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[www.serve.nebraska.gov](http://www.serve.nebraska.gov)

## 2021 AmeriCorps Formula Funding Opportunity



### Notice of Funding Opportunity Applications due February 28, 2021

Important Notice to Applicants: The following documents are necessary to complete a 2021-2022 operating grant application for AmeriCorps funding. All can be found on the ServeNebraska website: <http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/>

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## **Contact Information**

Notice of Funding Opportunity and application documents are available at ServeNebraska webpage.

<http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/>

Please submit questions about this funding opportunity to [dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov](mailto:dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov). Responses will be included in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS) that will be updated on the ServeNebraska funding website. ServeNebraska encourages questions and to submit questions well in advance of the deadline. ServeNebraska is not obligated to answer and/or respond to questions that are received within 48 hours prior to the application due date.

### **2021-2022 ServeNebraska AmeriCorps Competitive Grant Timeline**

This timeline is subject to change due to Corporation of National and Community Service (CNCS) announcements and other events.

February 1, 2021	Release Notice of Funding Opportunity
February 28, 2021	Grant Applications due to ServeNebraska
March 9-11, 2021	Clarifications, corrections and updates
March 29-April 2, 2021	Final Grant Applications with corrections due to ServeNebraska
April 26-30, 2021	Applications submitted into the CNCS system

**State Entity Name:** ServeNebraska  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** FY 2021 AmeriCorps State Grants  
**Announcement Type:** Initial Announcement  
**CFDA Number:** 94.006

### **Disclosure**

Publication of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (Notice) does not obligate the ServeNebraska or Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to award any specific number of grants or to commit any particular amount of funding. The 2021 President's Budget proposed the elimination of CNCS. The actual level, timing, and process of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

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

- Read the Notice of Funding Opportunity and attachments fully and carefully before beginning to work on your grant application.
- Grant applications due to ServeNebraska in a word document, performance measure document, logic model template, and budget template to [dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov](mailto:dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov) by February 28, 2021 by 5:00pm CST.
- Mandatory participation in all ServeNebraska events, program leader meetings, events and days of service.
  - June 2021 - Program Leader Launch
  - Monthly program leader webinar trainings 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month 10am-11am CST.
  - September 2021 - 9/11 Day of Service
  - October 2021 – AmeriCorps Kick Off Event (Members and Program Leaders)
  - January 2022 - MLK Day of Service
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of the program year – Legislative Visits Lincoln
  - March 2022 - AmeriCorps Week
  - April 2022 - ServeNebraska Week
  - Spring 2022 - Regional Cluster Training TBA
- ServeNebraska requires programs to have a dedicated program leader identified, appropriate to the size of the program, responsible to operate the AmeriCorps program and manage members.
- Due to recent disaster(s) that have happened across our state, ServeNebraska is requesting that applicants provide a one-three sentences narrative on how your agency would respond in times of disaster.
- ServeNebraska elects to retain a 2% share of the 5% of federal dollars available budgeted for program year 2021-2022 administrative costs. All applicants are required to budget the maximum allowable federal resources for Administrative/Indirect costs and spend those administrative resources.

ServeNebraska will provide the most updated information on the website <http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/> regarding the Notice of funding, grant documents, and technical assistance opportunities. If you have any questions, please submit to [dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov](mailto:dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov).

## **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

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### **A. Funding Program Description**

#### **Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding**

ServeNebraska mobilizes Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration, and national service programs. ServeNebraska is committed to uniting individuals in service to their communities and achieving demonstrable results by funding AmeriCorps programs that address Nebraska's unmet educational, economic, environmental, health, veterans and disaster response needs. ServeNebraska receives federal funds from Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to invest in AmeriCorps programs.

The 2021 AmeriCorps Notice of funding seeks to award AmeriCorps grants to eligible community partnerships that will engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions/practices to strengthen communities (e.g. based on the proposed program's performance and evaluation data or research demonstrating the effectiveness of similar intervention) to address state and local community problems.

An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust that members can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans. Members must be U.S. Citizens, U.S. Nationals or Lawful Permanent Residents of the United States, at least 17 years of age (no upper age limit), high school graduate or GED recipients (or working towards this goal), subject to criminal history check. AmeriCorps Programs may add program-specific requirements.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded on competitive basis to eligible organizations that engage members in evidence-based or evidence informed interventions to strengthen communities. AmeriCorps grants include the allotment of AmeriCorps member positions and provide partial funding to support AmeriCorps organizational operating expenses. AmeriCorps members or grant funds can help meet the unmet needs or can expand an organization's ability to better address community needs, but cannot be used to duplicate, displace, or supplant resources that already exists in the community.

### **B. Federal Funding Priorities**

(See Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for further information about some of the priorities)

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

- Efforts to help local communities recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Applicants may propose programming in any CNCS focus area to aid communities as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Programs that actively engage in removing structural racial inequities, advancing racial equality, and increasing opportunity in order to achieve sustainable change in communities.
- Economic Opportunity – a program model that increases economic opportunities for communities by preparing people for the workforce.
- Education – see sixth bullet.
- Healthy Futures – a program model that reduces and/or prevents prescription drug and opioid abuse.
- Evidence-based interventions on the CNCS Evidence Exchange (<https://www.nationalservice.gov/impact-our-nation/evidence-exchange>) that are assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence.
- Veterans and Military Families – a program model that positively impacts the quality of life of veterans and improves military family strength.
- Rural intermediaries - organizations that demonstrate measurable impact and primarily serve rural communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.

- Faith-based organizations.
- Programs that reduce child poverty.
- Environmental stewardship.
- Economic Mobility Corps – a joint initiative with the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund to place national service members at Certified Community Development Financial Institutions to enhance their capacity to provide financial literacy, financial planning, budgeting, saving, and other financial counseling activities in distressed and underserved areas (See Attachment A)

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

### **C. Available Funds**

Generally ServeNebraska receives AmeriCorps grant funding from CNCS through two federal pots of money: formula and competitive funds. ServeNebraska receives formula funds from CNCS through a population-based allocation. Competitive funds are awarded to ServeNebraska to support a select number of programs that have completed successfully at the state competition through ServeNebraska and national grant competition administered by CNCS. All applicants first apply for funding through ServeNebraska and then ServeNebraska selects which applications are submitted to the CNCS AmeriCorps State and National competition for competitive funding consideration. Applications submitted to the national competition are not guaranteed funding at any level. CNCS makes final award decisions for competitive funds; those applicants approved for competitive grant awards are considered grantees for ServeNebraska. Unsuccessful applicants submitted to CNCS national grant competition will return to rank –order list for consideration for formula funds based on results from ServeNebraska state grant review process. Award amounts will vary, as determined by the scope of the projects.

### **D. Available Funds**

SN anticipates making three-year grants. CNCS generally makes an initial award for the first year of the period of performance, based on a one-year budget. Continuation awards for subsequent years are not guaranteed; they depend upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance.

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

### **E. Performance Goals or Expected Outcomes National Performance Measures**

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

CNCS expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance measurement strategy if the National Performance Measures are part of the applicant's theory of change. Applicants should use both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work as well as make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals. For more information, please refer to the National Performance Measure Instructions.

### **F. Program Authority**

Awards under this Notice are authorized by the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, (42 U.S.C. § 12501 et seq.)

#### **G. Project and Award Period.**

The project period is one year, with a start date proposed by the applicant. The grant award covers a three-year project period unless otherwise specified. In most cases, the application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding for subsequent years is not guaranteed and shall be dependent upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance. Project date may not occur prior to the date CNCS awards the grant. AmeriCorps members may not enroll prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment.

## **II. Eligibility**

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### **A. Eligible Applicants**

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

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

Applicants that are Indian Tribes apply directly to CNCS. In addition to Indian Tribes as defined in 2 CFR §200.54, tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by Indian Tribes are also eligible to apply. An entity applying on behalf of a federally-recognized tribe or multiple specific federally-recognized tribes must submit a sanctioning resolution, applicable for the entirety of the period of performance that the applicant is applying for, adopted by the Tribal Council (or comparable tribal governing body) of each Indian Tribe. The resolution(s) must identify the entity by name as a tribal organization and indicate whether it is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by an Indian Tribe(s). It must authorize the entity to be the legal applicant and act on behalf of and include the Indian Tribe(s) in a CNCS application for the purpose of conducting the activities and providing the services described in the application. A current resolution will not suffice to meet this requirement unless the resolution applies for the entire period of performance of the award, i.e., current resolutions that are applicable to a previous AmeriCorps award at the time of the application submission, but expire during the prospective period of performance of a new award, do not meet this requirement.

Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one State or Territory apply directly to CNCS. In addition to being eligible to apply under this *Notice*, federally-recognized Indian Tribes will also be eligible to apply for operating or planning grants under a separate Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity for Indian Tribes to be released later in the Winter with an application deadline in the Spring. CNCS may request applicants apply under the Tribal competition, rather than under this *Notice*.

### **B. Other Requirements**

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

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

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

- Has been assessed
- For which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and
- That not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability-that corporation is not eligible for an award under this *Notice*. However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation which a federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the federal government.

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

### **C. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

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

SAM registration must be renewed annually. ServeNebraska suggests that applicants finalize a new registration or renew an existing one at least four weeks before the application deadline, to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. **Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and address on all grant applications to ServeNebraska and CNCS.**

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

The Federal government is implementing Unique Entity Identifiers (UEI) as part of the SAM registration process to eventually replace DUNS numbers. ServeNebraska may ask applicants to add the UEI to their application as part of the clarification or pre-award process. CNCS is adding a field to capture the UEI in eGrants. If you already have a UEI and the UEI field is available in eGrants, you can enter it at the time you submit your application.

Applicants can obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at the [DUNS Request Service](#). ServeNebraska recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date, if applicants do not yet have their UEI.

Applications must include a DUNS number **and** an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number.

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## **III. Funding Restrictions**

### **A. Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)**

Applicants request the number and types of AmeriCorps member positions that are needed to address the community need stated in their application. A 1700-hour (full-time) AmeriCorps member position is equivalent to one Member Service Year (MSY). The MSY is similar to a Full Time Equivalent (FTE), measuring positions as a fraction of full-time, so a full-time member is 1 MSY and half time member is .5 MSY. An AmeriCorps grant is determined based on the number of MSY's that a grantee will support.

An applicant's cost per MSY is determined by dividing the total federal share budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. For example, a request for \$81,401 to support 6 MSYs would have a cost per



MSY of \$13,567 (\$81,401÷6 MSY). The cost per MSY does not include childcare or the value of the education award a member may earn, which is covered directly by CNCS outside of the grant award.

Successful applicants are required to maintain their awarded cost per MSY throughout the grant period. The cost per MSY is augmented by match funding secured by the legal applicant to supplement the costs of the program which can include member living allowances, staff salaries, and other program expenses.

**The maximum cost per MSY that a new or re-competing applicant may request is \$16,300 for traditional cost reimbursement grants.**

Other grant types may have lower cost per MSY limits. New and re-competing applicants will be held to the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type. See below for more information on each grant type.

**Table 1: Maximum Cost per MSY**

Grant Program	Maximum
Cost Reimbursement Grant	\$16,300
Full cost Fixed Amount Grant	\$16,300
Professional Corps Fixed Amount Applicants	\$1,000
Education Award Program Fixed Amount Grant	\$800

\*Cost reimbursement programs operating in rural communities (as defined in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) and cost reimbursement programs that recruit opportunity youth as AmeriCorps members may request up to \$16,800 cost per MSY for the AmeriCorps members who will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth.

## **B. Types of Grants**

AmeriCorps grants can be awarded on cost reimbursement or fixed amount basis. Applicants need to select and indicate which type of grant they are applying for in their application. The following types of AmeriCorps grants are offered through this funding opportunity.

### **Cost Reimbursement**

These grants fund a portion of program operating costs and member living allowances with flexibility to use all of the funds for allowable costs regardless of whether or not the program retains all AmeriCorps members. Cost reimbursement grants include a formal match requirement and require the submission of financial budget and financial report. The following two types of cost reimbursement grants are available through this funding opportunity.

#### **1. Traditional**

In a traditional AmeriCorps operating grant, all program expenses are based on an approved budget as part of the grant award and are reimbursed through the submission of expense reports to ServeNebraska. Grant funds can only be spent on costs approved in the budget. A cost reimbursement grant provides funding to pay for program costs such as member support, operational costs, and administrative costs associated with the implementation for an AmeriCorps program. An applicant that applies for a cost reimbursement grant must provide and include in the budget cash and/or in-kind match to support its overall program costs. The minimum match level required varies for applicants depending on the number of years an applicant has received AmeriCorps funding.

#### **2. Professional Corps:**

Professional Corps grants are awarded to organizations that propose to operate a Professional Corps program that place AmeriCorps members as teachers, health care providers, police officers, engineers, or other professionals in communities where there is a documented shortage of such professionals. Professional Corps applicants are requested to cover operating expenses associated with the

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

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

### **Fixed Amount Grants**

These grants provide a fixed amount of funding per Member Service Year that is substantially lower than the amount required to operate the program. Grantees can access all of the federal funds, provided they recruit and retain the members supported under the grant based on the MSY level awarded. Successful applicants are not required to enter detailed budget and there is no specific match requirement. An AmeriCorps program that receives a fixed-amount grant must adhere to all AmeriCorps Regulations and Provisions including the administrative and programmatic requirements related to the recruitment, placement, training, and management of members as well as the required documentation.

#### **1. Full-Cost Fixed Amount:**

These grants are only available for experienced applicants that propose to enroll full-cost members. New applicants are NOT eligible to apply for this type of grant. The final grant amount that a fixed-amount grantee may retain under its award is tied to the number of service hours completed by each member. If a member completes their term of service and has earned their education award, the program is entitled to the full amount approved per MSY. If a member did not complete the term of service the program is entitled to pro-rated approved amount based on the percentage of hours served. Programs can access all the funds, provided they recruit and retain the members supported under the grant based on the MSY level awarded. The maximum cost per MSY limit for a Full-cost Fixed Amount grant is \$15,479.

#### **2. Education Award Program:**

Applicants apply for a small fixed amount up to \$800 per Member Service Year (MSY), can enroll less than full-time members, and use their own resources to cover all other costs (e.g. majority of member living allowance, staffing, training, etc.) Successful applicants can access funds under the grant based on enrolling the full complement of members supported under the grant. As with full-time fixed amount grants, there are no specific math or financial reporting requirement for EAP fixed amount grants. Because of the minimal grant amount received, EAP grants are best suited for pre-existing service programs or for organizations with other sources of funding, for whom becoming part of AmeriCorps will add value to their program. New applicants are eligible to apply for EAP grants.

#### **3. Fixed Amount Professional Corps:**

These grants are awarded to organizations requesting up to \$1,000 per MSY to support a Professional Corps program for full-time AmeriCorps members only. See Cost-Reimbursement Professional Corps description for other applicable information.

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement	Fixed Amount			
Available Subtypes	Traditional	Full-Cost	Education Award Program (EAP)	Professional Corps See Sec. D.6.a.2 for further requirements	No Cost Slots
Maximum Cost per MSY	\$16,300	\$16,300	\$800 or \$1,000*	\$1,000	\$0
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	Full-Time, Three Quarter-Time, Half-time, Reduced Half-Time, Quarter-Time, Minimum-Time, Abbreviated-Time	Full-Time, Three Quarter-Time, Half-Time, Reduced Half-Time, Quarter-Time, Minimum-Time, Abbreviated-Time	Full-Time, Three Quarter-Time, Half-Time, Reduced Half-Time, Quarter-Time, Minimum-Time, Abbreviated-Time	Full-Time only	Full-Time, Three Quarter-Time, Half-Time, Reduced Half-Time, Quarter-Time, Minimum-Time, Abbreviated-Time
Budget Submission Required	Yes	No		Yes, if requesting operating funds	No
Availability of Funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSYs	No	Yes			No
Special Requirements	N/A	N/A		Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries and benefits must be paid entirely by organization where member serves and not included in budget.	N/A
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes	No			
Available to new Applicants	Yes	No	Yes		

### C. Cost Sharing or Matching

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

**Table 2: Match Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations**

Grant Type	Match Requirement
Cost Reimbursement Grant (Traditional and Non Fixed Professional Corps)	Minimum grantee share is 24% of program costs for the first three years, Overall grantee share of total program costs increases gradually beginning in year 4 to 50% by the tenth year of funding and every year thereafter.
Fulltime Fixed Amount Grant	There are no specific match requirements for fixed-amount grants. Grantees pay all program costs over the cost per MSY awarded.
Professional Corps Fixed Amount Applicants	There are no specific match requirements for fixed-amount grants. Grantees pay all program costs over the cost per MSY awarded.
Education Award Program Fixed Amount Grant	There are no specific match requirements for fixed-amount grants. Grantees pay all program costs over \$800 or \$1,000.00 per MSY Awarded

#### **Fixed Amount Grants**

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

#### **Cost Reimbursement Grants (Traditional and Professional Corps Non Fixed Amount)**

Applicants are required to match funds based on the chart below. The applicant's match can be non-CNCS cash and/or in-kind contributions. Applicants must indicate whether the match is proposed or secured. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet the match requirement at the time of application submission.

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

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

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

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

The legal applicant is the entity responsible for meeting matching funds requirements. The legal applicant may request that partnering organizations provide a share of the match necessary to meet matching fund requirements. Programs may match their share of operating costs through cash or in-kind resources. Matching funds must be verifiable, not be included as match for other federal programs, be necessary and reasonable for the purpose of the proposed program, and be allowable under OMB cost principles. Successful applicants must demonstrate matching funds are secured before ServeNebraska can issue the grant award. Additionally,

successful applicants are requirement to maintain the awarded match and support any new costs not included in the grant award through match or its own or other resources.

### **Alternative Match**

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

### **D. Indirect Costs**

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants will either use a federally approved indirect cost rate, a 5/10 percent fixed option, a 10 percent *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly as outlined in 2 CFR § 200.413. States, local governments and Indian Tribes may use approved indirect cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across federal awards. Applicants that have a federal negotiated indirect cost rate or that will be using the 10 percent *de minimis* rate must enter that information in the Organization section in the CNCS's web-based management system. However, under section 121(d) of the NCSA and CNCS's regulations at 45 CFR 2521.95 and 2540.110, no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants, of which up to two percent may be allocated to cover ServeNebraska share of indirect costs.

### **E. Pre-Award Costs**

Pre-award costs, where authorized, are allowed after receiving written approval from ServeNebraska.

### **F. Minimum Program Size**

The minimum program size by funded by ServeNebraska is 3 Member Service Year (MSY).

### **G. Living Allowance**

The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members that are within the required minimum and maximum per member (except as noted below). A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. Programs are prohibited from comparing the member living allowance to an "hourly wage" in any recruitment materials, member handbooks, etc.

Fixed grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance to members that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements.

Programs are not required to provide a living allowance for members who serve less than full-time terms of service. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to a less than full-time member, it must comply with the maximum limits in the table below and should follow the guidelines below for minimum limits. For cost-reimbursement grants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either CNCS or grantee share. While Fixed-amount grantees final grant award does not include a detailed budget, providing a living allowance to members that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements is still required.

**Table 3: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance**

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Living Allowance
Full-Time	1,700	\$15,100	\$30,200
Three Quarter-time	1,200	N/A	\$21,318
Half-time	900	N/A	\$15,988

Reduced Half-time	675	N/A	\$11,991
Quarter-time	450	N/A	\$7,994
Minimum-time	300	N/A	\$5,329
Abbreviated-time	100	N/A	\$1,776

#### **Exceptions to Living Allowance Requirements**

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

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

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

#### **H. Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards**

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

### **IV. Application Review Information**

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#### **A. ServeNebraska Review and Selection Process**

Applications will be reviewed for funding using a multi-stage process that includes ServeNebraska Staff Review, Clarification and Feedback, and ServeNebraska Commission approval.

##### **Compliance Check**

ServeNebraska staff will review all applications to determine compliance with eligibility, deadlines and completeness of the requirements. Applicants that are submitted by eligible organizations by the deadline and that meet minimal compliance check requirements will advance to staff review.

##### **Staff Review**

Reviewers will evaluate each application against a selection matrix based on assessment criteria outline in the Notice.

##### **Clarification and Feedback**

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

##### **Selection**

Primary consideration in the selection of AmeriCorps programs is merit based and address all clarification issues. ServeNebraska staff provides recommendations to the ServeNebraska's board of Commissioners for approval.

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

## **B. Criteria**

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

Points will be awarded based on an applicant's ability to address each required criterion as described in the 2021 Application Instructions. The following outlines the corresponding weight for each application component.

### **A. Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)**

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

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

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

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

Fixed-Amount grant applicants (EAP, Full-cost Fixed, No Cost Slots) should list their Other Revenue (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still raise significant additional resources to operate the program.

### **B. Program Design (50 percent)**

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

#### ***1. Theory of Change and Logic Model (24 points)***

The Theory of Change shall address:

- The proposed intervention is responsive to the identified community problem.
- The applicant's proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, dosage, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) leveraged volunteers.
- The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's theory of change.

- The expected outcomes articulated in the application narrative and logic model represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem identified by the applicant.
- The rationale for utilizing AmeriCorps members to deliver the intervention(s) is reasonable.
- The service role of AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.

The Logic Model shall depict:

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

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

In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets for their performance measures.

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

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

## **2. Evidence Base (20 points)**

The assessment of an applicant's evidence base has two parts. First, the applicant will be assigned to an evidence tier (see the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.) Second, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the degree to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

Evidence Tier (12 points):

An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of applying the strategic characteristics (and understanding the relative strength of each applicant's evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the logic model.

In 2019, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 20%, Moderate 15%, Preliminary 30%, and Pre-Preliminary 35%. As these figures



indicate, CNCS/ServeNebraska values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. Thus, do not be deterred from applying for funding due to your current evidence level.

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

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

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

In the Evidence Tier section of the application narrative, applicants must (1) summarize the study design and key findings of any outcome or impact evaluation report(s) submitted and (2) describe any other evidence that supports their program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform their program design. Applicants who submit evaluation reports for consideration must also describe in the Evidence Base section of the application narrative how the intervention described in the submitted reports is the same as the intervention described in the application (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance).

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

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

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

#### Evidence Quality (8 points):

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

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

- The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.);
- The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years;

- The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

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

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

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

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

### **3. *Notice Priority (0 points)***

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

### **4. *Member Experience (6 points)***

- AmeriCorps members will gain skills as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.
- The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate.
- The applicant will foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds, talents, and capabilities are welcomed and leveraged for learning and effective service delivery.

## **C. Organizational Capability (25 percent)**

### **1. *Organizational Background and staffing (9 points)***

- The organization details the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing the AmeriCorps program as well as providing oversight and monitoring for the program.

### **2. *Compliance and Accountability (8 points)***

- The organization has a monitoring and oversight plan to prevent and detect non-compliance and enforce compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities and criminal history checks at the grantee, subgrantee (if applicable), and service site locations.
- The CNCS-required evaluation report meets CNCS requirements (if applicable),
- The CNCS-required evaluation report is of satisfactory quality (if applicable).

### **3. *Culture that Values Learning (4 points)***

- The applicant's board, management, and staff collect and use information, including performance data, for learning and decision making.

#### **4. Member Supervision (4 points)**

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

### **D. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)**

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

#### **1. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 points)**

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

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

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

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

### **E. Evaluation Plan (0 percent)**

Please provide a data collection plan in the “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field that includes the following:

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

ServeNebraska will require submission of data collection instruments if a grant is approved for funding. For more information about how to develop a high-quality data collection plan, visit the CNCS Knowledge Network.

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

- A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results
- Outcome(s) of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation

- Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes
- Proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the design selected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components;
- Description of the data sources, sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures that will be used in the evaluation
- Analysis plan that clearly describes the methodology/ies that will be used to analyze the collected data
- A timeline for the evaluation that describes how the evaluation will cover at least one year of CNCS-funded activity and will be completed within the three-year timeframe of the grant
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator
- The proposed budget

Information provided in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

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

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

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

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

The “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field of the Narrative does not count toward the page limit of the application; however, it does have a set character limit of 20,000 characters.

Grantees requesting approval of an alternative evaluation approach should submit a request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach along with their evaluation plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system. The request should clearly explain: (a) the evaluation constraints faced by the program, (b) why the proposed approach is the most rigorous option feasible, and (c) how the proposed alternative approach will help the grantee build their evidence base. Evaluation plans should include, at a minimum, the required elements listed in this *Notice*. The evaluation plan must be consistent with the information submitted in the competitive funding application and in the request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. CNCS guidance on alternative evaluation approaches can be found on the CNCS website.

The “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field of the Narrative does not count toward the page limit of the application; however, it does have a set character limit of 12,000 characters. If the request for the alternative

evaluation approach plus the Evaluation Plan itself will exceed the character limit of the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system, the applicant should do the following:

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

#### **F. Amendment Justification (0 percent)**

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

#### **G. Clarification Information (0 percent)**

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

#### **H. Continuation Changes (0 percent)**

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

#### **C. Threshold Issues**

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

- All applicants should request at least 3 MSY.
- Professional Corps applicants and/or applicants determined to be a Professional Corps by ServeNebraska must demonstrate that the community in which it will place AmeriCorps members serving as professionals has an inadequate number of said professionals.
- If the proposed service activities require specialized member qualifications and/or training (for example, tutoring programs: 45 CFR §2522.910-.940), the applicant must describe how the program will meet these requirements.
- All applicants must propose program designs that are either evidence-based or evidence informed. Applicants assessed as lower than the Preliminary evidence tier (i.e., Pre-Preliminary) must provide adequate responses to the Evidence Quality review criteria in order to be considered for funding.

#### **D. Risk Assessment Evaluation**

Applications submitted to the national grant competition will be subject to a Risk Assessment Evaluation conducted by CNCS. CNCS will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds and the applicant's past performance (if applicable.) This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If CNCS determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. In evaluating risks, CNCS may consider the following, but not limited to:

- Financial capability and capacity to manage Federal funds
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant's record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
  - Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements,
  - If applicable, meeting matching requirements, and
  - If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to

future awards

- Information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as—
  - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS),
  - U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
  - Dun and Bradstreet,
  - “Do Not Pay,” and /or
  - System for Award Management
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance and findings of any other available audits
- IRS Tax Form 990
- An applicant organization's annual report
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website
- Any other information listed in 45 CFR § 2522.140
- The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.
- Responses to the Financial Management Survey and supporting documentation.
- Past Performance

ServeNebraska will assess recompeting programs' past performance and submit those assessments to CNCS. This assessment is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding or the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this assessment will inform funding decisions. In evaluating programmatic performance, ServeNebraska/CNCS will consider the following for applicants that are current formula and competitive grantees:

- Applicants record in managing previous CNCS awards
- Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements
- Conformance to the terms and conditions of previous federal awards
- Meeting match requirements
- Grant progress reports – attainment of Performance Measures
- Enrollment and retention
- Site visit or other monitoring findings (if applicable)
- OIG findings (if applicable)
- Significant opportunities and/or risks of the grantee related to national service
- State Rank

Other Programmatic Risks:

Publicly available information, including information from the applicant's organization's website.

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

#### **E. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information**

Prior to making any award that exceeds \$250,000, ServeNebraska/CNCS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM and FAPIIS (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).

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

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

## **V. Application and Submission Information**

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### **A. Submission to ServeNebraska**

Applicants must submit all submission requirements electronically to ServeNebraska by the application deadline. This Notice should be read together with the AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR 2520-2550.

1. Download the following documents from ServeNebraska website at <http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/>
  - 2021 AmeriCorps Notice of Funding Opportunity
  - 2021 Mandatory Supplemental Guidance
  - 2021 AmeriCorps Application Instructions
  - 2021 National Performance measures instructions
  - 2021 Budget Template
  - 2021 Performance Measure template
  - 2021 Logic Model template
2. Follow the instructions included in the 2021 AmeriCorps Notice of Funding Opportunity and 2021 AmeriCorps Application Instructions documents in completing and submitting an application.
3. All applications and supplemental items must be submitted electronically to ServeNebraska email, [dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov](mailto:dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov).
4. When submitting label as outlined below:
  - Subject Line: Legal Applicant Name
  - Body of the email should Identify: Legal name and list of documents attached
  - Attachments to the email should include Name of the document

### **Page Limits**

There are two page limits that must be adhered to: Narrative and Logic Model.

#### **Narrative**

The narrative must be in a word document, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, no more than the required length of pages. Applications must not exceed 10 pages for the Narratives or 12 pages for Rural Intermediaries.

Application sections that count towards the page limit are the:

- SF-424 Face Sheet
- Executive Summary
- Program Design, Organizational Capability, and Cost-Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy narratives

The application page limit does not include the Budget, narrative portion of the Evaluation Plan, the Logic Model, performance measures, or the supplementary materials. Do not submit unrequested materials, ServeNebraska will not review or return materials.

#### **Logic Model**

The Logic Model may not exceed three pages when printed.

### **Supplemental Documents**

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

### **Rural Intermediaries (New and recompeting)**

- Letters of support from the consortium members

### **Entities applying on behalf of a Federally Recognized Tribe (New and recompeting)**

- Tribal organization eligibility documentation

**Please note the length of a document in word processing software may be different than what will print out in the CNCS's web-based system that you will submit your final and approved application in.**

ServeNebraska will not consider any submitted material that exceeds the page limits in the printed report, also, note that the system will not prevent an applicant from entering text that will exceed page limitations. This applies to both the application page limit and the Logic Model page limit.

### **B. Application Submission Deadline**

Applications must be submitted to ServeNebraska electronically on **Sunday, February 1, 2021 by 5:00pm CST** to be considered.

ServeNebraska will not consider applications received after the deadline, except when noted below. ServeNebraska reserves the right to extend the submission deadline and any notice of such extended deadline will be posted.

### **Late Applications**

All applications received after the submission deadline published in this Notice of Funding Opportunity are presumed to be non-compliant. ServeNebraska may, at their discretion, consider an application received after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay, including the timing and specific cause(s) of the delay and any evidence that supports the circumstance(s). This must take place within one business day after the application deadline stated in the Notice.

### **C. Application Submission Deadline**

Once selected for AmeriCorps funding, applicants will be required to submit their applications electronically into CNCS's web-based management system. Please ensure staff availability to enter the application into the system. ServeNebraska will provide instructions at a later date.

### **D. Intergovernmental Review**

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

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

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### **A. Governing Documents**

A grantee's fully executed award incorporates the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant as well as the AmeriCorps regulations (45 CFR §§ 2520–2550), CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions, and ServeNebraska Policies and Requirements.



## **B. CNCS Terms and Conditions**

All awards made under this *Notice* will be subject to the 2021 CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and the 2021 AmeriCorps Program Specific Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnccs-grants>.

## **C. Uniform Guidance**

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

## **D. Reporting Requirements**

Programs are required to submit a variety of reports which are due at specific times during the life cycle of an award. All reports must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time. ServeNebraska will provide due dates for all reports required.

Cost reimbursement grantees are required to provide annual progress reports, semi-annual financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR 2522.500-2522.540 and 2522.700-2522.740. Final financial and progress reports are due 90 days after the end of the agreement. Fixed Amount grantees are required to provide annual and final progress reports and an internal or external evaluation report. All grantees, including Fixed Amount grantees, must submit quarterly financial reports to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Payment Management System.

Award recipients will be required to report at [www.FSRS.gov](http://www.FSRS.gov) on all subawards over \$30,000, and may be required to report on executive compensation for the recipient organization and its subrecipients. Recipients must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 CFR Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

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

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

Failure to submit accurate, complete, and timely required reports may affect the grantee's ability to secure future AmeriCorps funding.

## **E. National Service Criminal History Check Requirements**

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

Grantees should utilize the two vendors CNCS has engaged to conduct the required NSCHCs. Information regarding use of these two vendors can be found at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/2018/nschc-using-fieldprint-and-truescreen-manual>.

Failure to conduct compliant NSCHC may result in significant disallowed costs.

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

All award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers must undergo NSCHCs that include:

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

Special Rule for Persons Serving Vulnerable Populations. Award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers *with recurring access to vulnerable populations* (i.e., children age 17 or younger, individuals age 60 or older, or individuals with disabilities) must undergo NSCHCs that include:

- A nationwide name-based check of the [NSOPW](#); *and*
- Both
  - A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *and*
  - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

See [45 CFR 2540.200–2540.207](#) and [CNCS Criminal History Check Resources](#) for complete information and FAQs.

## **F. Continuation Funding Information and Requirements**

Organizations that have current awards that continue beyond FY 2021 must submit an application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. Please see the Application Instructions, if applicable. Requests by existing continuation applicants for increases in the level of funding or number of positions will be assessed using the review criteria published in this Notice. The review will also be based on progress reports, the federal financial report, evaluation plans, and CNCS staff's knowledge of the grant program. To be approved for continuation funding, recipients must demonstrate satisfactory performance with respect to key program goals and requirements, as well as compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant.

## **G. Request for Improper Payment information**

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

## **H. Use of Material**

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

## **I. Reallocation of Funding**

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

## **J. Reallocation of Funding**

ServeNebraska will host technical assistance calls upon request at [dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov](mailto:dhhs.americorps@nebraska.gov).

## **J. IMPORTANT NOTICES**

### **Public Burden Statement**

Public reporting burden for collection of information under this Notice of Funding is estimated to average six hours per submission, including reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing the application and reporting forms. CNCS informs people who may respond to this Notice of Funding that they are not required to respond unless the OMB control number and expiration date are current valid. (See 5 C.F.R. 1320.5(b)(2)(i).) The OMB Control Number for the information collection is 3045-0187. It expires on 9/30/2020.

### **Privacy Act Statement**

The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C § 552a) requires that we notify you that the information requested under this Notice of Funding is collected pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 12592 and 12615 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended, and 42 U.S.C. 4953 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 as amended.

**Purposes and Uses** - The information requested is collected for the purposes of reviewing grant applications and granting funding requests. Routine uses may include disclosure of the information to federal, state, or local agencies pursuant to lawfully authorized requests. In some programs, the information may also be provided to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to determine the existence of any prior criminal convictions. The information may also be provided to appropriate federal agencies and contractors that have a need to know the information for the purpose of assisting the government to respond to a suspected or confirmed breach of the security or confidentiality or information maintained in this system of records, and the information disclosed is relevant and unnecessary for the assistance. **Effects of Nondisclosure** - The information requested is voluntary; however, to be a recipient of this grant program, disclosure of personal or sensitive information is required to receive federal benefits.