



ServeNebraska
The Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission

AmeriCorps*State
Request for Competitive Applications
Program Year: 2011-2012



ISSUED: November 10, 2010
DEADLINE: December 10, 2010 - 5:00 pm CST

State Capitol, 6th Floor West
P.O. Box 98927
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509--8927
Phone: 402-471-6225 or 800-291-8911
www.serve.nebraska.gov

OMB Control #: 3045-0047
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IMPORTANT NOTICE

These application instructions conform to the Corporation for National and Community Service's (the Corporation's) online grant application system, [eGrants](#). The eGrants system is designed to serve the Corporation's applicants and grantees. All Corporation funding announcements are posted on the Corporation's web site at www.cns.gov and at www.grants.gov.

Public Burden Statement: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires the Corporation to inform all potential persons who are to respond to this collection of information that such persons are not required to respond unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. (See 5 CFR 1320.5(b)(2)(i)).

Time Burden: The time required to complete this collection of information is estimated to average 40 hours per applicant.

Use of Information: The information collected constitutes an application to the Corporation for grant funding. The Corporation evaluates the application and makes funding decisions through the Corporation's grant review and selection process.

Effects of Non-Disclosure: Providing this information is voluntary; however, failure to provide the information would not allow the Corporation to assess the applicant's request for funding. In this case, it would not be possible to consider granting funds to the applicant.

Privacy Act: Information provided for this collection may be shared with federal, state, and local agencies for law enforcement purposes.

Please be aware that this Request for Applications (RFA) modifies the national Instructions to address specific needs and concerns in the State of Nebraska. It takes precedence over the application instructions promulgated by the Corporation. If you have questions about any component in the Corporation for National & Community Service Application Instructions [http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/09_0918_nofa_ac_inst.pdf] not addressed in the ServeNebraska RFA, contact Greg Donovan at 402-471-6249 or greg.donovan@nebraska.gov

The AmeriCorps regulations include the selection criteria used to select applications for funding and other pertinent information (see Table 1, below). Additional criteria regarding the specific needs and concerns of the State of Nebraska may be added.

Table 1: Program Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Requirements and Selection	Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations
Member Service Activities	§2520.20 - §2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§2520.65
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

If there is any inconsistency between the AmeriCorps regulations, the *Notice*, and the Application Instructions, the order of precedence is as follows:

1. AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550 take precedence over the
2. *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity*, which takes precedence over the
3. ServeNebraska Request for Competitive Applications



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AMERICORPS IN NEBRASKA

ServeNebraska – the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission mobilizes Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration, and national service programs. We are committed to uniting individuals in service to their communities and achieving demonstrable results by funding AmeriCorps programs that address Nebraska’s unmet human, educational, public safety, homeland security and environmental needs. This Request for Applications (RFA) is being released for new, re-competing and continuing applications for AmeriCorps programming operating exclusively within the state of Nebraska. **This Request for Applications is complemented by a second component containing applicable FORMS and tools to assist in the completion of applications.**

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 ServeNebraska AmeriCorps Program Officer Greg Donovan at 402-771-6249 or greg.donovan@nebraska.gov for consultation and special technical assistance.

ServeNebraska administers AmeriCorps programming and funds 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 services 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 Request for Applications (RFA) prior to writing a response. ServeNebraska further encourages all interested parties to develop a thorough understanding of AmeriCorps prior to applying by visiting our AmeriCorps page on our website, <http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/ameriCorps/ameriCorps.htm>

To help you determine whether to pursue creating a proposal, ServeNebraska has created a resource to guide potential applicants entitled “**Is My Organization Ready for an AmeriCorps Grant: A READINESS ASSESSMENT**” which is posted on our website at: [http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/pdf/ameriCorps/nebraska AC_readiness_assessment.doc](http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/pdf/ameriCorps/nebraska_AC_readiness_assessment.doc)

ServeNebraska is committed to providing the most helpful and current information to all applicants. **A listing of all questions posed by potential applicants and the answers to these questions will be posted on our website, <http://www.serve.nebraska.gov> throughout the application period.**

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.



INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR COMPETITIVE AMERICORPS PROGRAMMING IN NEBRASKA

Applications for AmeriCorps program funding are subject to review by ServeNebraska and, if funded, programs are subject to ServeNebraska oversight.

ServeNebraska is very concerned about supporting a diversity of programs, including those that provide geographic breadth across our state. Western and Central regions of the state have traditionally been under-represented in Nebraska's portfolio of AmeriCorps programs. To address this, geographic representation in Central and Western frontier and rural Nebraska will be a factor in the review and selection of grantees.

New applicants should follow the application instructions for New or Continuing AmeriCorps*State Programs.

All applications must be submitted via eGrants, the online grant submission program operated by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) accessible at: <https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp>

If you need assistance in establishing an eGrants account or navigating eGrants please contact Greg Donovan at (402) 471-6249 or greg.donovan@nebraska.gov. If there are significant technical difficulties or if extenuating circumstances prevents the use of the eGrants system, ServeNebraska will consider requests for submission of a paper document if such requests include a written rationale and are made NO LATER than December 1, 2010.

In utilizing eGrants, ServeNebraska **requires all applicants responding to this RFA for 2011-2012 support to submit their grants as "Competitive" applications**. Following the Commission's initial review of applications, a decision will be made as to which programs to refer to the Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS) for Competitive funding consideration. The remaining applications - and those applications not selected by CNCS for Competitive funding - will be considered for state Formula funds. There will be an opportunity for organizations to submit applications exclusively for Formula funding consideration. This opportunity will occur in early 2011. ServeNebraska will promptly notify applicants of necessary revisions and resubmission that may be needed during the funding process. The distinction between Competitive and Formula funding is provided below:

- **Competitive** funds are available to support innovative programming. Established larger multi-site programs and initiatives with sophisticated, well-developed program designs tend to compete well for this pool of funds. All applications are reviewed and ranked at the state level. Applications for Competitive funding consideration are forwarded with ServeNebraska recommendations to compete against applications put forth by state commissions in other states and with multi-state proposals. The Corporation for National and Community Service makes final decisions on Competitive grant funding.
- **Formula** funds are allocated exclusively at the state level to support outstanding programming. Newer and smaller scale programs tend to be supported with Formula funds. Successful applicants are funded based on the decision of the Commission grant review team with approval by the full Commission. The amount of Formula funds available annually to each state is determined through a population-based formula devised by the Corporation for National & Community Service.

The following **Key Factors** should be considered in crafting your application:

- All applicants must include their organizational **DUNS** (Data Universal Number System) as part of the application. ServeNebraska strongly suggests that organizations that have not previously applied for federal funds immediately apply for a DUNS number if your organization does not currently have one. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line or by applying online at https://eupdate.dnb.com/requestoptions.asp?cm_re=HomepageB*Resources*DUNSNumberLink



- The 2009 Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act reauthorizes and expands national service while also identifying new priorities for AmeriCorps funding. These *priorities* are:
 - Education:** Unmet educational needs within communities especially those that help children and youth achieve success in school and prevent them from dropping out before high school graduation.
 - Healthy Futures:** Unmet health needs within communities including access to health care, disease prevention and health promotion initiatives, and health literacy.
 - Clean Energy/Environment:** Unmet energy-efficiency and environmental needs within communities.
 - Veterans:** Unmet needs of veterans, members of the Armed Forces who are on active duty, and family members of deployed military personnel and engages veterans in service.
 - Opportunity:** Unmet needs relating to economic opportunity for economically disadvantaged individuals within communities including financial literacy, housing assistance, job training, and nutritional assistance.

Preference may be given to applications addressing these priority areas.

- ServeNebraska funds programs that consist of teams of ***no fewer than three AmeriCorps members.***
- Applicants for multi-site programs must secure and submit a signed ***Host Site Application*** from each host site with their response to this Request for Applications. Host Sites are entities seeking to partner with an applicant and utilize the resources of at least one AmeriCorps member. Internal Departments, Programs, and Divisions of Lead Agencies that utilize AmeriCorps members are considered Host Sites for the purpose of this application.
- ***There is a match requirement for federal funds.*** The match requirement varies based on the longevity of the grant and can be met through any combination of cash and/or in-kind resources. Minimum grantee share is 24%. Starting in Year 4, overall grantee share of total program costs increases gradually to 50% by the tenth year of funding and any year thereafter. If you are applying to continue or renew a currently operating program, please contact Janet Schmidt, ServeNebraska Operations & Fiscal Officer at janet.schmidt@nebraska.gov or 402-471-6212 to verify what match ratio applies to your project.
- ***All applicants must NOT exceed the cost per member service year (MSY) of \$13,300.*** This is the maximum amount of federal funds that may be requested. The total amount of funds available for a project can be determined by multiplying \$13,300 times the number of full-time member slots proposed. Actual MSY costs for current grantees may be examined and considered during the grant review process.
- The ***minimum living allowance for AmeriCorps members is \$12,100*** for full-time members for 2011-2012.
- Child Care is a benefit for income eligible AmeriCorps members. Funding of child care for AmeriCorps members is provided directly from the Corporation for National & Community Service and is not included as a budgeted expense through this RFA. Eligibility standards that members must meet can be found in the Nebraska State Median Income Chart at <http://www.hhss.ne.gov/chc/ccsubsypa.htm>
- The Educational Award earned by AmeriCorps members is awarded subsequent to service by the National Service Trust and should not be included as a budgeted expense through this RFA.
- The application narratives cannot exceed 50,000 characters combined. This includes spaces and punctuation.
- The Serve America Act authorizes the Corporation to award fixed-amount grants. The ***Fixed-Amount Pilot*** is only available for new and re-competing applicants. Second and third year Competitive continuation applicants must submit a new application if they are interested in participating in the Fixed-Amount Pilot. For 2011-201, these fixed-amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members only. Fixed-amount grants allow programs to apply for a fixed dollar amount per member. The fixed amount awarded per member is significantly less than the cost of running an AmeriCorps program and the applicant must raise the additional revenue necessary to operate the program. If you are interested in submitting a fixed-amount grant, please contact Greg Donovan at 402-471-6249 or greg.donovan@nebraska.gov

ServeNebraska expects to announce Competitive funding decisions by June 2011.

We are eager to partner with you in enhancing civic engagement and the quality of life in our state. Please contact us freely as you develop your applications.

Thank you for your interest and efforts.



NOTICE OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)
State Commission Name: ServeNebraska – the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission
Funding Opportunity Title: AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY 2011
Announcement Type: Initial announcement
CFDA No.: 94.006
Key Dates: See below

AmeriCorps State & National Grant Program Dates for New, Recompeting and Continuing Competitive Grants

<u>NEBRASKA RFA DEADLINE</u>	<u>CNCS SUBMISSION DEADLINE</u>
Friday, December 10, 2010, 5:00 pm CST	Tuesday, January 25, 2011, 5:00 pm EST

Overview: The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

2011-2012 NEBRASKA FOCUS AREAS

ServeNebraska operates in accordance with the Corporation for National & Community Service's mission to improve lives, strengthen communities and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. In pursuing this mission ServeNebraska will give special consideration to projects extending the rural and frontier geographic representation of AmeriCorps programming in Nebraska. Additionally, programs are encouraged to incorporate in their program design elements that address the five national priorities identified by CNCS:

Education: Unmet educational needs within communities especially those that help children and youth achieve success in school and prevent them from dropping out before high school graduation.

Healthy Futures: Unmet health needs within communities including access to health care, disease prevention and health promotion initiatives, and health literacy.

Clean Energy/Environment: Unmet energy-efficiency and environmental needs within communities.

Veterans: Unmet needs of veterans, members of the Armed Forces who are on active duty, and family members of deployed military personnel and engages veterans in service.

Opportunity: Unmet needs relating to economic opportunity for economically disadvantaged individuals within Community including financial literacy, housing assistance, job training, and nutritional assistance..

ServeNebraska applauds applications which meaningfully incorporate *cross stream* national service opportunities involving AmeriCorps*VISTA, Senior Corps, Learn & Serve (K-12, Higher Education), and/or Citizen Corps in their design.

National Performance Measures Pilot: In 2011, the Corporation for National & Community Service will implement the second year of the National Performance Measures Pilot. National performance measures allow the Corporation to demonstrate the aggregated impact of AmeriCorps programs. While use of national performance measures remains optional in 2011, new and recompeting applicants are strongly encouraged to use them in planning programming. Applications that include national performance measures will be a funding priority in 2011.

Additional detail on federal guidelines regarding the review process and application prioritization may be found in the AmeriCorps Regulations §2522.425. ServeNebraska and the Corporation for National and Community Service reserve the right to refocus program dollars in the event of disaster or other compelling need and will make an announcement in this event.



Fixed-Amount Grant Pilot:

The Serve America Act authorizes the Corporation to award fixed-amount grants. For 2011-2012, these fixed-amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members only. Fixed-amount grants allow programs to apply for a fixed dollar amount per member. The fixed amount awarded per member is significantly less than the cost of running an AmeriCorps program and the applicant must raise the additional revenue necessary to operate the program. Education Award Only (EAP) programs, which have been authorized to receive fixed-amount grants for many years, may continue to enroll less-than-full-time members.

An AmeriCorps program that receives a fixed-amount grant is like any other AmeriCorps program except that, unlike the more typical cost-reimbursement grant, the fixed amount grant does not require:

- ✓ Compliance with OMB Cost Principles.
- ✓ Detailed, line-item budgets.
- ✓ Corporation for National & Community Service FFRs.
- ✓ Match or documentation of match.

Approved applicants must agree to participate in evaluations the Corporation conducts to measure success of this pilot. The maximum costs per Member Service Year (MSY) for the full-time fixed-amount pilot are currently being determined and will be released later this fall (one MSY is the equivalent of a full-time term of service). The amount per full-time member requested will be a competitive factor in the Corporation's selection process. Priority will be given in the selection process to organizations that have demonstrated capacity to track and report on performance measures. The Corporation may also prioritize those organizations that adopt specific national performance measures or are aligned with national service priority areas.

Contact Greg Donovan [greg.donovan@nebraska.gov or 402-471-6249] if you are interested in exploring submitting a proposal to be part of the Fixed-Amount Grant Pilot.



FUNDING AVAILABILITY ANNOUNCEMENT

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. What is the purpose of AmeriCorps funding?

The Corporation's purpose is to maximize the power of service and volunteering to improve lives in communities across the country. In the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, Congress directed the Corporation to focus national service on unmet needs that service can impact, including improving education, energy conservation, the health of all Americans, and economic opportunity for economically vulnerable individuals; increasing service by and for veterans; and providing disaster services.

The Corporation is carrying out Congress's intent by targeting AmeriCorps funding in these six focus areas, and is developing strategic objectives for each. The Corporation intends to:

- direct the power of national service to solve a common set of national challenges,
- expand opportunities to enable all Americans to enlist in community-based efforts that address national challenges,
- embrace innovative solutions that work, and
- build the enduring capacity of individuals, organizations and communities to effectively use service and volunteering to solve community problems.

AmeriCorps grants support the efforts of community-based non-profit organizations to recruit and deploy AmeriCorps members and the volunteers with whom they work to tackle unmet needs. AmeriCorps grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to eligible organizations that identify a problem(s) and persuasively demonstrate how deploying AmeriCorps members and community volunteers will produce significant impact.

AmeriCorps members will be recruited, trained, supervised, and managed by the funded organization, and may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, AmeriCorps members are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust. A community volunteer is an individual who donates his or her service to organizations funded by the Corporation, but who is not an AmeriCorps member.

New Applicants

The Corporation anticipates that at least 15 percent of the funds allocated will support applicants that have not received an AmeriCorps State or National operational grant in the last five years. Applicants that have received only a state or territory commission formula operational grant within the last five years will be considered new for purposes of this 15 percent target.

Encore Programs

An encore service program involves a significant number of participants age 55 or older and employs the skills and experience that such participants offer in the design and implementation of the program.

The Corporation anticipates that at least 10 percent of the financial assistance and approved national service positions provided through these grants will be awarded to eligible entities proposing to carry out encore service programs unless the Corporation does not receive a sufficient number of applications of adequate quality to justify making that percentage available to those eligible entities.

Special Consideration

Additional programs and program models that may receive special consideration in the selection process are described in the AmeriCorps regulations at 45 CFR §§ 2522.450 and 2522.



II. Award Information

A. How much funding is available?

Subject to the availability of appropriations for fiscal year 2011, the Corporation anticipates availability of approximately \$311 million nationally to award new, re-competing, and continuation Competitive AmeriCorps grants. There is no set amount or estimate for support of AmeriCorps programming within Nebraska. Note that this amount of funding coupled with high demand as indicated in last year's funding cycle will result in a high degree of competition for these funds.

B. What organizations are eligible for funding?

Public or private nonprofit organizations, including labor organizations, faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); Indian Tribes; partnerships and consortia; and intermediaries planning to subgrant funds awarded are eligible to apply. The Corporation encourages organizations that have never received funding from the Corporation or AmeriCorps to apply for the grants. Organizations that have been convicted of a Federal crime are disqualified from receiving funding.

An Indian Tribe is defined as a federally recognized Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Native village, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation, as defined under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. § 1602), that the United States Government determines is eligible for special programs and services provided under federal law to Indians because of their status as Indians. Indian Tribes also include tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by one of the entities described above.

Organizations that propose to operate in more than one state are eligible to apply directly to CNCS, but should confer with Greg Donovan [greg.donovan@nebraska.gov or 402-471-6249] about their proposal.

Other Eligibility Requirements:

- **Lobbying:** Any 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, serve as a host site for member placements, or act in any type of supervisory role in AmeriCorps programs.
- **Current Grantees:** An organization that currently operates a CNCS-funded program or is applying for other CNCS funding is an eligible applicant.
- **Multiple Submissions:** The same project cannot be funded by multiple AmeriCorps grants. If you have more than one application pending before the Corporation for the same project, will be required to withdraw all but one if two or more are approved for funding.

III. Match Requirements

A. What are the matching requirements for these grants?

Program requirements, including requirements on match, are specified in the AmeriCorps regulations and summarized below.

Fixed-Amount Grants

There is no match requirement for fixed-amount grants. However, the fixed-amount grant does not cover all costs. Fixed-amount grantees provide the additional resources needed to operate the program, but are not required to track or report on them. If you are interested in applying for a fixed-amount grant, contact Greg Donovan at 402-471-6249 or greg.donovan@nebraska.gov

Cost Reimbursement Grants (non-fixed-amount)

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. For questions regarding the appropriate match ratio contact Janet Schmidt at 402-471-6212 or janet.schmidt@nebraska.gov

Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act requires that programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to the Corporation on the Federal Financial Report.



Indian Tribal Government programs are subject to the same matching requirements. However, in accordance with Executive order 13175, "Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments," the Corporation may expedite approving waivers of matching requirements. Tribal governments that require a waiver must submit a request at least 60 days before the AmeriCorps application is due. For full information on applying for a Tribal waiver, send a request for instructions to TribalMatchWaiver@cns.gov.

B. What are the requirements regarding member living allowance?

The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members that is between \$12,100 (minimum) and \$24,200 (maximum) per member except as noted below.

For cost-reimbursement grants, this amount must be included in the proposed budget. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to part-time members, it must comply with the maximum limits in the chart below.

While Full-time Fixed-amount grant applicants don't submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance to members that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements. Full-time fixed-amount grant applicants are not required to identify that amount in the application.

Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance*	Maximum Total Living Allowance +
Full-time	1700	\$12,100	\$24,200
One-year Half-time	900	n/a	\$12,800
Two-year Half-time	900	n/a	\$12,800
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	\$9,600
Quarter-time	450	n/a	\$6,400
Minimum-time	300	n/a	\$4,300

* Living allowances, while recommended and beneficial for recruiting & retaining AmeriCorps members, are not required for less-than-full-time AmeriCorps positions.

+ The Total Living Allowance includes both grant funds and matching resources

C. What is the Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)?

The maximum cost per MSY is \$13,300. Cost per MSY is calculated by dividing the Corporation's share of the budget request by the number of MSYs requested in the application. The cost per MSY does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum amount an applicant may request from the Corporation per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

Continuation and re-competing grantees requesting a higher cost per MSY than in the previous year must include a compelling rationale for this increased cost in the Budget Adequacy/Cost Effectiveness section of the application narrative. *This applies even if the increased cost per MSY is less than the maximum.*

D. What are the member enrollment requirements for existing grantees?

The Corporation and ServeNebraska expect grantees to enroll the full number of members included in their grant award. Enrollment rates have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and re-compete processes. Applicants that do not fully enroll are likely to receive a decrease in funding. Continuation and re-competing grantees that haven't achieved full enrollment in the previous year must provide an explanation in their application and describe a corrective action plan.

E. What are the member retention requirements for existing grantees?

The Corporation and ServeNebraska recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model. We expect grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible. Retention rates will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and re-compete processes. Applicants that do not retain members are likely to receive a decrease in funding. Continuation and re-competing grantees that



haven't achieved full retention in the most recently completed program year must provide an explanation in their application and describe a corrective action plan.

F. What is the amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award?

AmeriCorps members serving in programs funded with 2011 dollars who successfully complete a term of service will receive an education award from the National Service Trust of \$5,550 for a year of full-time service, with correspondingly smaller awards for less-than-full-time service. The amount of the Education Award is determined on the basis of the Pell Grant award. A member has up to seven years after the term of service has ended to use the award.

The amount of the Education Award should not be included in the budget you prepare and submit.

Term of Service and Education Award

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	Education Award
Full Time	1700	\$5,550
One-Year Half Time	900	\$2,775
Two-Year Half Time	900	\$2,775
Reduced Half Time	675	\$2,114
Quarter Time	450	\$1,468
Minimum Time	300	\$1,175

IV. SUBMISSION INFORMATION

The application should be submitted within the Corporation for National & Community Service's eGrants system in the manner specified in these instructions

A. Universal Identifier

Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and register with the Central Contractor's Registry (CCR). **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 at www.dnb.com. The website indicates a 24-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however applying sooner is strongly encouraged. Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by following instructions found here: <http://smallbusiness.dnb.com/establish-your-business/12334338-1.html>.

CCR is the primary registrant database for the U.S. Federal Government. CCR collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All CNCS recipients and subrecipients are required to maintain a valid registration, which must be renewed annually.

We urge applicants that are not already registered with the CCR to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a DUNS number in order to register with the CCR. It typically takes 3-5 days to finalize CCR registration. To register online go to www.bpn.gov/CCR.

B. Submission Instructions & Deadline:

Deadline: December 10, 2010, 5:00 CST

Your AmeriCorps State grant applications should be submitted by 5:00 p.m. CST on December 10, 2010. The application must be submitted online via eGrants (unless you have received prior permission to submit a paper version) at <https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp>. Please check to assure that you are in compliance regarding the character count of your application as they apply to new, re-competing, and continuation applicants. ***eGrants does not accommodate formatting such as bold, italics or bullets. Words in all capital letters can be used to distinguish sections.***



Character Limits: In eGrants, applicants will enter text for Section A. Program Design, B. Organizational Capability, C. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, and D. Evaluation Plan. *You may not exceed 50,000 characters, or about 25 double spaced pages, in these six sections combined. The character count includes spaces and punctuation.*

Materials: In addition, please submit the following supplemental documents by e-mail, hand delivery, mail, or express courier:

- Internal or independent evaluation of the prior year's AmeriCorps programming;
- Labor Concurrence statement (if applicable);
- Host Site Applications (if applicable);
- Federally Approved Indirect Cost Agreement (for applicants with a federally-approved indirect cost agreement in their budget).
- Most recent OMB A-133 audit of your organization if your organization has received federal grants exceeding \$500,000 or more within the past fiscal year.

These documents must **ARRIVE** in ServeNebraska office by the 5:00 pm, December 10, 2010 deadline.

- If submitting electronically: greg.donovan@nebraska.gov
- If submitting via US Mail:
ServeNebraska – the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission
ATTN: Greg Donovan
P.O. Box 98927
Lincoln, NE 68509-8927
- If sending via UPS/FedEx/Courier:
ServeNebraska – the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission
ATTN: Greg Donovan
State Capitol, 6th Floor
1445 K Street
Lincoln, NE 68509

Do not submit any other supplementary materials such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested in these application instructions. They will not be reviewed or returned.

C. eGrants Help & Tips:

As stated, all grant applications must be submitted electronically using the eGrants system. Training and ongoing technical assistance is available on use of the eGrants system by contacting Greg Donovan at (402) 471-62498 or greg.donovan@nebraska.gov to discuss your training and technical assistance needs.

The following steps will make the use of eGrants simpler and minimize obstacles:

- Create your eGrants account and begin your application as soon as possible. This will allow you time to address technical issues prior to the deadline.
- Prepare and save your application as a word processing document prior to inputting it into eGrants. Copy and paste the contents of this document into the relevant fields in eGrants.
- Adhere to all the character limits indicated in the application instructions. Characters include all the letters, punctuation, and spaces in your document. Your word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word[®]) can provide a character count.
- Use only uppercase letters for all section headings and other information you would like to highlight in your narrative. Bold face, bullets, underlines, or other types of formatting, charts, diagrams, and tables will not copy into eGrants. Do not use any of these in your application.



If you encounter difficulties using eGrants, contact: Greg Donovan (402) 471-6249 or greg.donovan@nebraska.gov . Alternatively assistance is available directly from the eGrants Help Desk at 888-677-7849 or egrantshelp@cns.gov .

Current Grantees Submitting Requests:

In assessing your request for continued funding, we will consider a grantee's progress to date in meeting performance measures for the current grant period, compliance with grant requirements, and data from our information management systems, including enrollment and retention rates. Please address causes for any enrollment rates less than 100% or retention and, if needed, describe your plans for improving these rates in your continuation request.

For Current Competitive Grantees: Supplemental application instructions will be issued for AmeriCorps programs receiving Competitive funding for 2010-2011 AmeriCorps programming

For Current Formula Grantees: Since the applications under this Request for Applications are being submitted in eGrants, under Competitive and your current 2010-2011 AmeriCorps grant is for Formula funds, you should create a new grant submission. You will not be able to simply "renew" in eGrants since the Formula and Competitive funding streams are unique. You can copy-and-paste portions of the prior year Formula application into the current application as appropriate, assuring that all content is current.

Paper Applications:

If there are significant technical challenges or if you are unable to submit your application in eGrants, you may submit a paper application if you request and receive prior permission from ServeNebraska. This permission will be granted only in exceptional cases.

In submitting a paper application, follow these instructions:

- Type and double-space the application in Times New Roman, 12-point font size with one-inch margins.
- Adhere to the character limits listed in the application instructions and number all pages. Ensure a footer that identifies the RFA applicant on each page.
- Submit one unbound, single-sided original paper application. Also submit an electronic version of your application on CD in order to expedite processing. The CD version must be an exact duplicate of the paper original and will be used to copy and paste your application information into eGrants. If there are differences between the paper application and the CD we will use the CD version. Faxed or emailed versions of your application will not be accepted.
- With your paper application, please include, in hard copy, a brief paragraph that describes the technical issues that prevented you from submitting in eGrants.

Funding Restrictions: Grants under this program, except for fixed-amount and EAP grants, are subject to the applicable Cost Principles under OMB Circulars A-21 (2 CFR part 220), A-122 (2 CFR part 230), or A-87 (2 CFR part 225) and the Uniform Administrative Requirements for grants under A-102 (45 CFR part 2541) or A-110 (45 CFR 2543 or 2 CFR part 21).

V. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical Assistance:

Applicants are encouraged to proactively pursue opportunities to learn more about AmeriCorps and other national service opportunities.

ServeNebraska will provide technical assistance for applicants through the following mechanisms:

eGrants Training

In-person and remote eGrants technical assistance session will be scheduled as needed by request.

Please contact Greg Donovan at (402) 471-6249 greg.donovan@nebraska.gov if guidance is needed.

Orientation to AmeriCorps for New Applicants

ServeNebraska staff will schedule and conduct an AmeriCorps Orientation for any potential applicant for AmeriCorps programming. Please contact Greg Donovan at (402) 471-6249, or greg.donovan@nebraska.gov to arrange an orientation.

Responses to Questions & Inquiries from Potential Applicants



ServeNebraska will respond to all questions and inquiries by posting the questions and answers on the ServeNebraska website each Wednesday during the application period. Questions regarding the RFA should be addressed to Greg Donovan at 402-471-6249 or greg.donovan@nebraska.gov

VI. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. What is the selection process for these grants?

In evaluating applications for funding to develop a balanced portfolio, in addition to the six focus areas external and staff reviewers will assess program design, organizational capability, and cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy. Additional selection factors will be applied to balance the portfolio with regard to program models, program activities, geographic distribution, and communities served, as described in 45 CFR §§ 2522.450 and 2522.470.

B. Selection Criteria

Each application must clearly describe a project that will effectively deploy AmeriCorps members to solve a significant community problem.

1. Program Design. (50%)

In assessing Program Design, reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant clearly describes and convincingly links four major elements: (1) the problem(s) identified, (2) the solution that will be carried out by AmeriCorps members and community volunteers, (3) the ways in which AmeriCorps members are particularly well-suited to deliver the solution, and (4) the anticipated outcomes. Specifically, reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant:

- Provides persuasive evidence that the identified problem exists in the targeted community(ies).
- Demonstrates that individuals recruited and selected to be AmeriCorps members will:
 - Have the appropriate backgrounds, qualifications and skills to succeed;
 - Receive orientation, training, and supervision to ensure impact in the community, and the necessary support to have a high-quality service experience.
- Makes the case that engaging AmeriCorps members is a highly effective means of solving the identified community problem.
- Describes how the activities in which AmeriCorps members and volunteers will engage will have a measurable impact on the identified community problem.

If a new applicant is already working on the problem identified in the application, the applicant should describe efforts and impact to date and describe how the proposed use of AmeriCorps members will add value, i.e., be more effective than what is currently being implemented, or enhance existing efforts.

2. Organizational Capability (25%)

Reviewers will assess the extent to which:

- The organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan, implement and evaluate the proposed program.
- The organization has secured, or describes an effective plan for securing, the financial and in-kind resources necessary to support program implementation and to demonstrate community stakeholder support
- Current or previous AmeriCorps grantees filled the member positions they were awarded and retained the AmeriCorps members they enrolled.
- The organization has a well-developed plan for expanding on its success through expansion or assuring adaptation of its program model by other organizations.

3. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25%)

For cost-reimbursement grants, reviewers will assess the extent to which:

- The budget is clear, reasonable, cost-effective, and in alignment with the program narrative.
- The requested funds do not exceed the maximum cost per Member Service Year (MSY), or for existing programs, have not increased over previous years.



For EAPs and Full-time Fixed-amount grants, reviewers will assess:

- The amount requested per member. Fixed-amount applicants are encouraged to request less than the full maximum amount allowed per MSY. The amount requested is a competitive factor in the selection process.
- The applicant's understanding of total program cost and capacity to raise additional resources beyond the fixed-amount.

C. Review and Selection Timeline

The Corporation for National & Community Service anticipates that processing and selecting applications for Competitive funding will require five months.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. When will grants be awarded?

The Corporation will award grants following the grant selection announcement. We anticipate announcing the results of this competition in June 2011. Programs should be prepared to begin September 1, 2011.

B. What documents govern the grant?

The AmeriCorps regulations and grant provisions are incorporated in the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). The NGA incorporates the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant.

C. What is the Project/Award Period?

The Corporation generally makes grant awards for three years, with funding in annual increments. Grantees will be eligible for continuation funding in the second and third year contingent on the availability of appropriations, compliance, and satisfactory performance. It is anticipated that the project period for 2011-2012 will be September 1, 2011 to August 31, 2011. *The project start date may not occur prior to the date the Corporation awards the grant. 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.*

D. What are the reporting requirements for these grants?

Grantees will be required to submit monthly income & expenditure reports, quarterly program progress reports, and annual summaries in addition to an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522 and other reports requested or required by ServeNebraska and/or the Corporation for National & Community Service.

E. Disaster Funding

The Corporation reserves the right to re-focus program dollars in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.

VIII. SERVENEBRASKA CONTACTS

Request for Application:

This Request for Applications is available on the ServeNebraska website, www.serve.nebraska.gov, for the duration of the application period. The *lead contact* for this Request for Applications is Greg Donovan, ServeNebraska Senior Program Officer. Greg may be reached at (800) 291-8911, (402) 471-6249, or greg.donovan@nebraska.gov



APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR NEW & RECOMPETING PROGRAMS

NOTE: SERVENEBRASKA IS REQUIRING ALL APPLICANTS TO APPLY FOR COMPETITIVE FUNDS WITHIN EGRANTS.

The following instructions contain the information for new and recompeting AmeriCorps applicants.

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION IN EGRANTS

Applicants need to establish an eGrants account by accessing this link: <https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp> and selecting “Don’t have an eGrants account? Create an account.”

In eGrants, before Starting Section I you will need to:

- Start a new Grant Application
- Select a Program Area (AmeriCorps)
- Select a NOFA:
 - Commission AmeriCorps State FY 2011—States and American Samoa, District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico (New and Continuations) - *Select Nebraska*
 - Commission AmeriCorps EAP FY 2011 (New and Continuations)
 - Commission AmeriCorps State Fixed Amount Grants FY 2011 (New and Continuations)

Your application consists of the following components. Please make sure to complete each one.

- I. Applicant Info
- II. Application Info
- III. Narratives
- IV. Performance Measures
- V. Documents
- VI. Budget
- VII. Review, Authorize, and Submit
- VIII. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (Optional)

I. APPLICANT INFO

In eGrants, complete the Applicant Info Section. This section is particularly important for data collection and evaluation. Please take the time to reflect your proposed program activities accurately in this section.

- In the Program Info Section, select **Continuation/Renewal** if you are continuing (starting Years Two or Three of your grant). Also select **Continuation/Renewal** if you are recompeting (if you have just completed a three-year funding cycle). Select **New** only if you are applying for the first time or have received formula funding only in the past.
- If you are applying for the first time, enter your contact information into the fields that appear.
- Select a primary Program Model and a secondary Program Model, if appropriate.
- Then select characteristics that fit your project under Program Design, Program Location, and Program Focus. Enter or select a Program Director and Program Website URL.

II. APPLICATION INFO

Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF 424 Facesheet. **If you are submitting your application in hard copy, you will find the SF 424 in Attachment A.**



In the Application Info Section enter:

- Areas affected by your proposed program. Please include the two-letter abbreviation with both letters capitalized for each state where you plan to operate. Separate each two letter state abbreviation with a comma. For city or county information, please follow each with the two-letter capitalized state abbreviation.
- Requested project period start and end dates. You may not request a program start date earlier than June 15. First-time grantees should not expect to start until late summer or early fall. The project period is three years.
- If you are delinquent on any federal debt.
- State Application Identifier: Enter N/A.
- State Single Point of Contact: This is pre-filled as “No, this is not applicable.”
- If you plan to request a waiver of the volunteer leveraging requirement please select “Request a waiver” at the bottom of the screen. A pop-up screen will appear. Select a waiver type and enter your volunteer leveraging waiver request justification in the narrative field in 2,000 characters or less.
- If you plan to request the alternative match schedule, you must submit your request as described in the Budget Section, below, at least 60 days prior to the application deadline.
- For “Project Director” please enter the Executive Director or other authorizing executive who will certify the grant.
- Leave the box for “Program Initiative” blank.
- The “Estimated Funds Requested” box will be populated automatically after you complete the budget.

III. NARRATIVES

The narrative section of the application is your opportunity to convince reviewers that your project meets the selection criteria. Below are some general suggested guidelines to help you present your project in a way the reviewers will find compelling and persuasive.

- ***Lead from your program strengths and be explicit.*** Do not make the mistake of trying to stretch your program description to fit each strategic initiative, special consideration, and priority articulated in the regulations or this RFA. Focus on the special considerations and priorities that apply to your program.
- ***Be clear and succinct.*** Reviewers are not interested in jargon, boilerplate, rhetoric, or exaggeration. They are interested in learning precisely what you intend to do, and how your project responds to the three selection criteria presented below.
- ***Use clear sub-dividing section headers.*** The narrative text boxes accommodate large amounts of text. To assure completeness and ease of review, use the headings in bold in this section as sub-dividers in your narratives. Please remember that eGrants does not accommodate formatting such as bold, italics or bullets. Words in all capital letters can be used to distinguish sections.
- ***Avoid circular reasoning.*** The problem you are addressing should not be described as the lack of the program you are proposing.
- ***Explain how.*** Avoid simply stating that the criteria will be met.
- ***Don't make assumptions.*** Even if you have received funding from the Corporation in the past, do not assume your reviewers know anything about you, your program, your partners, or your beneficiaries. Avoid overuse of acronyms.
- ***Use an impartial proofreader.*** Before you submit your application, let someone who is completely unfamiliar with your project read and critique the project narrative.
- ***Follow the instructions and discuss each criterion in the order they are presented in the instructions.*** Use headings to differentiate narrative sections according to the criteria.



In eGrants, you will enter text for

- Executive Summary: Maximum 500 characters (a brief paragraph, about a quarter-page). Executive Summaries of all compliant applications will be published on the Corporation website following grant notifications.
- Program Design.
- Organizational Capability.
- Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.
- Evaluation Plan.

You may not exceed 50,000 characters, or about 25 double spaced pages in the Narratives, including the Executive Summary. The character count includes spaces and punctuation. Reviewers will not consider material submitted over the character limits. The character count includes spaces and punctuation.

Please note that the Narratives Section includes a field for Clarification Information, Amendment Justification, and Continuation Changes. These are not required fields; they are used once a grant is awarded. Please enter N/A in these fields.

External and staff reviewers will assess your application against the selection criteria. The bullets that follow the criteria are recommendations on how to best respond to the criteria. To best respond to the criteria, we suggest that you include a brief discussion of each bullet if it pertains to your application.

Executive Summary

Please provide a one-paragraph summary of your proposed program. This paragraph must be 500 characters maximum, including spaces and punctuation. The Corporation will post these summaries on www.nationalservice.gov in the interest of transparency and Open Government.

Each application must clearly describe a project that will effectively deploy AmeriCorps members to solve a significant community problem.

Program Design:

In assessing Program Design, reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant clearly describes and convincingly links four major elements:

- (1) the problem(s) identified,
- (2) the solution that will be carried out by AmeriCorps members and community volunteers,
- (3) the ways in which AmeriCorps members are particularly well-suited to deliver the solution, and
- (4) the anticipated outcomes.

Specifically, reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant:

- Provides persuasive evidence that the identified problem exists in the targeted community(ies).
- Demonstrates that individuals recruited and selected to be AmeriCorps members will:
 - Have the appropriate backgrounds, qualifications and skills to succeed.
 - Receive orientation, training, and supervision to ensure impact in the community.
- Provides evidence that the program will provide AmeriCorps members a powerful service experience that leads to continued engagement in active civic participation.

- Makes the case that engaging AmeriCorps members is a highly effective means of solving the identified community problem(s).
- Describes, to the extent possible based on evidence, how the activities in which AmeriCorps members and volunteers will engage will have a measurable impact on the identified community problem(s).



If a new applicant is already working on the problem identified in the application, the applicant should describe efforts and impact to date and describe how the proposed use of AmeriCorps members will add value, i.e., be more effective than what is currently being implemented, or enhance existing efforts.

In discussing how you will meet the criteria, please include your response to the following:

a. Problem

Describe the problem(s) you will be working on. Why did you choose this problem? Provide documentation of the extent/severity of the problem in the target community. Describe the target community. Why did you select this population to be served?

b. Solution: AmeriCorps Member Roles and Responsibilities

Why are you proposing to use AmeriCorps to solve the identified problem? What will members do? How many members are you requesting? What types of slots (service terms) are needed for these members? If you are requesting different slot types, explain how the different slot types align with your program design and activities.

c. AmeriCorps Member Selection, Training, and Supervision

Describe your plans for recruiting members for your program. Describe how the applicants selected for your program will reflect a diverse member corps. Describe how members will be included from the local communities to be served by your program.

Describe your plan for orienting members to AmeriCorps, the community they are serving, their placement site, and to the service they will perform. Describe how you will ensure that training provided to members will prepare members to perform all the activities they will engage in during their term of service. Describe, as necessary, the ongoing training provided to members throughout their terms. What are the anticipated training topics and the timeline for member training? Demonstrate how you will provide structured opportunities for participants to reflect on and learn from their service in order to promote a lifelong ethic of service and civic responsibility.

Describe your plan for supervising members, and how it ensures that members will receive adequate support and guidance throughout their terms. Who will supervise the AmeriCorps members? Describe how supervisors are selected and trained. Describe how your program provides training, oversight, and support to supervisors.

d. Outcome: Performance Measures

What is the overall change you want to see by the end of the three-year grant cycle? How will you measure impact? How will you report on this on an annual basis? How did you determine your performance measure targets?

e. Volunteer Generation

Describe how the proposed program will recruit volunteers to expand the reach/impact in the community. How will volunteers help meet the identified community needs? What will be the role(s) of volunteers? What role will AmeriCorps members have in volunteer recruitment and management? If you are requesting a waiver of the requirement to recruit or support volunteers (see 45 CFR § 2520.35), explain the basis for your request in this section.

f. Partnerships and Collaboration

Who are your community stakeholders and partners? How are they involved in planning and implementing the proposed program?

g. Sustainability

Outline your plans for ensuring that the impact of your program in the community is sustainable beyond the presence of federal support. For example, you might describe how your community relationships will lead to community investment in the program's continued operation; how you will diversify your funding sources to include a wide range of stakeholders (such as state, local, and private sector funding); how your strategies for recruiting and supporting



volunteers will sustain member activities after your AmeriCorps grant ends; or how the community will maintain your project once it is completed.

h. Tutoring Programs Only

If you are proposing to operate a tutoring program, describe how your process complies with AmeriCorps requirements for member tutoring qualifications. Members who tutor must have a high school diploma, and successfully complete high-quality, research-based pre- and in-service training for tutors. This requirement does not apply to a member enrolled in a secondary school who is providing tutoring through a structured, school-managed cross-grade tutoring program.

Describe how your strategy for training members complies with AmeriCorps requirements for member tutor training that is high quality and research based, consistent with the instructional program of the local agency and with state academic content standards [section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311)], includes appropriate member supervision by individuals with expertise in tutoring, and provides specialized pre-service and in-service training consistent with the activities the member will perform.

Organizational Capability

Reviewers will assess the extent to which:

- The organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan, implement and evaluate the proposed program.
- The organization has secured, or describes an effective plan for securing, the financial and in-kind resources necessary to support program implementation and to demonstrate community stakeholder support.
- Current or previous AmeriCorps grantees filled the member positions they were awarded and retained the AmeriCorps members they enrolled or have provided an explanation for less than 100% enrollment and retention.

In discussing how you will meet the criteria, please include your response to the following:

a. Organizational Background

Identify the primary and secondary contacts for the grant application. Describe your organization's prior experience administering AmeriCorps grants or other federal funds. Describe your organization's experience raising funds to support service activities and initiatives. Please list all sources of organizational funding in this section, and what percent the proposed project represents in your budget. If you have received support from the Corporation during the last five years, please specify what type of support you received. What percentage of your total funding comes from the Corporation?

If you already operate an AmeriCorps program, describe how it is integrated and supported within your organization. Include information explaining your organization's management structure and how the board of directors (if applicable), administrators, and staff members will be used to support your program.

b. Staffing

Who will staff the AmeriCorps program and what is their specific role? What is their relevant experience? If positions are currently vacant, please describe the desired qualifications for each open position. What are your plans for: providing financial and programmatic orientation; training and technical assistance; and monitoring for compliance to your program and service sites?

c. Multi-Site Applicants Only

Identify your proposed member service sites (if known). Describe your process for selecting operating and service sites and ensuring they have adequate programmatic and financial capabilities to succeed. How will your site selection process incorporate the criteria required by the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §2522.475 (quality, innovation, sustainability, quality of leadership, past performance, community involvement), and the special considerations found in 45 CFR §2522.450 (program models, program activities and programs supporting distressed communities)? What are your current or previous programmatic and funding relationships with the sites? ***ServeNebraska requires that a Host Site application be submitted for each planned site.***

e. Current Grantees Only

Enrollment: If you enrolled less than 100% of slots received during your last full year of program operation, provide an explanation, and describe your plan for improvement. Enrollment rate is calculated by dividing slots filled plus refill slots filled by slots awarded.



Retention: If you were not able to retain all of your members during your last full year of program operation, provide an explanation, and describe your plan for improvement. While we recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model, we expect grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible. Retention rate is calculated by dividing the number of members exited with award (full or partial award) by the number of members enrolled.

Cost per MSY: Re-competing grantees requesting a higher cost per MSY than in the previous year must include a compelling rationale for this increased cost in the Budget Adequacy/Cost Effectiveness section of the application narrative. **This applies even if the increased cost per MSY is less than the maximum.**

f. Special Circumstances

In applying the organizational capability criteria to each proposal, reviewers may also take into account the following circumstances of individual organizations: The age of your organization and its rate of growth; and whether your organization serves a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of philanthropic and corporate resources.

If you feel that any of the circumstances stated above have an impact on your organizational capability that has not already been discussed, please describe the circumstance and how it affects your organizational capacity.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

For cost-reimbursement grants, reviewers will assess the extent to which:

- The budget is clear, reasonable, cost-effective, and in alignment with the program narrative.
- The requested funds do not exceed \$13,300, the maximum cost per Member Service Year (MSY), or for existing programs, have not increased over previous years.

For full-time fixed amount grants and Education Award Only Programs [EAPs], reviewers will assess:

- The amount requested per member. Fixed-Amount applicants are encouraged to request less than the full maximum amount allowed per MSY. The amount requested is a competitive factor in the selection process.
- The applicant's understanding of total program cost and capacity to raise additional resources beyond the fixed-amount.

a. Cost Effectiveness

The Corporation cost per MSY is determined by dividing the Corporation's share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs you are requesting in your grant. It does not include child care or the cost of the education award. One MSY is equivalent to at least 1700 service hours, a full-time AmeriCorps position. The Corporation cost per MSY for your proposal will be automatically calculated once you enter your budget in eGrants. The Corporation request may not exceed \$13,300 per MSY

The maximum cost per MSY allowable is published each year in the *Notice*. Cost effectiveness will be evaluated by analyzing cost per MSY in relation to your program design. If you request above the maximum, please justify. This is rarely approved.

Demonstrate how your program has or will obtain diverse resources for program implementation. Indicate how much funding your program needs from non-Corporation sources to support the project. Indicate the non-Corporation resource commitments (in-kind and cash) that you have obtained to date and the sources of these funds. Indicate what additional commitments you plan to secure, and how you will secure them.

b. Current Grantees Only:

Describe the extent to which you are increasing your share of costs to meet or exceed program goals, or the extent to which you are proposing deeper impact or broader reach without a commensurate increase in Federal funds.

c. Special Circumstances

In applying the cost-effectiveness criteria, the Corporation will take into account the following circumstances of individual programs: program age, or the extent to which your program brings on new sites; whether your program or project is located in a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of corporate or philanthropic resources; whether your program or project is located in a high-cost, economically distressed community, measured by applying appropriate Federal and State data; and



whether the reasonable and necessary costs of your program or project are higher because they are associated with engaging or serving difficult-to-reach populations, or achieving greater program impact as evidenced through performance measures and program evaluation.

d. Budget Adequacy

Unless you are applying for an EAP or Full-time Fixed-Amount grant, discuss the adequacy of your budget to support your program design including how it is sufficient to support your program activities and desired outputs and outcomes.

e. EAPs and Full-time Fixed-Amount Applicants Only

The extent to which a current grantee is increasing its share of costs will not be considered in assessing a fixed-amount application. However, all other indicators described under Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy apply and the section will be weighted 25% of the total application. Fixed-Amount applicants are encouraged to request less than the full maximum amount allowed per MSY. The amount requested is a competitive factor in the selection process.

Discuss how you will raise the resources you will need to manage and operate an AmeriCorps program and identify the total amount you have budgeted to operate the program, both the Corporation share and grantee share. Keep in mind that full-time AmeriCorps program costs include expenditures for the AmeriCorps living allowance, health care and criminal history checks.

Education Award Programs are not required to pay living allowances or cover health care for less-than-full-time members, but must conduct criminal history checks. You will not be required to track or report on your expenditures. However, you must demonstrate that you have planned for total costs. Reviewers will assess the adequacy of your plan to secure resources to support your program design.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

If you are competing for the first time, please enter N/A in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field since it pertains only to recompeting grantees. If you are recompeting for AmeriCorps funds for the first time you must submit a summary of your evaluation efforts or plan to date in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in eGrants. If you are recompeting for the second time, you must submit your evaluation report according to the instructions in V. D., below. An evaluation report may be submitted in place of an evaluation plan.

Your evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of your grant, as described in the AmeriCorps Regulations, Section 2522.710:

- If you are State and National grantee (other than an Education Award Program grantee), and your average annual Corporation program grant is \$500,000 or more, you must arrange for an external evaluation of your program, and you must submit the evaluation with any application to the Corporation for competitive funds as required in §2522.730 of this subpart.
- If you are State and National grantee whose average annual Corporation program grant is less than \$500,000, or an Education Award Program grantee, you must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of your program, and you must submit the evaluation with any application to the Corporation for competitive funds as required in §2522.730 of this subpart.

NOTE: A formula program will be considered a recompeting application, if it satisfies the Corporation's definition of "same project," below, and has been funded in formula for at least one three-year cycle. If your project satisfies the definition of same project, and you have completed one three-year cycle, you will be required to submit an evaluation plan, summary, or evaluation report when you recompetite for the first time. If your project does not satisfy the definition, it will be considered new and will not be required to submit an evaluation plan, summary, or completed evaluation.

Two projects will be considered the same if they:

- address the same issue areas;
- address the same priorities;
- address the same objectives;
- serve the same target communities and population;
- utilize the same sites; and
- use the same program staff and members.



IV. AMENDMENT JUSTIFICATION, CLARIFICATION INFORMATION & CONTINUATION UPDATES

Enter N/A in each field. These fields may be used if you are awarded a grant.

V. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

All applicants must submit performance measures with their application. Applicants opting into the National Performance Measures Pilot should note that some pilot measures in the NOFO may not appear in eGrants at the time the application is submitted. If this is the case, the applicant should make a note in the performance measures section of the Program Design narrative and should identify the numbers and titles of the pilot measures the applicant intends to opt into as well as the targets and instruments for these indicators. Applicants will have an opportunity to enter these measures in eGrants during the clarification process.

All applicants must complete Steps 1-6. Then, if you are:

- Entering applicant-determined performance measures, follow steps 7A-17A.
- Opting in to the National Performance Measures, follow steps 7B-17B.

For more information about Performance Measures go to: <http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/star/ac>

For more information about the National Performance Measures Pilot go to: <http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/national-performance-measures/home>.

AmeriCorps Performance Measures

To begin entering performance measures, from your eGrants grant application page select Performance Measures.

Step 1: Select Serve America Act (SAA) Characteristics.

To begin, click one or more boxes in the “SAA Characteristics”

Step 2: Select Serve America Act Focus Areas

Select the Focus Area in which your primary service activity fits. If your primary service activity does not fit into a Focus Area, select “Other” and skip to **Step 5**. You may select multiple Focus Areas to represent significant areas of AmeriCorps member activity. Do not include multiple Focus Areas to describe the same activity. Select the Focus Area that best describes the activity.

Step 3: Choose whether to Opt-in to National Performance Measures:

Although eGrants will allow you to select all of your Focus Areas at once, we suggest starting with one Focus Area that represents your primary activity and then repeating **Step 2 – Step 6** for additional Focus Areas if applicable.

When you select a Focus Area, eGrants automatically pre-populates “No, I will not be using a national performance measure related to this Priority.”

- Leave this selection as “No” if you do not want to participate in the National Performance Measures for that Focus Area.
- Change the selection to “Yes, I will be using a national performance measures related to this Priority,” if you want to opt-in to the National Performance Measures for that Focus Area.

Consult the Serve America Act Performance measures found along with the AmeriCorps application materials at www.serve.nebraska.gov



If you selected Other or Disaster Services as your Focus Area, you will skip this step as there are no National Performance Measures for Other or Disaster Services.

Step 4: Complete the MSY Chart(s)

For each Focus Area selected, complete a Member Service Years (MSY) Chart. If the only Focus Area you selected is “Other,” skip to Step 5.

Click the “view/edit MSY Slots” orange link. There are two sets of numbers to enter in each MSY Chart. First, for each slot type, enter the number of members that will be providing service in that Focus Area.

Second, enter the percent of time that members of each slot type will spend on activities in that Focus Area. Use whole numbers to represent the percent. Do not use a % or a decimal. eGrants will calculate the total MSYs for each slot type, then aggregate the MSYs for the entire chart in the “Total MSYs Devoted to Priority” field at the bottom of the chart.

Note that MSYs in each Focus Area should be mutually exclusive. Do not double count MSYs. The total MSYs across all Focus Areas selected should not exceed the total MSYs requested in the budget.

Step 5: Add an Issue Area

Click on the “Add a service category” link and then click “Go.” You will use this link to select the Issue Areas and Service Categories that best represent the need your activities are meeting and the strategies you are using to meet them.

The Issue Area will be a drop down menu. The Issue Area you select will determine the Service Category options in the next step.

Step 6: Add a Service Category

Select your Primary Service Category from the pop-up menu. The Service Category you select will determine the Indicator drop-down options in later steps.

If this is the first or only Service Category you select, eGrants will automatically check “Primary” to indicate this is your primary activity. To select more than one Service Category, simply click the “add a service category” link. Only one Service Category can be indicated as the primary, and one as the secondary. You may add additional service categories if appropriate for your program design.

Note that the following definitions apply to the Service Categories listed under the Disaster Recovery/Relief Issue Area. A program which has a primary focus on one or more of these phases should indicate alignment with the Disaster Services focus area.

Disaster Mitigation

Disaster Mitigation is any action to eliminate or reduce potential injury to people or damage to property from natural hazards and other disasters. Examples of disaster mitigation projects include, but are not limited to: converting riverfront property to green space; installing hurricane shutters and straps; constructing tornado shelters and safe rooms; planting natural vegetation along river banks; installing tornado warning systems; and creating rain gardens.

Disaster Preparedness and Education

Disaster preparedness is minimizing the real and potential adverse risks and effects of dealing with natural or man-made hazards by ensuring there is precautionary actions and training needed to ensure appropriate and effective delivery of prevention, response, recovery, relief and mitigation activities. Disaster education provides the skill development and training needed to safely and effectively serve communities who are working to reduce risk and repair damage from natural and man-made risks and hazards. Disaster preparation and education activities may be community-based or school-based.

Immediate Disaster Response

Disaster response is the phase in the disaster management cycle that typically follows the mitigation and preparedness phases. This phase addresses the work that takes place in the emergency period immediately following the impact of a natural or man-made event. Examples of Disaster Response activities include: staffing evacuation shelters, distributing emergency kits and equipment, serving food and assisting in immediate assessments.

Disaster Recovery & Long Term Recovery

The Long Term Recovery process begins when the crisis situation stabilizes and loss of life is no longer eminent. This phase may be initiated within hours or days of the initial disaster response phase. It is possible that the recovery phase may last anywhere from weeks to years, depending upon the size and scale of the incident. Recovery consists of those activities that continue beyond the emergency period to restore critical community functions, manage reconstruction, and restore services and community wellbeing after a disaster. Examples of activities include: capacity building of community organizations that support recovery services and economic recovery projects aimed at lifting vulnerable populations impacted by the disaster out of poverty.



Step 7: Add a performance measure

You must create at least one aligned set of Performance Measures representing your Primary Service Activity, which is achieved through either applicant-determined performance measures or National Performance Measures.

If you have opted-in to National Performance Measures, you will see the links for both “add a performance measure” and “add a national performance measure.” If you have not opted-in to National Performance Measures, you will only see the link for “add a performance measure.”

- Follow the instructions **7A – 17A** for each aligned set of applicant-determined measures you need to create.
- Follow the instructions for **7B – 17B** for each aligned set of national performance measures you need to create.

Applicant-Determined Performance Measures***Step 7A: Add a Performance Measure***

Follow the instructions for **7A – 17A** for each applicant-determined performance measure you will create. Begin by creating the Performance Measure Output and then repeat steps 12A-17A to create an aligned Intermediate Outcome.

Step 8A: Add Performance Measurement Title

Give this performance measure a title—usually 3-4 words that describe the activity—and enter it in the text box.

Step 9A: Select a Service Category

Service Category is a drop-down menu of choices based on your earlier identification of Service Categories; select one and continue.

Step 10A: Describe Strategies to Achieve Result

Briefly describe how you will achieve this result. Keep statements to one or two paragraphs with a maximum of 4,000 characters.

Step 11A: Select a Result Type

You will need to select the Result Type that you intend to track for this activity – output or intermediate outcome – and click “Add New Results Section.” You should begin each aligned measure with the selection of an Output Measure.

Step 12A: Write a Result Statement

Enter 1-2 sentences stating the expected Result.

Step 13A: Select an Indicator

Select an Indicator from the drop- down menu. If the options provided do not include the indicator you are measuring, select “other” and describe the Indicator in the text box that will appear. Some pilot measures that appear in the NOFO may not appear in e-Grants at the time the application is submitted. If this is the case, the applicant should make a note in the performance measures section of the Program Design narrative and should identify the numbers and titles of the pilot measures the applicant intends to opt into as well as the targets and instruments for the for these indicators. Applicants will have an opportunity to enter these measures in eGrants during the clarification process.

Step 14A: Write a Target Description

In 250 characters or less, include a description of the target. Be sure to include how you determine what is counted in this target. For example: 100 parents will attend the eight-week parenting skills/drop-out prevention class.

Step 15A: Select a Target Number or Percent

Write a number in the Target box from your target statement—and indicate whether it is a whole



number or percent—for example, of how many things or services will be created or provided. Output targets often use a number (#) rather than a percent. If you included a number in your Target Description, this number in the Target Number or Percent field and the number in the Target Description should match.

Step 16A: Identify your Instruments

Describe the Instruments that will be used to measure your output/outcome in 250 characters or less. These are specific tools to collect information such as a behavior checklist, tally sheet, attitude questionnaire, or interview protocol.

Step 17A: Write a Performance Measure Statement

Provide the expected result and target combined into one or two sentences in 1,000 characters or less.

Once you have completed the output performance measurement information, do the same for your intermediate outcome and/or additional measures, if necessary. Begin by identifying the Result Type as “intermediate outcome” and complete Steps 12A through 17A again. If you would like to enter an “end outcome”, you may do so by completing Steps 12A through 17A again. End outcomes are not required.

National Performance Measures

Follow the instructions for **7B –17B** for each aligned set of National Performance Measures you need to create. You will use these instructions to complete measures if you have opted in to National Performance Measures for any Focus Area.

- If you select the Education Focus Area and opt-in to National Performance Measures, you are only allowed to select National Performance Measures. You are not allowed to add any additional, applicant-determined measures.
- If you select the Healthy Futures, Economic Opportunity, Environmental Stewardship or Veterans Focus Areas, you will enter your National Performance Measures. If you choose, you may add additional, applicant-determined Measures after you enter the National Performance Measures.

Step 7B: Add a National Performance Measure

First select the Focus Area. Only those Focus Areas that were checked as participating in the National Performance Measures will be displayed.

Step 8B: Add a Performance Measurement Title

Give this performance measure a title — usually 3-4 words that describe the activity — and enter it in the text box.

Step 9B: Select a Service Category

Service Category is a drop-down menu of choices based on your earlier identification of Service Categories; select one and continue.

Step 10B: Describe Strategies to Achieve Result

Briefly describe how you will achieve this result. Keep statements to one or two paragraphs with a maximum of 500 characters.

Step 11B: Select a Result Type

You will need to select the Result Type that you intend to track for this activity – output or intermediate outcome— and click “Add New Results Section.” You should begin each aligned measure with the selection of an Output Measure.

Step 12B: Select the Indicator

This is where you select your National Performance Measure. There is a drop-down list containing the National Performance Measures for the Focus Areas that you have selected.



Once you select your first National Performance Measure, eGrants will provide onscreen instructions about other National Performance Measures you must use in conjunction with this measure or if you need to add an applicant-determined intermediate outcome.

If you need to add an applicant-determined intermediate outcome measure, you will select “Other” from the pop-up list.

Step 13B: Write Result Statement

Enter 1-2 sentences stating the expected result.

Step 14B Write a Target Description

In 250 characters or less, include a description of the target. Be sure to include how you determine what is counted in this target. For example: 100 parents will attend the eight-week parenting skills/drop-out prevention class.

Step 15B: Select a Target Number

Write the number in the Target box from your target description. You are only allowed to use a number.

Step 16B: Identify your Instruments

Describe the Instruments that will be used to measure your output/outcome in 250 characters or less. These are specific tools to collect information such as a behavior checklist, tally sheet, attitude questionnaire, or interview protocol. Check for guidance on appropriate instruments posted at the National Performance Measures resource page: <http://nationalservicerresources.org/national-performance-measures/home>

Step 17B: Write a Performance Measures Statement

Provide the expected result and target combined into one or two sentences (1,000 characters or less).

Step 18B: Create Aligned Measure

Now that you have completed the output performance measurement information, do the same for your intermediate outcome. Begin by identifying the Result Type, and then complete Steps **12B to 17B** again.

Once you complete entering an aligned measure as defined by the National Performance Measure, you will return to Step 7 and create any other aligned measures to report member activities in Focus Areas or other areas of service either by:

- **Following Steps 7A – 17A for an applicant-determined measure or**
- **Following Steps 7B – 17B for an aligned National Performance Measure.**

VI. DOCUMENTS

In addition to submitting your application in eGrants, you are required to provide your evaluation, labor union concurrence (if necessary), and a federally approved indirect cost agreement in hard copy or e-mail, as part of your application. After you have submitted the documents, change their status in eGrants from the default “Not Sent” to the applicable status (“Sent,” “Not Applicable,” or “Already on File at CNCS”). Submission details are included earlier in this document.

- ❖ **Host Site Applications:** For multi-site applications, secure and submit a signed Host Site Application from each service site where at least one AmeriCorps member will be in service.
- ❖ **Evaluation:** Completed evaluations must be completed as described in this RFA and submitted
- ❖ **Labor Union Concurrence:** If a program applicant:
 - (1) Proposes to serve as the placement site for AmeriCorps members; and
 - (2) Has employees engaged in the same or substantially similar work as that proposed to be carried out by AmeriCorps members; and



(3) Those employees are represented by a local labor organization then the program applicant’s application must include the written concurrence of the local labor organization representing those employees. For the purposes of this section, “program applicant” includes any applicant to the Corporation or a State Commission, as well as any entity applying for assistance or approved national service positions through a Corporation grantee or subgrantee. If this applies to you, please select “Enter New,” name the new document “Labor Union Concurrence,” and enter status Sent.

- ❖ **Federally Approved Indirect Cost Agreement:** Applicants with a federally-approved indirect cost agreement in their budget must submit the approved agreement.
- ❖ **Most recent OMB A-133 Audit:** Submit if your organization has received federal grants exceeding \$500,000 or more within the past fiscal year

VII. Budget

For Fixed-Amount grants, including Education Award programs: Use the Budget Instructions for Fixed-Amount applicants.

Overview of Key Budget Requirements:

Program requirements, including requirements on match, are located in the AmeriCorps regulations, modified by 2008 appropriations language, and summarized below. Current grantees remain where they are in terms of match requirements. For example, a grantee entering the sixth year of funding will be required to match at 34% as specified in the chart.

If you are applying for the first time, you must match with cash or in-kind contributions at least 24% of the project’s total Operating Costs (Section I) plus Member Costs (Section II) plus Administrative Costs (Section III). If you are re-competing, please contact Janet Schmidt at janet.schmidt@nebraska.gov or 402-471-6212 to verify where you are in the match schedule.

Acceptable sources of matching funds are federal, state, local, private sector, and/or other funds or resources in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements. In Section III of the budget, identify the source and total dollar amount of cash match from private, state and local and federal funds, and the source and total amounts of in-kind support. Define all acronyms the first time they are used

Match Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Competition	Match Requirement
Formula	Minimum grantee share is 24% of all federal funds. The overall grantee share of total program costs increases gradually beginning in Year 4 to 50% by the tenth year of funding and any year thereafter.
Education Award Only	Grantee pays all program costs over \$800 per MSY provided by the Corporation.

Note: The Corporation’s legislation permits the use of non-Corporation federal funds as match for the grantee share of the budget. Please discuss your intention of using their funds to match an AmeriCorps grant with the other agency prior to submitting your application.

- Equipment costs must not exceed 10% of the total Corporation share.
- Administrative costs must not exceed 5% of the total Corporation funds requested.

Preparing Your Budget

Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your proposal narrative. Reviewers will consider the information you provide in this section in their assessment of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criterion.



Follow the detailed budget instructions, below, to prepare your budget. We recommend that you prepare your budget in the same order as indicated in the Budget Worksheets in Attachments F and G. The Budget Checklist in Attachment H is a resource for you to ensure your budget is complete. eGrants will create the budget and the budget narrative automatically from the detailed budget information you enter. Once you have entered your budget information in eGrants you will be asked to validate your budget, and eGrants will check your submission for errors.

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.
- Present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.
- Do not include unallowable expenses, e.g., entertainment costs (which include food and beverage costs) unless they are justified as an essential component of an activity.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).

Please refer to the relevant OMB Circulars on allowable costs for further guidance. The OMB circulars are online at www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars

- A-21 - Cost Principles for Educational Institutions, 2 CFR 220
- A-87 - Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments, 2 CFR 225
- A-122 - Cost Principles for Non Profit Organizations, 2 CFR 230

Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and OMB circulars for grant management, allowable costs, and audits, including providing audits to the A-133 clearinghouse if they expend over \$500,000 in federal funds, as required in OMB Circular A-133.

Detailed Budget Instructions

These instructions do not apply to applicants for EAP and Fixed-Amount Pilot grants.

Please see the detailed budget instructions for Fixed-Amount grants.

Follow the detailed budget instructions, below, to prepare your detailed budget. We recommend that you prepare your budget in the same order as indicated in the Budget Worksheets, included in the complementary FORMS document. eGrants will create the budget and the budget narrative automatically from the detailed budget information you enter. Once you have entered your budget information in eGrants you will be asked to validate your budget, and eGrants will check your submission for errors.

Section I. Program Operating Costs

Complete Section I, Program Operating Costs, of the Budget Worksheet by entering the “Total Amount,” “CNCS Share,” and “Grantee Share” for Parts A-I, as follows:

A. Personnel Expenses

Under “Position/Title Description,” list each staff position title and provide a brief 5 or 6 word position description, salary, and percentage of effort devoted to this award. Because the purpose of this grant is to enable and stimulate volunteer community service, the grantee may not include the value of direct community service performed by volunteers. However, the grantee may include the value of volunteer services contributed to the organization for organizational functions such as accounting, audit work, training of staff and AmeriCorps Programs.

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 amount is over 30%, please list separately. 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. Uncommon or exceptionally high-cost benefits should be itemized and justified.

C.1 Staff Travel

Describe the purpose for which program operating staff will travel. Provide a calculation to include costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel related expenses multiplied by the number of trips/staff. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information. Only domestic travel is allowable; other travel is allowable only if specifically identified and approved as a condition of a grant award.

We expect all applicants to include funds in this line item for travel for staff and site staff to attend Corporation-sponsored technical assistance meetings. There are two to three such opportunities per year, including opportunities for financial training, the Annual Grantee Meeting in Washington D.C. in the fall, and the National Conference on Service and Volunteering at various locations in the summer.

For example: Two staff members will attend the National Conference on Service and Volunteering in New Orleans.

2 staff X \$750 airfare + \$50 ground transportation + (1 day) X \$400 lodging + \$35 per diem = \$2,470 for national conference.

C. 2. Member Travel

Describe the purpose for which members will travel. Provide a calculation to include 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.

D. Equipment

Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year AND an acquisition cost of **\$5,000 or more per unit** (including accessories, attachments, and modifications). Include items that do not meet this definition in *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

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. Grantees may only charge the cost of member service gear, except for safety equipment, to the federal share if it includes the AmeriCorps logo. Grantees may also add the AmeriCorps logo to their own local program uniform items using federal funds. All safety gear may be charged to the federal share, regardless of whether it includes the AmeriCorps logo. All other service gear must be purchased with non-federal funds.

F. Contractual and Consultant Services

Include costs for consultants related to the project's operations, except evaluation consultants, who will be listed in Section G or H., below. Payments to individuals for consultant services under this grant may not exceed \$617 per day (excluding costs for indirect expenses, travel, supplies, etc.). The \$750 daily rate is a ceiling, and we anticipate budgeted daily rates at considerably lower levels. Indicate the daily rate for consultants you are proposing to use, their contractual services, and provide the names of the organizations when available. For any pro bono work by a contractor in combination with fee-based work, affirm that the vendor's normal fee schedule and market-based work warrant the in-kind value placed on the donated portion.

G. 1. Staff Training

Include the costs associated with training staff on project requirements and training to enhance the skills staff need for effective project implementation, i.e., project or financial management,



team building, etc. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate, not to exceed the daily rate limit of \$750.

G. 2. Member Training

Include the costs associated with member training to support them in carrying out their service activities, for example, orientation, project-specific skills such as age-appropriate tutoring, CPR, or ecosystems and the environment. 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, not to exceed the daily rate limit of \$750.

H. Evaluation

Include costs for project evaluation activities, including additional staff time or subcontracts you did not budget in Personnel Expenses, use of evaluation consultants, purchase of instrumentation and other costs specifically for this activity. 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:

- Background checks of members and grant-funded staff who have recurring access to vulnerable populations, i.e., children, the elderly, disabled, etc.
- Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
- Utilities, telephone, Internet and similar expenses that are specifically used for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps project staff, and are not part of the organizations indirect cost/administrative cost allocation pool.
- Recognition costs for members. List each item and provide a justification in the budget narrative. Gifts and/or food in an entertainment/event setting are not allowable costs.

Section II. Member Costs

Member Costs are identified as “Living Allowance” and “Member Support Costs.” Your match may can be federal, state, local or private sector funds. In the “Source of Match” box, enter the total amount of cash and in-kind match under columns for “Private,” “State and/or local,” and “Federal.” Then, for each amount entered, identify the source of the matching funds or in-kind contributions by entering text under “Sources.” Define any acronyms the first time they are used.

A. Living Allowance

The narrative should clearly identify the number of members you are supporting by category (i.e., full-time, half-time, reduced-half-time, quarter-time, minimum-time, and the amount of living allowance they will receive, allocating appropriate portions between the Corporation’s share (CNCS Share) and grantee match (Grantee Share).

In eGrants, enter the total number of members you are requesting in each category. In addition, enter the number of members for which you are not requesting funds for a living allowance, but for which you are requesting education awards.

Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum Number of Hours	Educational Award	MSY^	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance+
Full-time	1700	\$5,550	1.000	\$12,100	\$24,200
One-year Half-time	900	\$2,775	0.500	*	\$12,800
Reduced Half-time	675	\$2,775	0.381	*	\$9,600



Quarter-time	450	\$2,114	0.265	*	\$6,400
Minimum-time	300	\$1,468	0.212	*	\$4,300

- ^ MSY = Member Service Year, the equivalent to FTE for AmeriCorps member positions
- * Living allowances, while recommended and beneficial for recruiting & retaining AmeriCorps members, are not required for less-than-full-time AmeriCorps positions.
- + The Total Living Allowance includes both grant funds and matching resources

B. Member Support Costs

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

- *FICA for Members.* Unless exempted by the IRS with accompanying documentation (note in the narrative and provide documentation with application), all projects must pay FICA for any member receiving a living allowance, even when the Corporation does not supply the living allowance. 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.* Some states require worker’s compensation for AmeriCorps members. You must check with your State Department of Labor or state commission to determine if you are required to pay worker’s compensation and at what level. If you are not required to pay worker’s compensation, you must obtain Occupational, Accidental, Death and Dismemberment coverage for members to cover in-service injury or incidents.
- *Health Care.* You must offer health care benefits to full-time members in accordance with AmeriCorps requirements. Except as stated below you may not pay health care benefits to half-time members with Corporation funds. You may choose to provide health care benefits to half-time members from other sources (i.e., non-federal). Half-time members who are serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period of time (such as a full-time summer project) are eligible for health care benefits. In your budget narrative, indicate the number of members who will receive health care benefits. The Corporation will not pay for dependent coverage.
- *Unemployment Insurance and Other Member Support Costs.* Include any other required member support costs here. Some states require unemployment coverage for their AmeriCorps members. You may not charge the cost of unemployment insurance taxes to the Grant unless mandated by state law. Programs are responsible for determining the requirements of state law by consulting their state commission, legal counsel, or the applicable state agency.

Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs

Definitions: Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives Corporation funds and do not include particular project costs. 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 Circulars A-21, A-87, and A-122.

Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs (choose either A. OR B.)

Applicants **can choose to use one of two methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a Corporation fixed percentage method or a federally approved indirect cost rate method.** Regardless of the option chosen, the Corporation’s share of administrative costs is limited by statute to 5% of the total Corporation funds **actually expended** under this grant.

Corporation Fixed Percentage Method



The Corporation fixed rate 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 Corporation Fixed Percentage Method (Section IIIA in eGrants), you may charge, for administrative costs, a fixed 5% of the total of the Corporation funds expended. In order to charge this fixed 5%, the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10% of all direct cost expenditures.

1. Multiply the sum of the Corporation funding shares of Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can request as Corporation share. The factor 0.0526 is used to calculate the maximum amount of federal funds that may be budgeted for administrative (indirect) costs, rather than 0.0500, as a way to mathematically compensate for determining Section III costs when the total budget (Sections I + II + III) is not yet established. (If 0.0500 was used, the resulting Section III costs would be less than the maximum 5% of total costs that are permitted under the Corporation's regulations.) 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 Corporation 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 Corporation and grantee shares under Total Amount.

Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate Method

If you have a Federally Approved Indirect Cost (IDC) rate and choose to use it, the IDC rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs including the 5% maximum payable by the Corporation. 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.). It is at your discretion whether or not to claim your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate under the Rate Claimed field.

1. Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both the Corporation and Grantee's shares, as prescribed by your established rate agreement (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other). Then multiply the appropriate direct costs by the rate being claimed. This will determine the total amount of indirect costs allowable under the grant.
2. To determine the Corporation share: Multiply the sum of the Corporation funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as the Corporation share of indirect costs.
3. To determine the grantee share: Subtract the amount calculated in step b (the Corporation administrative share) from the amount calculated in step a (the Indirect Cost total). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for administrative costs.

Increasing Grantee Overall Share of Total Budgeted Costs

Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as the minimum match of 24% for the first three years, and the increasing minimum in years thereafter, are maintained. These matching requirements may be waived in limited circumstances.

Special Circumstances for an Alternative Match Schedule:



Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35% instead of 50% as specified in the regulations at §2521.60(b). To qualify, you must demonstrate that your program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined below.

Program Location: Except when approved otherwise, the Corporation will determine the location of your program based on the legal applicant's address. If you believe that the legal applicant's address is not the appropriate way to consider the location of your program, you must provide relevant facts about your program location in your waiver request. The Corporation will, in its sole discretion, determine whether some other address is more appropriate for determining a program's location.

Rural County: In determining whether a program is rural, the Corporation will consider the most recent Beale code rating published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the county in which the program is located. Any program located in a county with a Beale code of 6, 7, 8 or 9 is eligible to apply for the alternative match requirement.

Severely Economically Distressed County: In determining whether a program is located in a severely economically distressed county, the Corporation will consider the following list of county-level characteristics. See Attachment J for a list of website addresses where this publicly available information can be found.

- The county-level per capita income is less than or equal to 75 percent of the national average for all counties using the most recent census data or Bureau of Economic Analysis data;
- The county-level poverty rate is equal to or greater than 125 percent of the national average for all counties using the most recent census data; and
- The county-level unemployment is above the national average for all counties for the previous 12 months using the most recently available Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

Send your request in memo format to Greg Donovan at greg.donovan@nebraska.gov. You must respond to each question below. Please include both the question and your response in your request.

1. Basis of Request

- a. Identify the basis for your request as either a rural county or a severely economically distressed community as described above.
- b. Describe where your program operates and include the address of the legal applicant.

2. Rural Counties

- c. Describe the economic conditions.
- d. Confirm that your county has a Beale code of 6, 7, 8, or 9.

3. Economically Distressed Counties:

- e. Provide your level of county per-capita income and poverty and unemployment levels.
- f. Demonstrate that the income levels are above or below the national averages. Identify the data source(s) used to make your determination.
- g. Provide any other statistics you deem relevant to demonstrate your county is economically distressed.

4. Program Location:

If you believe the location of your program should not be based on the address of the legal applicant, describe your justification for requesting an alternative location(s).

5. Other:

Provide any other justification and information for your request that is not presented in the responses to the above.

Detailed Budget Instructions for Fixed-Amount Pilot & Education Award Programs

These instructions apply only to applicants for the Fixed-Amount Pilot Program and Education Award Program funding

Fixed-amount Pilot Instructions for Budget Section II

Enter the number of full-time positions you are requesting under the column labeled w/o living allowance. You may not request less than full-time positions under this competition.



Under “calculation” you will enter the calculation for your grant request. Leave all other columns blank.

Member Positions		Cost per MSY		Total Cost
_____ Full-time (1700 hours)	x	\$_____	=	\$_____

Type the total amount requested in the “Total Amount” & “CNCS Share” columns. Leave the “Grantee Share” blank.

Please note that the final amount that a program receives will be adjusted to reflect actual hours served if a member does not serve the minimum number of hours necessary to complete a full term of service.

Education Award Program Instructions for Budget Section II

Member Positions

Identify the number of Education Award members you are requesting by category (i.e. full-time, half-time, reduced half-time, quarter-time, minimum-time) and list under the column labeled #w/o Allow (without CNCS-funded living allowance.) Leave all other columns blank.

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

Amounts of fixed awards are based on the member service years which are calculated as follows:

Member Positions	Calculation	MSY
_____ Full-time (1700 hours)	(_____ members x 1.000)	= _____
_____ 1-Year Half-time (900 hours)	(_____ members x 0.500)	= _____
_____ 2-Year Half-time (1 st Year) (generally 450 hours)	(_____ members x 0.500)	= _____
_____ 2-Year Half-time (2 nd Year)* (generally 450 hours)	(_____ members x 0.000)*	= _____
_____ Reduced half-time (675 hours)	(_____ members x 0.3810)	= _____
_____ Quarter-time (450 hours)	(_____ members x 0.2646)	= _____
_____ Minimum-time (300 hours)	(_____ members x 0.2117)	= _____
	Total MSY	_____

* Grantees receive the total amount for 2-Year Half-time members in the first year. Therefore, 2-Year Half-time members serving in their second year are not included in the calculation for funds.

Under “Calculation,” you will enter the calculation for your grant request. Applicants may request up to \$800 per member service year (MSY).

Display your calculation in the following format:

Total # of MSYs _____ x MSY amount (up to \$800)_____ = Total Grant Request \$_____



Type the total amount requested in the “Total Amount” & “CNCS Share” columns. Leave the “Grantee Share” blank. See example below:

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share	edit	del
Program Grant Request	47.5 MSY	\$38,000	\$38,000	\$0		
	X \$800/MSY				view	
Subtotal		\$38,000	\$38,000	\$0		

VIII. REVIEW, AUTHORIZE, AND SUBMIT

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

- Review
- Authorize
- Assurances
- Certifications
- Verify, and
- Submit

Read the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications carefully. Complete each section. The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant’s authorized representative or his/her designee and must have an active eGrants account to sign these documents electronically. A copy of the governing body’s authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant’s office. 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 the application.

If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant’s authorized representative, that person must log into their eGrants account and proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, their name will override any that may appear and show on the application as the authorized representative.

IX. SURVEY ON ENSURING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR APPLICANTS

The Corporation and other federal agencies are collaborating with the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to conduct a survey of organizations that apply for federal funding. The purpose of this voluntary information collection is to compile statistics on the types of organizations that apply to the Corporation for funds, such as number of employees, budget size, and self-identification as a faith-based/religious organization or a non-religious community-based organization.

This form is for applicants that are nonprofit private organizations, **not including private universities**. All information from the attached survey will be confidential and the responses will be aggregated for a summary report. Information provided on your form will not be released and will not be considered in any way in making funding decisions.

You may complete the survey while preparing your application or after submitting your application.

- 1) To complete the survey while preparing your application, go to the Main Menu, select Enter Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity, provide requested information and submit.
- 2) If you submit your grant application without completing the survey, a pop-up box will appear and ask you if you would like to complete the survey. You may select Yes, No, or Remind Me Later. If you select Remind Me Later, you will be asked to fill in the survey next time you attempt to submit an application to the Corporation for National and Community Service.

