into e-grants once clarifications are approved by ServeNebraska on **June 12, 2018**.
- All program leaders and staff assigned to the AmeriCorps grant will attend a mandatory Program Leader Launch on **June 19-21, 2018**. Location & times TBA.
- Mandatory participation in all ServeNebraska events, program leader meetings, events, and days of service TBA 2018-2019 AmeriCorps Reporting and Training Calendar.
- ServeNebraska requires programs to have a dedicated program leader identified, appropriate to the size of the program responsible to operate the AmeriCorps program and manage members.
- ServeNebraska is electing to retain a 2% share of the 5% of federal dollars available budgeted for program year 2018-2019 administrative costs. All applicants are required to budget the maximum allowable federal resources for Administrative/Indirect costs and spend those Administrative resources.
- ServeNebraska will award formula funding to programs that consist of no fewer than 3 Member Service Years (MSY).
- ServeNebraska hosts signature events to promote professional development of AmeriCorps members within Nebraska during 2018-2019 program year-AmeriCorps Legislative visits, ServeNebraska Symposium, National Days of Service, ServeNebraska week, and encourage participation in Step Forward Awards. All AmeriCorps programs will be expected to identify and select AmeriCorps members to participate in Disaster Training and Response.
- No applicants may exceed the cost per member service year (MSY) of \$14,932 for cost reimbursement grants.
- ALL programs will be required submit their grant application in a word document, performance measure template, and budget template provided, in addition to all attached documents listed in this *Notice*.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

ServeNebraska mobilizes Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration, and national service programs. ServeNebraska is committed to uniting individuals in service to their communities and achieving demonstrable results by funding AmeriCorps programs that address Nebraska's unmet educational, economic, environmental, health, veterans and disaster response needs. *This Notice of funding being released for new and re-competing applications for formula funding for programs operate exclusively within the state of Nebraska.*

ServeNebraska encourages organizations to consider or submit AmeriCorps Education Award Only Program applications. Funding for Education Award Only programs assures federal support for the educational awards of enrolled members, but provides very limited operational support -- \$800 per full-time member. Grantees must use their own or other resources to cover any AmeriCorps member living allowances and other program costs. Applicants interested in submitting an Education Award Only Program application or incorporating Education Award Only positions into your program design should contact, Audrey Jackson at 402-471-6249 or e-mail her at: dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov for consultation and technical assistance.

ServeNebraska administers AmeriCorps funds and programming in Nebraska as required and governed by federal and state law rules and regulations. Nebraskans have a solid history of providing innovative national service programming. AmeriCorps members, and the volunteers they have recruited, have provided thousands of hours in service aiding children, youth, and families in communities throughout the state. It is exciting that you are interested in building on this legacy.

ServeNebraska strongly recommends that potential applicants thoroughly read and understand this Notice of funding opportunity fully.

Applicants must carefully put together a proposal that will meet the demands of a potentially strong competition and to consider creative and innovative collaborations. ServeNebraska also encourages applicants to carefully identify ways these activities can be supported with local resources by reaching out to new partners and introducing visionary service methods should Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS) funding be reduced or eliminated.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations (see *Eligible Applicants* section) proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions to strengthen communities. 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 from the National Service Trust that members can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

CNCS Focus Areas

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended by the Serve America Act, emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on a core set of issue areas. In order to carry out Congress' intent and to maximize the impact of investment in national service, CNCS has the following focus areas:

Disaster Services

Grant activities will provide support to increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters, improve individuals' readiness to respond to disasters, help individuals recover from disasters, and/or help individuals mitigate disasters. Grantees also have the ability to respond to national disasters under CNCS cooperative agreements and FEMA mission assignments.

Economic Opportunity

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

Education

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

Environmental Stewardship

Grants will support responsible stewardship of the environment, while preparing communities for challenging circumstances and helping Americans respond to and recover from disruptive life events: programs that conserve natural habitats; protect clean air and water; maintain public lands; support wild land fire mitigation; cultivate individual and community self-sufficiency; provide reforestation services after floods or fires; and more. AmeriCorps programs support activities, such as conservation and fire corps, which may also help veterans and others learn new job skills through conservation service.

Healthy Futures

Grants will provide support for activities that will improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities served by CNCS-supported programs; increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible; and/or increase physical activity and improve nutrition in youth with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity.

Veterans and Military Families

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

2. Funding Priorities (See Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for further information about some of the priorities)

CNCS seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in the following areas:

- Disaster Services - improving community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation

- Economic Opportunity - increasing economic opportunities for communities by engaging opportunity youth, either as the population served and/or as AmeriCorps members, to prepare them for the workforce
- Education - improving student academic performance in Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Mathematics (STEM)
- Healthy Futures - reducing and/or preventing prescription drug and opioid abuse
- Veterans and Military Families - positively impacting the quality of life of veterans and improving military family strength
- Governor and Mayor Initiatives
- Rural intermediaries - organizations that demonstrate measureable impact and primarily serve communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.
- Safer Communities - programs that focus on public safety, preventing and mitigating civil unrest, and/or partnerships between law enforcement and the community
- Evidence Based Intervention Planning Grants
- Encore Programs - programs that engage Americans age 55 and older

In order to receive priority consideration for submitting an application within a *Notice* priority(ies), applicants must demonstrate that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes and must include a high quality program design. Responses that propose programs for the purpose of receiving priority consideration are not guaranteed funding.

3. Performance Measures

ServeNebraska requires all applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (output and outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. Additional performance measures, including output-only National Performance Measures, may also be included if desired; however, all performance measures must be consistent with the program’s Theory of Change and represent significant program activities. ServeNebraska does not expect applicants to select performance measures to correspond to each and every potential member activity or community impact. ServeNebraska values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures.

ServeNebraska expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance measurement strategy if the National Performance Measures are part of the applicant’s theory of change. Applicants should use both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work as well as make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals. For more information, please refer to the National Performance Measure Instructions [<http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities>].

As described in the Application Instructions, applicants must include all information about their proposed performance measure in the Performance Measure section of the applications in CNCS’s web-based grants management system, e-grants once approved by ServeNebraska.

All definitions and data collection requirements described in the National Performance Measure Instructions must be included in the text of the performance measures themselves, and it must be evident in the performance measure text that all definitions and requirements outlined in the National Performance Measures Instructions are met. Providing performance measures information elsewhere in the narrative cannot be in lieu of providing full information in the Performance Measures section of the application in CNCS’s web-based grant management system.

In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets for their performance measures. Re-competing applicants proposing to significantly increase or decrease output or outcome targets from their previous grant should provide a justification for this change.

4. Program Authority

CNCS’s legal authority to award these grants is found in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, (NCSA) (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.)

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimated Available Funds

ServeNebraska expects a highly competitive AmeriCorps grant competition. ServeNebraska reserves the right to prioritize providing funding to existing awards over making new awards. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

2. Estimated Award Amount

Grant awards have two components: operating funds and AmeriCorps member positions. Grant award amounts vary – both in the level of operating funds and in the type and amount of AmeriCorps member positions – as determined by the scope of the projects.

3. Project and Award Period

The project period is generally one year, with a start date proposed by the applicant. In most cases, the application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding for subsequent years is not guaranteed and shall be dependent upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance.

The project start date may not occur prior to the date ServeNebraska awards the grant. 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 as designated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.

4. Type of Award

a. AmeriCorps Operating Grants: ServeNebraska may award a Cost Reimbursement or a Fixed Amount grant to any successful applicant, but the availability of a Full-Time Fixed Amount grant is limited to certain applicants. See the *Eligible Applicants* section and the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for more information. ServeNebraska will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year.

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement			Fixed Amount		
	Traditional	Professional Corps	Evidence-Based Planning Grant	Full-time	Education Award Program (EAP)	Professional Corps
Available Subtypes						
Maximum Cost per MSY	\$14,932	\$1,000*	N/A	\$13,430	\$800	\$1,000*
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	All	All	N/A	Full-time or Less than Full-time serving in a full-time capacity	All	Full-time only
Budget Submission Required	Yes			No		Yes, if requesting operating funds
Availability of Funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSYs	No			Yes		
Special Requirements	N/A	Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries must be paid entirely by organization where member serves and not included in budget.	See Notice	N/A		Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries must be paid entirely by organization where member serves and not included in budget.

Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes	Yes; Living allowance or salary paid to members may not be counted toward the match requirements	Yes	No	
Available to new Applicants	Yes		No	Yes	

a. Evidence Based Intervention Planning Grants: ServeNebraska is seeking applications for planning grants that will be used to develop national service models¹ that seek to integrate members in innovative ways into evidence-based interventions. For example, in the Economic Opportunity focus area applicants could explore how to adapt social enterprise, workforce partnership, supportive housing, or financial literacy program models. Alternatively, applicants could propose taking an evidence-based practice² such as motivational interviewing and training AmeriCorps members to apply these skills in ways that could improve individual economic or health outcomes.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following Non-Federal entities (as defined in 2 CFR §200.69) who have DUNS numbers and are registered in System for Award Management (SAM) are eligible to apply:

- Indian Tribes (2 CFR §200.54)
- Institutions of higher education (2 CFR §200.54)
- Local governments (2 CFR §200.64)
- Nonprofit organizations (2 CFR §200.70)
- States (2 CFR §200.90)

New Applicants

ServeNebraska encourages organizations that have not received prior funding from ServeNebraska and/or CNCS to apply. ServeNebraska will award formula funding to programs that consist of no fewer than 3 MSY.

New applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants but are not eligible to apply for Full-Time Fixed Amount grants. Existing subgrantees/operating sites of Fixed Amount and Cost Reimbursement grantees who can demonstrate a successful history and current capacity to manage a Fixed Amount grant are considered to have AmeriCorps experience and therefore can apply for Fixed Amount grants. See Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for more information.

2. Threshold Issues

Applications should reflect that they meet the following threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying.

- All applicants should request at least 3 MSY.
- Professional Corps applicants and/or applicants determined to be a Professional Corps by ServeNebraska must demonstrate that the community in which it will place AmeriCorps members serving as professionals has an inadequate number of said professionals.
- Applications for a Full-Time Fixed Amount grant must reflect that only full-time or less than full-time positions serving in a full-time capacity.
- Applications for the Governor and Mayor Initiative must clearly reflect that they are from one Governor, one or more Mayors, and a minimum of two nonprofits.

¹ A body of evidence is emerging that supports the role of national service in effective education interventions. Many of these service education interventions are currently being funded by AmeriCorps. The purpose of these planning grants is to identify new evidence-based service interventions in focus areas with less evidence such as Economic Opportunity and Healthy Futures.

² Applicants are encouraged to use federal agency clearinghouses or evidence reviews (see <https://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/main-menu/2016/clearinghouses-and-evidence-reviews>) to identify evidence-based programs and practices.

- If the proposed service activities require specialized member qualifications and/or training (for example, tutoring programs: 45 CFR §2522.910-.940), the applicant must describe how the program will meet these requirements.

3. Other Requirements

Under section 132A(b) of the NCSA, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this *Notice*.

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

- has been assessed,
- for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and
- that 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 Notice.³ A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this *Notice*. 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 interest of the federal government

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply for CNCS funding.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

This *Notice* should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550, the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, Application Instructions, and the National Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. These documents can be found at <http://www.serve.nebraska.gov>. The full Regulations are available online at www.ecfr.gov.

1. Address to Request Application Package

Applicants should refer to <http://www.serve.nebraska.gov> to obtain the necessary information to apply. Applicants can also send an email to dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov or call (402) 471-6249 for a printed copy of the application materials.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

a. Application Content

Applicants will submit all information to ServeNebraska for review and a formal recommendation from the ServeNebraska Commission. ServeNebraska will complete the review process and notify programs when to enter their application content into the CNCS web-based management system.

In CNCS's web-based management system, applicants will enter the following components of a complete application:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet: This is automatically generated when applicants complete the data elements in the system
- Narratives
 - Executive Summary
 - Program Design
 - Organizational Capability
 - Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
 - Evaluation Plan (if applicable)
- Logic Model
- Standard Form 424 Budget
- Performance Measures
- Authorization, Assurances, and Certification

b. Page Limits

ServeNebraska

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.

New Applications may not exceed 12 pages in a word document. Type must be 12pt, times new roman and 1 inch margins.

Narrative

Once applications are approved by ServeNebraska for entering into the CNCS web-based management system, e-grants: Applications must not exceed 12 pages for the Narratives or 15 pages for Rural Intermediaries

In determining whether an application complies with page limits, ServeNebraska will count the following for the narrative:

- The application's Executive Summary, SF 424 Facesheet (will be completed once application is entered into e-grants), and
- The Narrative portions contained in the Program Design, Organizational Capacity, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy sections of the application.

ServeNebraska will consider the number of pages only as they print out from the "Review" tab in CNCS's web-based management system (where you will see the "View/Print your application" heading) when determining compliance for page limits. ServeNebraska will not consider the results of any alternative printing methods in determining whether an application complies with the applicable page limits. ServeNebraska strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the "Review" tab prior to submission to check that the application does not exceed the page limit. The application page limit does not include the Budget, narrative portion of the Evaluation Plan, the Logic Model, performance measures, or the supplementary materials, if applicable.

Logic Model

The Logic Model may not exceed three pages when printed with the application from the "Review" tab in CNCS's web-based management system.

Please note the length of a document in word processing software may be different than what will print out in the CNCS's web-based system. Reviewers will not consider any submitted material that exceeds the page limits in the printed report, also, note that the system will not prevent an applicant from entering text that will exceed page limitations. This applies to both the application page limit and the Logic Model page limit.

3. Dun and Bradstreet University Numbering System (DUNS) Number & System for Award Management (SAM)

Applications must include a DUNS number **and** an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: [DUNS Request Service](#). CNCS recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date.

After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants **must** register with the [SAM](#) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete and, if a grant is awarded, throughout the life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. CNCS suggests finalizing a new registration or renewing an existing one at least two weeks before the application deadline to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and address on all grant applications to CNCS.

Applicants who do not comply with these requirements may be ineligible to receive or maintain an award. See the [SAM Quick Guide for Grantees](#).

4. Submission Dates and Times

a. Application Submission Deadline

Applications are due **Thursday, May 17, 2018 by 5:00pm CST**. This deadline applies to new and re-competing applicants. Applications must be submitted to dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov. ServeNebraska will notify once you can submit into CNCS's web-based grant management system

c. Additional Documents Deadline

Any required additional documents are due on the application deadline. See *Submission of Additional Documents* section for other guidance.

d. Late Applications

All applications received after the submission deadline published in the Notice are presumed to be non-compliant.

5. Intergovernmental Review

This *Notice* is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

6. Funding Restrictions

a. Member Living Allowance

A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. Programs are not required to provide a living allowance for members serving in less than full-time terms of service. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to a less than full-time member, it must comply with the maximum limits in the table below. For Cost Reimbursement grants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either CNCS or grantee share. Exceptions are noted below.

While Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance to members that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements. Exceptions noted below. Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to indicate that amount in the application and should request those positions as “without living allowance” in the budget.

Table: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1,700	\$13,732	\$27,464
Half-time	900	n/a	\$14,539
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	\$10,905
Quarter-time	450	n/a	\$7,270
Minimum-time	300	n/a	\$4,847

Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements

1. Programs existing prior to September 21, 1993 are not required to offer a living allowance. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement, but not the maximum requirement.

2. EAP Grantees are not required to provide a living allowance, but if a living allowance is provided, it must comply with the maximum requirements set forth in the Living Allowance Table above.

3. Professional Corps Grantees must provide members a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance set in the Living Allowance Table above. Professional Corps member salaries are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget request to CNCS (federal or matching share.)

b. Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

The CNCS cost per MSY is determined by dividing the CNCS share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum amount an applicant may request from CNCS per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

New and re-competing State Commission sub-grantees/applicants will be held to the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type.

Table: Maximum Cost per MSY

Grant Program	Maximum
Individual Competitive State/Territory Program (cost reimbursement)	\$14,932*
Multi-state (cost reimbursement)	\$14,932*
Professional Corps Applicants/ees (Cost Reimbursement)	\$1,000**
Professional Corps Fixed Amount Applicants/Grantees	\$1,000*
Education Award Program Fixed Amount Grant	\$800
Fulltime Fixed Amount Grant	\$13,430
State/Territory Commission Formula Prime	\$18,000
Individual State/Territory Formula Program	\$20,000
State/Territory Commission Average (of all its subgrants)	\$14,932

*Cost reimbursement programs operating in rural communities (as defined in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) and cost reimbursement programs that recruit opportunity youth as AmeriCorps members may request up to \$15,100 cost per MSY for the AmeriCorps members who will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth.

**ServeNebraska requires Professional Corps programs to cover the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non-CNCS. ServeNebraska will only consider operating funds of up to \$1,000 per MSY if an applicant is able to demonstrate significant organizational financial need and substantial challenges to raising non-CNCS resources based on the materials reviewed by the Office of Grant Management.

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

c. Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will be eligible for an Education Award from the National Service Trust. The amount of the Education Award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant. A member has up to seven years after his or her term of service to use the Education Award. CNCS will provide the updated Education Award amounts at the time of grant award.

d. Cost Sharing or Matching

Fixed Amount Grants

There is no specific match requirement for Fixed Amount grants. ServeNebraska does not provide all the funds necessary to operate the program; therefore organizations should raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.

Cost Reimbursement Grants

A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR §2521.60 and below.

AmeriCorps Funding Year	1, 2, 3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Grantee Share Requirements	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

Section 121(e)(5) of NCSA (42 U.S.C. 12571(e)) requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to CNCS on a Federal Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout.

The living allowance or salary provided to AmeriCorps members in Professional Corps programs (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) does not count toward the matching requirement.

Alternative Match

Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at 45 CFR §2521.60(b). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined in the Application Instructions. Applicants who plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request at the time the application is submitted. Applicants must submit requests for alternative match to ServeNebraska.

e. Indirect Costs

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants may either use a federally approved indirect cost rate, a 10 percent *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly as outlined in 2 C.F.R. § 200.413. States, local governments and Indian Tribes may use approved indirect cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across federal awards. Applicants that have a federal negotiated indirect cost rate or that will be

using the 10 percent *de minimis* rate must enter that information in the Organization section in the CNCS's web-based management system. However, under section 121(d) of the NCSA and CNCS's regulations at 45 C.F.R. 2517.710, no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants.

7. Other Submission Requirements

a. Late Applications

in cases where an applicant is unable to submit the application by deadline, ServeNebraska may, at its discretion consider an application received after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter to dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov explaining the extenuating circumstances that caused the delay. All deadlines are a requirement of this notice.

b. Electronic Application Submission in CNCS's web-based management system

Applicants must submit applications via email in a word document, provided performance measure template, and provided budget template to dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov May 17, 2018 by 5:00pm CST. ServeNebraska will notify applicants June 6, 2018 to submit final applications into CNCS's web-based system. ***Please note the length of the word processing software may be different than what will print out in the CNCS web-based system.*** ServeNebraska recommends that applicants create an account prior to June 12, 2018 to ensure user name and password allow you into the system.

The applicant's authorized representative must be the person who submits the application. The authorized representative must be using CNCS's web-based management system under his or her own account in order to sign and submit the application. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Contact ServeNebraska, Audrey Jackson at 402-471-6249 or dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov if a problem arises when creating an account or preparing or submitting the application. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the Notice to which the organization is applying. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, applicants must continue working with ServeNebraska until resolved.

If extenuating circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit in CNCS's web-based management system, applicants may send a paper copy of the application via overnight carrier to the following address:

ServeNebraska
ATTN: Audrey Jackson
PO Box 98927
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509

Please use a non-U.S. Postal Service carrier to avoid security-related delays. All deadlines and requirements in this *Notice* also apply to paper applications. Paper applications must include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via CNCS's web-based management system. CNCS does not accept applications submitted via fax or email.

c. Submission of Additional Documents

Applicants are required to submit the following additional documents by the application submission deadline May 17, 2018 by 5:00 pm. In the subject line indicate your organizations name Submit to dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov.

All applicants

- Evaluation briefs, reports, studies. Please refer to the *Evidence Base* section for detailed instructions by evidence tier.
- Organizational Chart
- Host Site Applications
- List of all other Federal grants your organization holds
- Labor Concurrence (if applicable)
- Indirect cost rate determination letter (if applicable)

Recompeting applications

- Evaluation report, if required. Please see the *Evidence Base* definition in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance and Section E. Evaluation Plan for further information.

Governor/Mayor Initiative applicants (New and recompeting)

- Letter(s) of support from partnering nonprofits
- Letter of support co-signed by Governor and participating Mayor(s)

Rural Intermediaries (New and recompeting)

- Letters of support from the consortium members

Additional Documents must be emailed to ServeNebraska dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov with the labels outlined below. Emails should include the following information:

- Subject line: [Legal Applicant Name]
- Body of the email should identify:
 - The legal applicant name and its point of contact information
 - A list of documents that should be attached to the email
- Attachments to emails should include
 - Individually saved files that are clearly labeled
 - Each file should also include a header or title within the body of each additional document to include the legal applicant name.

Do not submit other items not requested in this *Notice* or Application Instructions. ServeNebraska will not review or return them.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

Each applicant must describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to solve a significant community problem. ServeNebraska urges applicants to submit high quality applications that carefully follow the guidance in this *Notice* and in the Application Instructions. The quality of an application will be an important factor in determining whether an organization will receive funding.

A. Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)

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

The [Name of the organization] proposes to have [Number of] AmeriCorps members who will [service activities the members will be doing] in [the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage [number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable] who will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing.]

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)].* The CNCS investment of \$[amount of request] will be matched with \$[amount of projected match], \$[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and \$[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding.

*If the program is not operating in a CNCS focus area, omit this sentence.

Fixed-Amount grant applicants (EAP, Full-time Fixed) should list their Other Revenue (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still raise significant additional resources to operate the program. CNCS will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on www.nationalservice.gov in the interest of transparency and Open Government.

B. Program Design (50 percent)

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

1. Need (4 points)

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

“Community” can be a geographic region, a specific population of people, or a combination of both. The applicant must document the need it plans to address with its proposed program, whether it is a defined geographic community or a subset of individuals living in a particular area.

2. Theory of Change and Logic Model (24 points)

The Theory of Change shall address:

- The proposed intervention is responsive to the identified community problem.
- The applicant's proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, dosage, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) leveraged volunteers.
- The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's theory of change.
- The expected outcomes articulated in the application narrative and logic model represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem identified by the applicant.
- The rationale for utilizing AmeriCorps members to deliver the intervention(s) is reasonable.
- The service role of AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.

The Logic Model shall depict:

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

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

In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets for their performance measures. Re-competing applicants proposing to significantly increase or decrease output or outcome targets from their previous grant must provide a justification for this change.

Applicants should use National Performance Measures if they are part of the program's theory of change. Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization's performance data (e.g., program data observed over time suggests targets are reasonable), relevant research (e.g. targets documents by organizations running similar programs with similar populations), or prior program evaluation findings.

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

3. Evidence Base (12 points)

The assessment of an applicant's evidence base has two steps. First, the applicant will be assigned to an evidence tier. (See the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.) Second, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the applicant's overall capacity to collect and use data (including performance measurement and evaluation data) will be assessed and scored.

Evidence Tier:

An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of applying the strategic characteristics (moderate/strong evidence) and understanding the relative strength of each applicant's evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the logic model. Applicants should use the evidence checklist to self-assess their evidence tier before completing the application.

Applicants must 1) state the evidence tier in which they think they qualify; 2) clearly indicate and describe the evidence that supports the highest evidence tier for which they are eligible and 3) describe the complete body of evidence that supports their program intervention including evidence from lower tiers. Applicants should pay particular attention to the requirements for

each tier of evidence. All requirements must be met in order for applicants to be assigned to a tier. Applicants who do not fully describe their evidence base may not be assigned to a tier for which the applicant otherwise may have qualified.

In 2017, the evidence tiers of funded AmeriCorps State and National competitive grantees' were as follows: Strong 9%, Moderate 9%, Preliminary 38%, and Pre-Preliminary 27%. As these figures indicate, CNCS values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. Thus, do not be deterred from applying for funding due to your current evidence level.

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

All applicants must include as much detailed information as possible in the Evidence section of the application. All applicants who have collected relevant performance measurement data must describe this data fully as outlined in the requirements for the pre-preliminary evidence tier. Applicants who have conducted evaluations of their own program or that are replicating other evidence-based programs must describe these evaluations in the application narrative as outlined in the evidence tier descriptions. Applicants are advised to focus on presenting high-quality evidence from up to two of the strongest and most relevant studies while also summarizing the remaining body of evidence that exists for the program. Studies must be evaluations of specific programs or interventions. Research that does not focus on a specific program or intervention, but rather focuses on a broader issue area or population, will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points.

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

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

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

Reviewers will examine the descriptions (and attached studies if relevant) using the following criteria:

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

If the evidence submitted as part of an application does not describe a well-designed and well-implemented evaluation, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier. Applicants must meet all requirements of the evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier. Applicants who do not meet all requirements will be considered for a lower tier.

Evidence Quality and Evaluation Capacity

After the applicant's evidence tier has been assessed, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the applicant's overall capacity to collect and use data (including performance measurement and evaluation data) will be assessed and scored. Applicants must address the following standards in the application narrative. The standards are weighted differently for applicants in different

evidence tiers to reflect expected variations in program life cycle and evaluation capacity at each stage of the evidence continuum.

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

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

4. Notice Priority (3 points)

- The applicant proposed program fits within one or more of the 2018 AmeriCorps funding priorities as outlined in the *Funding Priorities* section and more fully described in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance and the proposed program meets all of the requirements detailed in the *Funding Priorities* section and in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.

5. Member Experience (7 points)

- AmeriCorps members will gain skills as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.
 - AmeriCorps members will have access to meaningful service experiences that includes education about the community problem/need and the community in which they will serve.
 - AmeriCorps members will have access to opportunities for reflection that involves the intentional processing of members’ experience and the incorporation of lessons learned
- The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate.
- The applicant will also foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds, talents, and capabilities are welcomed and leveraged for learning and effective service delivery.

C. Organizational Capability (25 percent)

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

1. Organizational Background and Staffing (7 points)

- The organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program.

2. Compliance and Accountability (8 points)

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

3. Culture that Values Learning (8 points)

- The applicant's board, management, and staff collects and uses information for learning and decision making.

- The applicant's management and staff produces frequent reports on how well the organization is implementing its programs and strategies.

4. Member Supervision (2 points)

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

D. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

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

This criteria will be assessed based on the budget submitted. No narrative should be entered in the narrative box except for "See budget"

1. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 points)

- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.
- The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum cost per MSY.

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

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

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

E. Evaluation Plan (Required for recompeting grantees - 0 percent)

If the applicant is competing for the first time, please provide a data collection plan in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field that includes the following:

- A description of the applicant's data collection system and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data during the first three years of the grant. If the applicant does not yet have a data collection system, describe the plan and timeline for developing a high quality system.
- A description of how the applicant will use performance data (including CNCS performance measures and other process and outcome measures if applicable) to improve its program in the first three years of funding.

First-time applicants should be aware that ServeNebraska may require submission of data collection instruments if a grant is approved for funding.

If the applicant is recompeting for AmeriCorps funds for the first time (see definition of "recompeting" below) the program must submit its evaluation plan in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" section of the Narratives field in CNCS's web-based management system. If the applicant is recompeting for a subsequent time, the program must submit its evaluation report and a learning memo as attachments (see the *Submission of Additional Documents* section for more information), and must also submit an evaluation plan for the next three-year period in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field in the system. Evaluations plans submitted outside of the system will not be reviewed.

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

- A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results
- Outcome of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation
- Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes

- Study components – a) a proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the design selected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components; b) description of the sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures, and c) an analysis plan
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator
- The proposed budget

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

The evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of the grant, as described in 45 CFR §2522.710:

- If the applicant is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee (other than an Education Award Program grantee), and its average annual CNCS program grant is \$500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in 45 CFR §2522.730.
- If the applicant is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee whose average annual CNCS program grant is less than \$500,000, or an Education Award Program Grantee, it must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in 45 CFR §2522.730.

For purposes of compliance with evaluation plan and report requirements, a program will be considered a recompeting application if it satisfies the CNCS definition of “same project” (*see* Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) and has been funded competitively for at least three of the last five years. If the project satisfies the definition of same project and the applicant has received competitive funding for at least three of the last five years, it will be required to submit an evaluation plan. If the project satisfied the definition of same project and the applicant has completed two or more competitively funded three-year cycles, including at least four years of competitive funding in the last five years, the applicant will be required to submit an evaluation report as well as an evaluation plan for the upcoming 3 year grant. If the project does not satisfy the definition of recompeting, it will not be required to submit an evaluation plan or completed evaluation report.

The “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field of the Narrative does not count toward the page limit of the application; however, it does have a set character limit of 10,000 characters. Applicants should print out the plan to ensure the narrative does not exceed the character limits when entered in CNCS’s web-based management system.

State/Territory subgrantees and/or National Direct Grantees that are recompeting for funds may be eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. Grantees requesting approval of an alternative evaluation approach should submit a request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach along with their evaluation plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system. The request should clearly explain: (a) the evaluation constraints faced by the program, (b) why the proposed approach is the most rigorous option feasible, and (c) how the proposed alternative approach will help the grantee build their evidence base. Evaluation plans should include, at a minimum, the required elements listed in this *Notice*. The evaluation plan must be consistent with the information submitted in the competitive funding application and in the request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. CNCS guidance on alternative evaluation approaches can be found at: https://www.nationalserviceresources.gov/files/guidance_for_grantees_approval_of_alternative_evaluation_approach.pdf

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

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

F. Amendment Justification (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used if the applicant is awarded a grant and needs to amend it.

G. Clarification Information (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period.

H. Continuation Changes (0 percent)

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

Criteria for Evidence Based Intervention Planning Grants

Executive Summary (fill in the blanks) (0 percent):

The [Name of the organization] proposes to develop an AmeriCorps program serving in [the location(s) the AmeriCorps program will serve] that will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)]. The CNCS investment of \$[amount of request] will be matched with \$[amount of projected match], \$[amount of local, state, tribal, and federal funds] in public funding and \$[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding. No AmeriCorps members will be needed to execute this plan.

Program Design (50 percent)

1. *Need (10 points):*

- The community problem is prevalent and severe in communities where the program plans to serve and the problem has been documented with relevant data.

2. *Evidence-Based Intervention (30 points)*

- The evidence-based intervention has successfully addressed the problem in other communities. The applicant must describe the evidence for the intervention in the application narrative and must submit at least one, and no more than two, randomized controlled trials (RCT) or quasi-experimental design (QED) evaluations of the intervention. If applicable, cite the clearinghouse and rating where the intervention is rated. The studies must be well-designed and well-implemented, must have been conducted by an independent, external evaluator, and must demonstrate, at minimum, evidence of effectiveness (positive findings) on one or more key outcomes that address the community problem/need.
- The key elements of the intervention will be implemented with fidelity to the evidence based model (e.g., context, target population, content or curriculum, delivery process, training for members).
- AmeriCorps members are well-suited to deliver the evidence-based intervention.

3. *Planning Process/Timeline (10 points):*

- The applicant describes a clear and logical planning process, including:
 - A detailed description of the planning process and who is leading it.
 - A well-developed timeline for planning activities.
 - A clear description of how the planning period will be used to develop the necessary components to effectively manage an AmeriCorps program in the future.
- The applicant includes development of the following program elements in the planning process/timeline:
 - Theory of Change/Logic Model that describes implementation of the evidence-based intervention with fidelity and why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed outcomes
 - Member selection and training plan
 - Member supervision plan
 - Commitment to AmeriCorps Identity
 - Compliance and Accountability
- Securing Match Support for the Program
- The applicant includes development of the following evaluation elements in the planning process/timeline:
 - Assessing fidelity to the evidence-based intervention being replicated, including a detailed accounting of which core components were modified as a result of integrating AmeriCorps members, how they were modified, and which core components were implemented with fidelity without adaptation
 - Assessing outcomes achieved in previous evaluations of the evidence-based intervention
 - Assessing any new outcomes anticipated as a result of integrating AmeriCorps members into the evidence-based intervention

Organizational Capability (25 percent)

1. Organizational Background and Staffing(25 points)

- The applicant has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan the proposed program.
- The applicant has prior experience in the proposed area of programming.
- The applicant has conducted high-quality process and outcome evaluations and has used evaluation results for organizational learning and continuous improvement

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

(Same as other AmeriCorps Applications)

E. Evaluation Plan (0 percent)

Evaluating the implementation and outcomes of proposed models will be critical to determining whether or not it is feasible to integrate national service into evidence-based interventions and achieve the same kinds of programmatic outcomes and impacts. As such, applicants should understand that they will be required to submit an evaluation plan with their application for a three-year AmeriCorps grant.

- A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results
- Outcome of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation
- Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes
- Study components – a) a proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the design selected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components; b) description of the sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures, and c) an analysis plan
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator
- The estimated budget

2. Review and Selection Process

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

a. Compliance and Eligibility Review

ServeNebraska staff will conduct a Compliance Review to determine if an application meets the compliance requirements published in this *Notice* and advances to the next stage of the review process. Applications determined non-compliant will not be considered for funding. An application is compliant if the applicant:

- Is an eligible organization
- Attends one ServeNebraska Informational session
- Submits a notice of intent to apply by the deadline of April 20, 2018 by 5:00 pm
- Is eligible to submit directly to CNCS
- Submits an application by the submission deadline that is complete and contains all required elements that follows the instructions by the deadline of May 17, 2018 by 5:00pm.
- Submit an application with a minimum 3 MSY

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

b. Review

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

c. Risk Assessment Evaluation

ServeNebraska staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds and the applicant's past performance (if applicable.) This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If ServeNebraska determines that an award will be made,

special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. In evaluating risks, ServeNebraska may consider the following, but not limited to:

- Financial capability and capacity to manage Federal funds
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant’s record in managing previous CNCS & ServeNebraska awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
 - Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements,
 - If applicable, meeting matching requirements, and
 - If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- Information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as—
 - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS),
 - U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
 - Dun and Bradstreet, or
 - “Do Not Pay”
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance (formerly OMB Circular A-133) and findings of any other available audits
- IRS Tax Form 990
- An applicant organization's annual report
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website
- Any other information listed in 45 CFR § 2522.140
- The applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.
- Past Performance

ServeNebraska will consider the following for applicants that are current formula and competitive grantees:

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

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

e. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information

Prior to making any award that exceeds \$150,000, ServeNebraska is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM and FAPIIS (see 41 U.S.C. 2313). Additionally ServeNebraska may expand upon these requirements and use its discretion to review and consider information about any applicant receiving an award, including those under \$150,000.

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

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

f. Applicant Clarification

Some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information and/or make changes to their application including changes to the budget. This information is used by ServeNebraska staff in making funding recommendations. Applications may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked clarification questions. A request for clarification does not guarantee a

grant award. Failure to respond to requests for clarification adequately and in a timely manner may result in the removal of applications from consideration.

g. Selection for Funding

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

Specifically, the review and selection process will:

A. Identify how well eligible applications are aligned with application review criteria and/or represent relative risk and/or opportunity.

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

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

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

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

4. Feedback to Applicants

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

5. Transparency in Grant-making

ServeNebraska is committed to transparency in grant-making. The following information for new and re-competing applications will be published on www.servenebraska.gov within 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

- A list of all compliant applications submitted
- Executive Summaries of all compliant applications submitted by the applicants
- Data extracted from the SF-424 Face Sheet and the submitted program narratives for successful applications
- A blank template of the external review worksheet
- A list of all external reviewers that completed the review process
- A summary of external reviewer comments for successful applications.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

ServeNebraska will make awards following the grant selection announcement. ServeNebraska anticipates announcing the results of this competition by notifying applicants **by June 6, 2018** contingent on timely full year appropriations. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions via email. This notification is not an authorization to begin grant activities. The Notice of Grant Award signed by the Executive Director is the only document authorizing awardees to commence grant activities. Unsuccessful applicants will also receive a notification that their application was not approved for funding.

An awardee may not obligate or expend federal funds until the start of the Project Period identified on the Notice of Grant Award.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

a. Uniform Guidance

All awards under this Notice are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), now consolidated in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 2205.

b. Requests for Improper Payment Information

ServeNebraska may, from time to time, request documentation from recipients in order to monitor the award or to comply with other legal requirements, such as the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002, as amended. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on temporary manual hold, reimbursement only, or other remedies as appropriate. In addition, ServeNebraska may, in appropriate circumstances, consider in its funding decisions any previous failures to make timely responses.

c. CNCS Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this *Notice* will be subject to the 2018 CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and the 2018 Specific Terms and Conditions for the particular program (when applicable.) These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnsc-grants>.

3. National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving CNCS funds. This includes staff that receive part of their salary through a subgrant. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such CNCS funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award.

Unless CNCS has provided a recipient with a written exemption or written approval of an alternative search procedure, recipients must perform the following checks–

All grant recipients are required to adhere to ServeNebraska Criminal History Policy. Award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers must undergo NSCHCs that include:

- A nationwide name-based search of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) and
- Both
 - A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person’s state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *or*
 - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

See 45 CFR § 2540.200–§ 2540.207 and [CNCS Criminal History Check Resources](#) for complete information and FAQs. See 100.1 National Service Criminal History Checks policy www.servenebraska.gov

4. Use of Material

To ensure that materials generated with CNCS funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, CNCS reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so (2 CFR §200.315 (b)).

5. Reporting

Recipients are required to submit a variety of reports which are due at specific times during the life cycle of an award. All reports must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time.

Cost reimbursement grantees are required to provide quarterly progress reporting, monthly financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740.

Fixed Amount grantees are required to provide quarterly progress reports and an internal or external evaluation report. All grantees, including Fixed Amount grantees, submit quarterly financial reports to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Payment Management System.

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

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

Progress Report Data

In addition to quarterly reporting of progress toward the grant's approved performance measure outputs and outcomes, additional demographic and narrative data must be reported annually (as applicable), including the number of applicants for AmeriCorps positions and the number of volunteers recruited and/or supported by AmeriCorps members (both episodic and ongoing volunteers.)

Failure to submit accurate, complete, and timely required reports may affect the recipient's ability to secure future ServeNebraska funding. For further guidance and training resources see – [CNCS Performance Measure Resources](#).

5. Continuation Funding Information and Requirements

Organizations that have current AmeriCorps awards that do not end in FY17 must submit an application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. Please see the Application Instructions. Requests by existing continuation applicants for increases in the level of funding or number of positions will be assessed using the criteria under this *Notice*.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

This *Notice* is available at <http://www.serve.nebraska.gov>. For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice*, call (402) 471-6249. For questions regarding multi-state or Indian Tribes applications submitted directly to CNCS, please call (202) 606-7508 or send an email to americorpsgrants@cns.gov.

ServeNebraska's mailing address is:

ServeNebraska
State Capitol, 6th Floor West
PO Box 98927
Lincoln, NE 68509

H. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Technical Assistance

In addition to consulting the Application Instructions, Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, Performance Measure Instructions, and AmeriCorps regulations as directed in this *Notice*, ServeNebraska applicants are encouraged also to consult the CNCS web site for a schedule of technical assistance conference calls, and Frequently Asked Questions that are updated during the competition period.

2. Reallocation of Funding

CNCS reserves the right to reallocate funding in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.

Disclosure: Publication of this Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (*Notice*) does not obligate the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to award any specific number of grants or to obligate any particular amount of funding. The 2018 President's Budget proposed the elimination of CNCS. The actual level and timing of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.