

2014 *justice* AmeriCorps Notice of Funding Availability (Notice) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

*As of 7/9/2014**

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A. justice AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity and Program Design

A1. How many grants will be awarded? How many of the awards will be for programs located in the priority areas listed in the NOFO?

The number and location of grants will depend entirely on the number and quality of the applications that are received.

A2. Will any of the funding determinations be based on the population of the immigrant children in the cities?

Immigration court locations were selected for a variety of reasons, including the need for legal services for Unaccompanied Children in those locations; the potential for differing program models based upon existing resources in each site; diversity in geographic locations; and variation in docket size. We will take all of these factors into consideration when evaluating individual applications.

A3. How can an applicant without previous AmeriCorps experience be competitive and what percentage of new applicants are funded annually?

Applicant responses to selection criteria are what CNCS uses to assess application quality. Applicants who successfully demonstrate that they can fully address the selection criteria will be scored accordingly. Past program performance is a factor in the review process, but previous experience with AmeriCorps is not a requirement. CNCS encourages new applicants to apply for AmeriCorps grants. New applicants are only eligible for cost reimbursement grants. While there is no set percentage, some new grants are historically awarded each year.

A4. We are a national organization that does not have free-standing offices in other states. The individual sites we seek to work with through an AmeriCorps grant program are all individual

nonprofits that operate within individual states. Are we eligible to apply for a Multi-State grant, or do we need to coordinate the submission of multiple requests to individual state offices?

You are eligible to apply for a Multi-State grant. Many national organizations are intermediary organizations or work with a consortium of other organizations. As the grantee, you would have specific responsibilities for overall program reporting, management, and oversight and grant administration (even if you choose to subgrant funds to any of the nonprofit organizations).

A5. Are organizations that apply for funding through the AmeriCorps State Grant program generally awarded less funding than those that apply through the Multi-State program? In addition, is the application pool generally smaller if you apply for State Grant funding rather than Multi-State funding?

There are many single-state programs that are larger than multi-state programs. Single-state and multi-state applicants are reviewed in a combined competition. Information about previous grants awarded may be found on our website in the press release area or <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open-government-initiative/transparency/results-grants-competition>. You may review this information to learn about grant sizes and distributions between state and national programs.

A6. How do you determine if a project should be a single-state or a multi-state application if the members travel to do service outside of the state in which they are based?

Multi-State grants are for programs that use service and volunteering to address compelling community needs in at least two states. A multi-state program is one in which the members provide consistent service over an extended amount of time in two or more states. If members will be based in at least two states (in other words, not just a crew that at times crosses state lines to provide service), it may be considered a multi-state program. Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to administer and monitor a federal, multi-site, multi-state grant and have relationships with organizations in different states that will operate the local programs. An operating site is the organization that manages the AmeriCorps program on behalf of the multi-state recipient of the grant from CNCS. A multi-state grantee must have an operating site in each state in which it has AmeriCorps members.

A7. How many AmeriCorps members will my program receive?

In your application you must indicate the number and type of AmeriCorps member positions you are requesting based on your program design and desired outcomes. If your proposal is approved for funding, CNCS will determine how many AmeriCorps members will be included in your award.

A8. In the Application Instructions, there are references to Tier I and Tier II in funding priorities?

These refer to different tiers of service projects, but this is not relevant for the justice AmeriCorps funding opportunity. All projects in this case are assumed to be the same tier.

A9. Regarding “unaccompanied children”: if a child obtains representation through justice AmeriCorps when he or she is under 16 but have not had their case resolved when they turn 16, but his or her case is not resolved before the child turns 16, are they grandfathered into the program so that the child continue to receive representation through the AmeriCorps program?

Yes. A child is eligible for the program if he or she has received a Notice to Appear in removal proceedings before EOIR and the Notice to Appear has been filed in immigration court, and if a justice AmeriCorps lawyer files a notice of Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Representative Before the Immigration Court (form E-28) with the immigration court before the child turns 16. The child will remain eligible for the program if he or she turns 16 while his or her case is proceeding.

A10. How is "community" defined, in terms of identifying community need, particularly if it is a group of people and not a specific community?

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

A11. How long is the grant period?

AmeriCorps program implementation grants typically have a three-year period, but funds are provided one year at a time. Continued funding during the course of the three years is contingent upon satisfactory performance, compliance, the availability of funds, and other criteria established in the award agreement. The budget submitted in the application is for a one-year period.

A12. Many of these cases may take years to litigate. What will happen if the three year program funding expires before a case is concluded? For many of these cases, court dates are being set in 2017. So, there is some concern about taking on cases and then having a big caseload and then having no funding by the time the court date arrives to see a case to conclusion.

While it is true that some cases will take some time to litigate to their conclusion, children will make appearances in immigration court during the program period. In addition, through the immigration courts, we expect that the program will serve children who may be eligible for relief in various types of immigration proceedings before USCIS, including applications for asylum, Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) status, and/or T or U nonimmigrant status; and state court proceedings seeking orders necessary to support applications for SIJ status. In any event, we hope this is the start of a long partnership, and, if the program is successful and funding allows, we hope to continue beyond the initial three-year period. In terms of scheduling, some of the court dates are farther in the future than others, but much of that depends on the relief that the child is eligible for. Either way, the children will be called to court shortly after their notice to appear is filed, so even in that initial hearing, we think it is critical that have an attorney with them with this program. Some of the reasons that a court date has been set out for so far in the future, is because the child is processed outside of the court (immigration) such as in USCIF and additional forms of relief that they might be eligible for and working through some state proceedings. As stated in the Notice, we do want our attorneys to be covering those proceedings too. So, while there might be distant court dates, there are a number of factors involved in that date.

A13. Is there a possibility of continuing past the 3-year grant period?

If the program is successful and funding is available it may continue beyond the initial three-year period.

A14. Does the organization have to be located in the city where the member service will be performed?

No, the organization does not have to be located in that city, but your application must demonstrate your capacity to adequately manage and supervise members' activities in those immigration court locations.

A15. Can we use this grant to pay for general organizational expenses?

If by general organizational expenses, you mean indirect costs or costs that cannot be easily attributed directly to a specific program, then the answer is yes, to a limited degree and with some prohibitions. All allowable costs under AmeriCorps grants can only be used for costs directly related to the proposed project, such as personnel to run the program and supervise members, member costs, travel, evaluation, etc. Fundraising costs, including raising funds to operate your AmeriCorps program, are considered general organizational expenses and cannot be paid with grant funds. However, to a limited degree, you may capture indirect administrative costs related to your AmeriCorps program. The application instructions provide guidance on charging administrative or indirect costs to the grant.

A16. What specific information do you want to see reflected in the organizational chart that is required as part of the application?

We do not have specific instructions for what to include in an organizational chart. It should be a standard organizational chart sufficient to assess the organization's management structure and should be consistent with the Organizational Background and Staffing narrative.

A17. Should programs use links to research in the narrative? Is it realistic to think that grant application Reviewers will use a link to read additional information?

For our grant competitions, reviewers are advised not to click on links in an application to access additional information that was not in the application. Thus, you may assume if a link is provided in your application, it will not be viewed. The applicant has to provide sufficient information within the application narrative to describe the evidence that is being used to describe the community need or to support the program intervention.

A18. What does evidence-basis/evidence-informed mean and what documentation is required?

Evidence-basis/evidence-informed refers to a program's demonstration of support that a particular intervention will lead to the intended outcomes and address the identified community problem(s). Evidence for the intervention could include results from research, performance data, or results from a similar, successful program and would provide the basis for decisions about the design, frequency and intensity of the proposed intervention.

A19. What other type of evidence is required in a proposal?

An application must provide evidence of the need, which refers to data that demonstrates the extent or severity of the need in the target community.

A20. As this is a partnership with EOIR/DOJ I am wondering if EOIR or DOJ will have procedures in place to provide representation to these children. Currently, I believe children are given a list of referrals at their first master hearing. Would the child be responsible for calling us and looking for representation? Or will a child who receives an NTA be notified they can receive free representation through our agency? Or will our program need to have an attorney present at every children's master hearing to "pitch" our services? We are currently the only agency providing representation to these kids in court (free of charge) in the North Texas area.

Programs should describe how they expect to provide representation to children in the program design section of their application. EOIR will work with grantees to make case information available as expeditiously as possible after an Unaccompanied Child's Notice to Appear is filed in immigration court.

B. General

B1. What is AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), an independent federal agency whose mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps is made up of three main programs: AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps). Visit <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs> to find out more about the differences between these three programs.

B2. What is AmeriCorps State and National?

AmeriCorps State and National is a broad network of grant-funded AmeriCorps programs. It provides financial support to public and nonprofit organizations that sponsor service programs around the country, including hundreds of faith- and community-based organizations, and public agencies. These groups recruit, train and place thousands of Americans in intensive service to meet critical community needs. For the remainder of this document, AmeriCorps State and National will be referred to as AmeriCorps.

B3. What is an AmeriCorps member?

An AmeriCorps member is an individual who is enrolled in an approved national service position and engages in intensive service to address pressing community problems. AmeriCorps members are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award upon successful completion of their term of service. AmeriCorps members in *justice AmeriCorps* will receive a living allowance, loan forbearance, and may be eligible for other benefits to support them during their term of service.

B4. What is a State Service Commission?

A State Service Commission is a governor-appointment entity responsible for administering national and community service programs in its State. Funding for AmeriCorps programs operating within one state is often administered through the service commission.

B5. What if my State doesn't have a service commission?

CNCS accepts applications directly from organizations proposing to operate an AmeriCorps program within a state that doesn't have a service commission or if a commission is not participating in this competition.

B6. What documents do I need to read in order to apply for funding?

You must read the justice AmeriCorps Notice and the Application Instructions. You should also read the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 C.F.R. §§ 2520 - 2550 which are an important reference to

understand the requirements of AmeriCorps programs. The full Regulations are available online at www.eCFR.gov.

B7. Are we required to submit an Intent to Apply?

No, but to help us plan for the competition and the selection process, we request that interested applicants submit a notification of your Intent to Apply by July 15. Please reference the Notice (p.14) for the information that should be included in your Intent notification.

B8. What are the eligibility factors that will determine if my application will be reviewed?

As stated in the Notice, CNCS staff will review all applications to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completeness requirements. In order to be compliant and advance to External further review, an applicant must satisfy all the following requirements:

- Submit an application by the application submission deadline: Tuesday, July 22, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.
- Submit an application that is complete, in that it contains all required elements and additional documents via e-mail and follows the instructions provided in the Notice.

B9. When must I contact the State Service Commission?

If your organization plans to operate a program within one state (single-state applicant), you must contact your State Service Commission immediately to apply for an AmeriCorps grant.

You can find your State Commission's contact information here:

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact-us/state-service-commissions>. If the State Service Commission in your state is not participating in the justice AmeriCorps Competition, they will direct you to apply directly to CNCS and create an application in eGrants. Currently we are aware that the State Service Commissions in the following states are not participating in the competition: OR, WA, NJ, TX, FL, MO, LA, CO, GA, and NY. Single-state applicants from these states are eligible to apply directly to CNCS.

If your organization plans to operate an AmeriCorps program in two or more states (multi-state applicant), you must consult and coordinate activities with the State Service Commission in each state where activities will take place. The consultation is designed to ensure the most effective use of national service resources and lead to enhanced coordination among grantees. You must describe the consultation in your application. The AmeriCorps Notices of Funding Opportunity describes the consultation requirements in more detail.

B10. If an organization was an operating site/service location or a subgrantee of another AmeriCorps program previously and is now applying on its own, would it be considered a new applicant?

Yes, only applicants that have had an AmeriCorps State or National implementation grant previously and ran their own AmeriCorps program (not a portion of it) are considered **Previous** grantees. All others (including current planning grantees) should apply as **New**.

B11. If a current grantee becomes a host site for another program that is a new applicant organization, is that application still considered new?

A current grantee can serve as a partner for a new program without affecting the status of the new applicant as a first time grantee.

B12. Some of our offices have AmeriCorps state and VISTA members that will be completing their service next year. Would applying for the national grant on a multi-state level limit local offices from applying for future state and VISTA AmeriCorps members?

Activities taking place through the Multi-State grant should not be duplicative of activities supported by state commissions or service provided by VISTA members. Additionally, AmeriCorps members cannot supervise other AmeriCorps members, so the interaction between AmeriCorps members and VISTA members can be complementary but not supervisory.

B13. Are we required to submit our application via the on-line eGrants system?

Yes. CNCS requires that all applicants to use CNCS' web-based application system, eGrants, to submit applications electronically. The Notice contains submission instructions in the event that your efforts to submit an application via eGrants is unsuccessful. There are several options available in eGrants for the justice AmeriCorps application. Take care to select the appropriate funding opportunity in eGrants when you begin your application.

B14. What are the character limits in eGrants?

The overall character limit in eGrants is greater than the page limit of 15 pages outlined in the Notice. Be sure to print out the application to verify the length of the narratives. Within the application format, some sections have character limits. If you are having trouble saving a section of content, try to shorten it to resolve the issue.

B15. Do we enter a three-year budget in eGrants?

No, submit a budget only for the first year of the project. Unless otherwise specified, the grant generally covers a three-year project period. In approving a multi-year project period, CNCS generally makes an initial award for the first year of operation.

B16. Do we submit Additional Required Documents in eGrants?

No. All additional required documents should be attached to an email and sent to AdditionalDocuments@cns.gov. The email subject line should include the Legal Applicant organization name and the eGrants Application ID number. Each Additional Document should also be labelled with the Legal Applicant organization name and the eGrants Application ID number. As stated in the Notice, the additional documents are also due by the application deadline.

B17. Will we receive an acknowledgement when we submit Additional Required Documents?

No. Based on anticipated high volume in a short time frame, we will not be able to acknowledge the receipt of supplemental materials. Aside from the required documents, please do not submit non-required supplemental materials such as videos, DVDs, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested in the *Notice* or application instructions. CNCS will not review or return them.

B18. How and when can I reach the AmeriCorps Hotline for help with eGrants?

The National Service Hotline is open between the hours of 9:00 am to 7:00 pm EST Monday through Thursday up until the July 22, 2014 deadline. The Hotline may be open on Fridays during the last

few weeks prior to the deadline. The phone number is 1-800-942-2677. Questions about your eGrants application may be submitted via this weblink: https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask_eg. Please have your Application ID available for eGrants assistance.

C. AmeriCorps Members

C1. Is an AmeriCorps member the same as a volunteer?

No. An AmeriCorps member is an individual serving in an approved national service position for a pre-determined term of service. AmeriCorps members are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award and might receive a living allowance and other benefits such as health insurance and childcare. Additionally, there are limitations on the types of activities in which an AmeriCorps member can engage. Volunteers are not eligible for a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, and typically do not receive compensation or have a pre-defined term of service. Volunteers and AmeriCorps members might serve side-by-side and AmeriCorps members often recruit and manage volunteers.

C2. Do we recruit lawyers and paralegals to serve in this program or does CNCS do that?

Grantee organizations will be responsible for recruiting individuals to serve as AmeriCorps members in this program. Your application should speak to your plans for recruiting Members. There are several resources available to help your recruitment efforts: you can use online recruitment systems and you can partner with law schools, law clinics, and those that have the demographic that you are looking for. Many successful programs model themselves after a legal fellowship program, where it is considered a privilege or honor to serve in the program at what would normally be considered a less than competitive rate (showing the experience received and the benefit of being part of a well-respected and highly competitive program).

C3. Does CNCS train the AmeriCorps members?

Justice AmeriCorps members will attend national training in Washington DC (tentatively scheduled for December 2014 and funded separately from your budget). The national training program will address immigration laws and regulations applicable to unaccompanied children; practice and procedure for immigration proceedings; ethics for professionals working with children and youth; identification of signs of human trafficking and/or abuse; and trauma-informed and culturally-appropriate models of interacting with unaccompanied children. However, each program is also expected to provide supplemental training to ensure that their members are adequately prepared for successful service experience and needs to provide information to describe their member training plan in the application narrative.

C4. Must an AmeriCorps member serve for a certain amount of time?

Yes. An AmeriCorps member may serve either a full-time term of service, which requires a minimum of 1700 hours of service within a one-year period of time; or a part-time term, which can range from 300 hours to 900 hours. The AmeriCorps Notice provides additional detail. In your application, you must specify the terms of service you are proposing for your AmeriCorps members.

C5. Can AmeriCorps members take the place of current staff or volunteers at my organization?

No. AmeriCorps members may not displace staff or volunteers at your organization, nor may they perform any services or duties that would supplant the hiring of employed workers.

C6. Are there certain activities in which AmeriCorps members and staff cannot engage?

Yes. While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or CNCS, staff and members may not engage in the following activities (see the AmeriCorps Regulations, C.F.R. § 2520.65; Page 45).

Prohibited Activities include:

- Attempting to influence legislation;
- Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
- Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
- Providing a direct benefit to: (1) a business organized for profit; (2) a labor union; (3) a partisan political organization; (4) a nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (participating in partisan political activities or spending funds on lobbying and grassroots efforts in excess of allowable limits); and (5) an organization engaged in the religious activities described above, (unless CNCS assistance is not used to support those religious activities);
- Conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
- Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services.

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

Other restrictions for the use of AmeriCorps members include:

Nonduplication

CNCS assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless there is nondisplacement, CNCS assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.

Nondisplacement

(1) An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving CNCS assistance.

- (2) An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving CNCS assistance.
- (3) A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
- (4) A participant in a program receiving CNCS assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
- (5) A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that—
 - (i) Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
 - (ii) Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
- (6) A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any—
 - (i) Presently employed worker;
 - (ii) Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
 - (iii) Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
 - (iv) Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
 - (v) Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

C7. Can organizations provide additional compensation beyond the living allowance provided to members to bring them up to a staff compensation, giving them more duties, etc.?

AmeriCorps members can receive additional compensations such as housing or transportation reimbursement, in addition to the living allowance of \$24,200 (if full-time) for their required service hours, with the expectation that they focus on the project. In addition, Members are eligible for some benefits provided through AmeriCorps (loan forbearance, education award, child care. Health care is provided to full-time Members through the grantee organization (this can be provided through marketplace exchanges in your state or through private insurance companies).

C8. Can a program provide additional compensation in the form of a fellowship, in addition to housing or transportation stipends? Can an organization provide compensation to the AmeriCorps attorney to bring them to the same level as other new attorneys? Can we provide a monthly stipend to make up the difference?

A program may not provide additional funds (in the form of fellowship or extra cash) to AmeriCorps members receiving a living allowance of \$24,200 (the maximum living allowance). To do so is counter to the notion of national service. A program may provide additional benefits such as reimbursement of bar association fees, professional training, housing, or continuing education credits. Funds used for such allowable reimbursements can be applied as match on the grant. In addition to the living allowance, full-time AmeriCorps members receive from CNCS loan forbearance, paid child care, and a Segal Education Award.

C9. Is a part-time AmeriCorps Member eligible to work another job?

The preference is that Member attorneys are full-time, but paralegals can work part-time if it fits with your program design.

C10. Regarding the National training that is being provided, is there any way of tailoring the training to give members some CLE credits (who are admitted to the Bar)?

We are considering this, but have not resolved it at this point.

C11. Considering that the AmeriCorps members are all trained in DC, will they also receive additional training once they get to a site (in the case of lawyers potentially getting credit for additional training)? Essentially, how prepared will they be when they get to a site?

The training that AmeriCorps members will receive will be extensive, providing them with the background to give them a good start, but we do not expect them to be able to practice by themselves right away. We anticipate that applicants will address in the materials they submit and demonstrate their capacity to have attorneys work with the AmeriCorps Members to provide additional support/training in specific areas. We expect that the host organizations will need to provide additional hands-on training to make sure the AmeriCorps members are fully prepared.

C12. Has AmeriCorps ever put forth another program that looks to fund attorneys?

Yes, AmeriCorps does have a history of working with attorneys through one of our existing programs where the application rate was 4 applicants to every 1 slot available, so we feel confident that the interest is there.

D. Performance Measures/Logic Model

D1. What is a theory of change?

A theory of change is a theory (or logic model) for how an intervention can address or solve a stated problem. A theory of change articulates a problem, a proposed intervention, and the change (outcomes) that is expected to result from delivering the intervention. Underlying the theory is a set of assumptions, supported by evidence, about why the intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes. A Logic Model means a well-specified conceptual framework that identifies key components of the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice (i.e., the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the relationships among the key components and outcomes, theoretically and operationally.

D2. What are AmeriCorps’ performance measurement requirements?

AmeriCorps programs must have an aligned output and outcome that reflects the program’s primary service activity and aligns with the program’s theory of change.

D3. Am I allowed to allocate funds for collecting and analyzing data? If so, how much?

Costs related to measuring the performance of a program are allowable grant expenses. There is no standard recommended amount. As with all cost reimbursement grants, these costs must be reasonable, allowable for the proposed program, and properly allocated across grant activities.

D4. Could you please clarify the terminology in the Performance Measures section of eGrants?

The following is a guide to some of the common terms you will see in eGrants followed by language that is consistent with the Notice and training materials:

- **Strategy** = Intervention (The strategy/intervention will be the same for all components of the measure—output, intermediate outcome, end outcome—because all of these should result from the same intervention.)
- **Result** = Output, Intermediate Outcome, or End Outcome
- **Indicator** = For outputs, a description of the number of beneficiaries to be counted. For outcomes, a description of the measurable change that will occur.
- **Target Statement** = The indicator plus the expected number (100 beneficiaries will...)
- **Target** = The number in the target statement (100)
- **Instrument** = The specific tool that will be used to collect data (AIMSweb Letter Sounds and Letter Names pre/post-test)
- **Data Collection Methodology** = How data will be collected (survey, pre/post-test, etc.)

Tip: Within each output or outcome, the result statement, indicator, target statement and target number will seem repetitive:

- i. Result Statement: Students will demonstrate improved academic performance...
- ii. Indicator: Number of students with improved academic performance
- iii. Target Statement: 100 students will demonstrate improved academic performance...
- iv. Target: 100

eGrants Tip: Applicants will get an error message and will not be able to submit if:

- The total number across all MSY charts does not equal the number of MSYs in the budget (+/- 1 to account for rounding)
- A Primary Service Category has not been selected for each Focus Area selected.

D5. In eGrants, the Performance Measures screen contains a “list of populations”. Does this refer to the beneficiary populations or populations to be recruited as AmeriCorps Members?

The items in the list of populations refer to traditionally underrepresented populations that a program intends to intentionally recruit as AmeriCorps members (as outlined in the CNCS Strategic Plan). If any of these grant characteristics are selected, the application narrative should reflect the intention to recruit the selected population(s).

D6. Where do I find a copy of the webinar that helps applicants walk through the new performance measures module?

This tutorial, <http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/online-courses/egrants-performance-measure-module-for-ameriCorps>, designed for 2014 new, continuation and re-compete AmeriCorps applications, guides users through the new eGrants performance measures screens. It demonstrates how to complete the pages in the new performance measure section of the application. The tutorial also includes some program specific content information as well as shows users how to create an aligned performance measure for their chosen primary focus area and intervention.

D7. On the logic model chart there are three levels of output (short, medium and long) being requested. The focus has been on understanding that outputs and outcomes in performance measures should be linked by a sound theory of change and evidence. Do you have any new guidance on linking outputs and outcomes and how they mesh given the new output structure?

The logic model is a well-specified conceptual framework that identifies key components of the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice (i.e., the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the relationships among the key components and outcomes, theoretically and operationally. A program may have a theory of change

that is based on accomplishing a long-term change in conditions that is not measurable in the program year. However, there may be shorter-term changes that can be linked to this ultimate goal that are strong indicators that the long-term change is likely to happen. Since we define outcomes as changes that can be measured within the program year, there may be a need to list short, medium and long-term outcomes to understand the conceptual framework of the program. Not all programs need to use all three levels of outcomes – just those that are relevant to a solid understanding of their theory of change and the evidence of change that they will measure in the performance measures.

D8. Under the Theory of Change and Logic Model instructions, there are a set of bullet points. The text above the narrative indicates those bullets should be answered in the logic model matrix. The items asked in the bullets are not what is asked in the matrix - the bullets have much more information. Can you please clarify?

The bullet points are intended to provide guidance to applicants on what information should be entered in the logic model. The headings at the top of each column in the logic model matrix provide additional guidance, although, as you noted, the text in the column headings is not as detailed as the text in the bullet points. Please use the guidance provided in the bullet points plus the guidance provided in the column headings to fill out the logic model matrix.

D9. Can we reformat the logic model chart and how long can it be?

We want all charts to be in the same format (like the chart in the Notice) although the size of the columns can change. The logic model chart should be landscape orientation, with a font size not smaller than 10 points, and not exceed 2 single-sided pages when printed. These two pages do not count toward the overall proposal page limit and should be submit according to the Additional Document guidance provided in the Notice.

E. Budget/ Match Requirements

E1. What does Cost per MSY mean?

Cost per MSY stands for Cost per Member Service Year and represents the cost to CNCS of your AmeriCorps program. One MSY is the equivalent of one full-time term of service (1700 member service hours). The cost per MSY is calculated by dividing the total amount of CNCS funds requested by the total number of MSYs requested. For example, if the application requests \$10,000 in CNCS funds and 10 MSYs, then the cost per MSY is \$1,000. The cost per MSY does not include child care or the cost of the Segal Education Award a member may earn.

E2. Is there a maximum Cost per MSY?

Yes. The maximum cost per MSY for this program is \$19,890.

E3 For state commissions: The justice AmeriCorps program has a higher cost per MSY than most AmeriCorps programs. What impact will this have on the commission's overall cost per MSY?

A commission's justice AmeriCorps prime cost per MSY will not be included in the commission's overall cost per MSY. CNCS will note two separate cost per MSYs (one for non-justice AmeriCorps programs and another for justice AmeriCorps programs).

E4. Are there any sample budgets available from successful programs that we could review?

CNCS does not provide sample budgets, but the Knowledge Network website has resources on how to put together a budget: <http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/>

E5. If an organization is awarded a grant, is it possible to increase the funding request when you re-apply in years 2 and 3? If so, is it common practice for organizations to do so, or would this be out of the ordinary?

Currently funded grantees may request additional funds or positions in 'Continuation applications' for years 2 and/or 3. This is not out of the ordinary. The additional funding is subject to many factors including grantee performance, AmeriCorps funding, funding priorities, and funding decisions.

E6. Can the grant funds be used for any programming or must the program designed include the use of AmeriCorps members?

As an applicant, you would propose a program that uses AmeriCorps members to address the need for improved efficiency and effective adjudication of immigration court proceedings involving unaccompanied children. You would document that need, propose the service activities that AmeriCorps members would engage in to address that need, and describe the outcomes you expect the program to make that would demonstrate improved efficiencies and effective adjudication in these proceedings.

E7. How do we determine our budget? How much/ what percentage of the grantee match must be cash?

The budget should be determined by you based on your organization's needs/resources and the structure of your proposed program. There is no required percentage for the portion of grantee that must be cash.

E8. Are the members on our payroll (with taxes and other deductions) or on your payroll?

Members will be on your organization's payroll. When you apply for an AmeriCorps grant, your proposed grant budget must include a living allowance for full-time Members that is between \$12,100 (minimum) and \$24,200 (maximum) per full-time member. The budget must include FICA for any member receiving a living allowance. See the budget instructions for any other required costs related to members. The grantee must pay Social Security and Medicare taxes and withhold Federal personal income taxes from member living allowances, requiring each member to complete a W-4 form at the beginning of the term of service and providing a W-2 form at the close of the tax year. The grantee must comply with any applicable state or local tax requirements.

E9. We noted that programs should provide health benefits to those members serving a 1700-hour full-time term who are not otherwise covered by a healthcare policy at the time each begins his/her term of service. Is this requirement in any way negotiable?

Except for Education Award Program (EAP) grants, AmeriCorps programs must provide health care coverage to all full-time members who do not have adequate health care coverage at the time of enrollment or who lose coverage due to participation in the project. In addition, projects must provide coverage if a full-time member loses coverage during the term of service through no deliberate act of his/her own. The requirement to offer or make available health care benefits to full-time AmeriCorps members is not negotiable.

E10. What is the difference between a member living allowance and an employee salary/wage if both require FICA and tax payments?

Unlike a wage, an AmeriCorps living allowance is paid in regular increments throughout the service term regardless of the number of hours served during a pay period and AmeriCorps members are not considered employees for purposes of paid vacation, sick leave and retirement benefits. You also may find the opinion letter from the Department of Labor informative in relation to this question. It can be found on the CNCS Office of General Counsel resource page: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/guidance-from-office-general-counsel>.

E11. In the notice, it states that first-time successful applicants will not be required to match the funding provided. Does this apply to organizations that are new to the specific funding opportunity or those new to AmeriCorps funding in general?

The waiver only applies to organizations that have not received AmeriCorps State and National funding in the past.

E12. Is the matching fund requirement applicable here?

On page 23 of the Notice, it states that although a match of funds is not required, only a portion of the costs of running a program are covered (a maximum amount per AmeriCorps member) with this grant. Applicants are expected to identify in their budget additional non-CNCS resources (in-kind, in cash or combination) that the applicant estimates will be necessary to run the program.

E13. If you already have an AmeriCorps VISTA program that you currently operate, do you need to apply for a Fixed Amount grant?

No, you can apply for a cost-reimbursement grant.

E14. Do travel costs for members to the National Training in December need to be included in the budget?

No, members' travel costs for the training do not need to be listed in the budget, as they will be funded through other means. However, if you plan to send staff to the training (in addition to the Members that you will be recruiting), then you need to include the costs for those staff in the application budget.