

***Amended Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity***

**Federal Agency Name:** Corporation for National and Community Service  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY 2011  
**Announcement Type:** Amended announcement. Initially issued August 31, 2010  
Corrected October 25, 2010  
**CFDA Number:** 94.006

**Dates:** Applications are due **January 25, 2011** at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Successful applicants will be notified by May 31, 2011.

**Overview:** The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic participation through service and volunteering. For more than fifteen years, the Corporation—through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs—has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

On April 21, 2009, President Obama signed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the most sweeping expansion of national service in a generation. This landmark law not only expands service opportunities, but also focuses national service on key outcomes; builds the capacity of individuals, nonprofits, and communities to succeed; and encourages innovative approaches to solving problems.

In alignment with the Serve America Act, this AmeriCorps State and National *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity* will focus AmeriCorps grantmaking in six Focus Areas identified by the Act:

- Disaster Services
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Healthy Futures
- Opportunity
- Veterans and Military Families

In order to carry out Congress' intent and to maximize the impact of the investment in national service, the Corporation is seeking to fund programs that can demonstrate an evidence-based approach to creating community impact and solving community problems.

In the AmeriCorps State and National competition this year, the Corporation especially seeks to focus investment on national service programs that improve academic outcomes for children, youth and young adults. This focus reflects the extensive experience and past success of national service programs in education, and aligns with the reform efforts of the Department of Education. In addition, the Corporation seeks to increase its investment in programs that serve veterans and military families, or that engage veterans in service.

This *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity (Notice)* should be read together with the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR Sections 2520 – 2550 and the Application Instructions.

The Corporation embraces the Obama Administration's emphasis on open government and is moving toward greater openness and transparency in grant making. This amended *Notice* includes a description of the review and selection process in Section VI., below.

In addition, the following information pertaining to this competition will be published on the AmeriCorps website following the January 25 application deadline:

- A detailed description of the review and selection process.
- Links to external reviewer guide and training materials.
- Blank external and internal review worksheet templates.

The following information will be published for new and recompete applications after final funding notifications at the end of May, 2011:

- Names of external reviewers.
- List of all applicants considered for funding.
- Executive summaries of all applications considered for funding.
- Full text of approved applications.
- Results of external and internal review for approved applications.

For Continuation applications (current grantees in year two or three of a three year cycle), the following information will be published after final funding notifications at the end of May, 2011:

- List of all continuation applicants considered for funding.
- Executive summaries of all continuation applications considered for funding.
- Results of internal review for approved continuation applications.

## **I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. What is the purpose of AmeriCorps State and National funding?**

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

The Corporation is carrying out Congress's intent by targeting AmeriCorps State and National funding in these six focus areas, and is developing strategic objectives for each. In accordance with the Act, through this *Notice* and its other activities, the Corporation seeks to:

- Direct the power of national service to solve a common set of challenges.
- Expand opportunities for all Americans to serve.
- Build the enduring capacity of individuals, organizations and communities to effectively use service and volunteering to solve community problems.
- Embrace innovative solutions that work.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations to recruit, train, and manage AmeriCorps members who address community needs. An AmeriCorps member is an individual

who is enrolled in an approved national service position and engages in community service. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust.

## **B. What are the 2011 AmeriCorps State and National funding priorities?**

### ***1. Focus Areas and National Performance Measures***

As in 2010, in the 2011 competition the Corporation expects to invest a significant amount of available funding to programs working in the six Focus Areas of **Disaster Services, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, Opportunity, and Veterans and Military Families.**

In particular, the Corporation seeks to target its grantmaking in the Education Focus Area for greater impact and increase its investment in the Focus Area of Veterans and Military Families. To meet these goals, the Corporation will give priority consideration to the following, in descending order of preference:

- Education programs that are focused on improving academic outcomes for children, youth, and young adults, particularly those in low-performing schools; and programs that serve veterans and military families, or that include performance measures focused on engaging veterans in service (Veterans Performance Measures 2 or 5).
- Programs that opt into the national performance measure pilot.
- All other programs in the Focus Areas with self-nominated measures.

Additional preference will be given to programs that lead to member outcomes (Opportunity Performance Measures 12-17).

Continuation requests that include a request for expansion will receive priority consideration and preference in the same manner.

Applicants proposing programs that receive priority consideration are not guaranteed funding. The Corporation will pursue a balanced portfolio across the Focus Areas, and other considerations outlined below in **Section VI. B. What are the goals of the review and selection process?** Brief descriptions of the six Focus Areas follow:

#### **Disaster Services:**

Grants in the Disaster Services Focus Area will help communities with disaster mitigation, preparation, response and recovery. In order to be considered aligned with this Focus Area, applicants must submit self-identified performance measures that demonstrate community and member impacts as they relate to one or more of the functional aspects of disaster services. The application instructions include definitions and examples for each of the functional areas. The measures identified by successful applicants through this *Notice* will inform the development of national disaster services performance measures in future years.

#### **Education:**

Grants in the Education Focus Area will include programs that seek to contribute to the number of students who graduate from high school and college or university. In order to achieve that

goal, the Corporation seeks to increase its investment in national service programs that improve academic outcomes for young children, youth, and young adults, particularly those in the lowest-performing schools. Specifically, the Corporation seeks research- and evidence-based programs that help children and youth prepare for school; perform at grade-level; graduate from high school ready for college, work, and life; and succeed in college and university through academic engagement and civic participation.

**Environmental Stewardship:**

Grants in the Environmental Stewardship Focus Area will include programs that protect human health and the health of ecosystems by conserving natural resources and restoring the nation's air, water, and land. Environmental Stewardship programs may include activities that encourage organizations and individuals to use energy efficiently and utilize cost-effective renewable energy technologies; minimize waste disposal; restore watersheds and aquatic ecosystems; improve at-risk public use lands; restore critical wildlife habitat; increase soil stabilization and quality; mitigate the environmental consequences of disasters; and promote environmental sustainability.

**Healthy Futures:**

Grants in the Healthy Futures Focus Area will meet health needs within communities including access to care, aging in place, and addressing childhood obesity. Access to care is broadly defined and may include health insurance, culturally appropriate health care interventions, transportation, language translation, access to disease and disability prevention, health promotion initiatives, health literacy and efforts to address health disparities. Grants may support older adults, homebound individuals and disabled individuals with activities such as food delivery, transportation or other services that allow them to live independently, including evidence-based programs supported by other partner agencies such as the U. S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Veterans Affairs. The Corporation seeks to fund programs that target risk factors for childhood obesity, including poor nutrition and physical inactivity, and that reflect the recommendations of the National Prevention Council and the White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity.

**Opportunity:**

Grants in the Opportunity Focus Area will meet the needs of economically vulnerable Americans, their families and their communities. Opportunity programs may include activities that assist individuals and families that are homeless or at risk of homelessness; provide financial literacy training and tools designed to improve financial security; and expand employment possibilities. Opportunity programs include those that engage economically vulnerable Americans as AmeriCorps members leading to positive employment and/or educational outcomes. The Corporation will also support programs that undertake community-based strategies to redevelop local areas that are struggling with under-investment and other barriers to economic opportunity.

**Veterans and Military Families:**

Grants in the Veterans and Military Families Focus Area will meet the needs of veterans and family members of active duty and deployed military personnel. Veterans and Military Families programs may include activities in the areas of health, education and economic opportunity,

including the elimination of veteran homelessness, educational programs for children in military families, and economic opportunities for military spouses and veterans. The Corporation is also interested in supporting programs that target disadvantaged, homeless, or formerly homeless veterans and programs that align with the efforts of the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Veterans Affairs, Labor, Defense, and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

### **National Performance Measure Pilot:**

In 2011, the Corporation will implement the second year of the National Performance Measures Pilot. National performance measures allow the Corporation to demonstrate the aggregated impact of AmeriCorps programs. While use of national performance measures remains optional in 2011, new and re-competing applicants are strongly encouraged to use them in planning programming. Applications that include national performance measures will be a funding priority in 2011. National performance measures are described in detail in Section VIII., below.

### ***2. New Applicants***

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

### ***3. Encore Programs***

Congress set a goal that 10 percent of AmeriCorps funding should support encore service programs. The Corporation seeks to meet that 10 percent target in this competition and encourages programs that engage a significant number of participants age 55 or older to apply.

## **II. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. How much funding is available?**

Subject to the availability of appropriations for fiscal year 2011, the Corporation anticipates availability of approximately \$311 million to award new, re-competing, and continuation AmeriCorps State and National grants. Based on recent experience and expressions of interest, the Corporation anticipates that this AmeriCorps grant competition will be highly competitive.

### **B. What organizations are eligible for funding?**

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

An Indian Tribe is defined as a federally recognized Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Native village, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation, as defined under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. § 1602), that

the United States Government determines is eligible for special programs and services provided under federal law to Indians because of their status as Indians. Indian Tribes also include tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by one of the entities described above.

### **III. WHAT ARE THE CATEGORIES OF AMERICORPS STATE AND NATIONAL GRANTS?**

The categories of AmeriCorps State and National grants are described below. The Corporation will not provide more than one grant for the same project in one fiscal year. Also see the AmeriCorps State and National [Fit Finder](http://www.americorps.gov/fitfinder/) to decide which type of grant aligns with the proposed project (<http://www.americorps.gov/fitfinder/>).

#### **A. State and National Competitive**

These grants are awarded to organizations that are proposing a project that operate in only one state and that are put forward to the Corporation by Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions; and to organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state and apply directly to the Corporation. Applicants are eligible to apply for funding for members' living allowance and program costs.

#### **B. State and National Professional Corps**

These grants are awarded to organizations that propose to operate a Professional Corps program in a single or multiple states. Professional Corps programs that operate in only one state are put forward to the Corporation by Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions. Professional Corps programs that operate in more than one state apply directly to the Corporation.

Professional Corps programs place AmeriCorps members as teachers, health care providers, police officers, engineers, or other professionals in communities where there is an inadequate number of such professionals. Applicants are eligible to apply for funding for a portion of program costs, and use their own or other resources to pay the members' living allowance and additional member costs.

#### **C. States and Territories without Commissions**

Applicants in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, South Dakota, and the U.S. Virgin Islands apply directly to the Corporation. Applicants are eligible to apply for funds for member support and program costs. State or Territory government entities are not eligible to apply.

#### **D. State and National Education Award Program (EAP) Fixed-amount Grants**

Organizations operating in a single state and nominated by Governor-appointed State Commissions; and organizations that operate their AmeriCorps program in more than one state may apply. Applicants are eligible to apply for a small fixed-amount grant and use their own or other resources for the members' living allowance and program costs. There is no match requirement for EAP grants. Unlike Full-time Fixed-amount grants, EAPs may enroll full-time and less-than-full-time members.

### **E. Full-time Fixed-amount Grants (Non-EAP)**

Organizations operating in a single state and nominated by Governor-appointed State Commissions, including single-state Professional Corps programs; and organizations that operate their AmeriCorps program in more than one state, including multi-state Professional Corps programs, organizations in States and Territories without Commissions, and Indian Tribes may apply for a full-time fixed-amount grant. Full-time fixed-amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members only. Applicants apply for a fixed amount per MSY and use their own or other resources for the remaining costs of the program. There is no match requirement for fixed-amount grants, but organizations must still raise the additional funds needed to run the program.

Full-time fixed-amount grants are only available for new and re-competing applications. Second and third-year continuation applicants must submit a new application if they are interested in a fixed-amount grant. The Corporation reserves the right to consider an applicant's continuation request if its fixed-amount application is not funded.

Full-time fixed-amount grant applicants in the Education Focus Area will be required to select national performance measures. Applicants proposing non-education programs may select from the national measures or report on their own performance measures. All performance measures will be negotiated prior to grant selection and award. Approved applicants must agree to participate in any relevant evaluations conducted by the Corporation. One such evaluation will be designed to measure the success of this pilot, including whether fixed-amount grants reduce administrative burden on grant recipients.

### **F. Indian Tribes**

The Corporation sets aside 1 percent of grant funds to support programs operated by Indian Tribes and selected by the Corporation on a competitive basis. Applicants are eligible to apply for funds for members' living allowance and program costs.

## **IV. WHAT ARE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THESE GRANTS?**

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

### **A. What are the matching requirements for these grants?**

#### ***1. Fixed-Amount Grants***

There is no match requirement for fixed-amount grants. However, the fixed-amount grant does not cover all costs. Fixed-amount grantees provide the additional resources needed to operate the program, but are not required to track or report on them.

#### ***2. Cost Reimbursement Grants (non-fixed-amount)***

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

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

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

Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35% instead of 50% as specified in the regulations at §2521.60(b). To qualify, 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.

**B. What are the requirements regarding member living allowance?**

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

For cost-reimbursement grants, this amount must be included in the proposed budget. The living allowance is not required for members serving in less than full-time terms of service. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to a less than full-time member, it must comply with the maximum limits in the chart below. While full-time fixed-amount grant applicants don’t submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance to members that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements. Full-time fixed-amount grant applicants are not required to identify that amount in the application.

**Table 1: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance**

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

**C. What are the exceptions to the living allowance requirements?**

**1. Prior to September 21, 1993**

If a program existed prior to the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (enacted September 21, 1993), the law does not require a living allowance. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement of \$12,100, but not the maximum requirement of \$24,200.

## 2. EAP Fixed-Amount Grantees

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 section above.

## 3. Professional Corps Grantees

Professional Corps members must receive a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance required for other AmeriCorps programs. Professional Corps member salaries are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget. Professional Corps applicants may request funds for other costs, and must meet the regulatory match on these budgeted costs only, unless proposing a fixed-amount grant.

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

The Corporation considers comparative cost per MSY in funding decisions. One MSY is equivalent to at least 1700 service hours, a full-time AmeriCorps position. The Corporation cost per MSY is determined by dividing the Corporation's share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum amount an applicant may request from the Corporation per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

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

**Table 2: 2011 Maximum Cost per MSY**

Grant Program	Maximum
Individual State Program	\$16,000
Average across State Formula and State Competitive	\$13,300
Multi-state	\$13,300
Indian Tribes	\$13,300
Professional Corps	\$2,500
Professional Corps Fixed-Amount Grant	\$2,000
Education Award Program Fixed-Amount Grant	\$800
Full-time Fixed-amount Grant	\$13,000

## E. What are the member enrollment requirements for existing grantees?

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

**F. What are the member retention requirements for existing grantees?**

We recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model. We expect grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible. Retention rates will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and re-compete processes. Applicants that do not retain members are likely to receive a decrease in funding. Continuation and recompeting grantees that haven't achieved full retention in the most recently completed program year must provide an explanation in their application and describe a corrective action plan.

**G. What is the amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award for FY 2011?**

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

**Table 3: Term of Service and Education Award**

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

**V. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

**A. How to Apply**

Organizations that propose to operate in one state only must apply through the State Commission for the state in which they will operate. Organizations that propose to operate in more than one state are eligible to apply directly to the Corporation. **Organizations in states and territories without commissions apply directly to the Corporation.** Indian Tribes may apply through State Commissions, or directly to the Corporation.

**B. Notice of Intent to Apply**

Applicants are encouraged to send an e-mail by December 15, 2010 to [americorpsnational@cns.gov](mailto:americorpsnational@cns.gov) for National applicants or [americorpsapplications@cns.gov](mailto:americorpsapplications@cns.gov) for State Commissions, stating intent to apply.

Although submission of the Notice of Intent is not mandatory, submitting it will help the Corporation plan more efficiently for external and internal review. Include the name of the applicant organization, address, contact person, and phone number in the Notice of Intent. National applicants should state category of funding. State Commissions are encouraged to include an estimate of the number of programs planned for submission to the state competitive competition. Providing an e-mail address will also allow the Corporation to contact applicants directly if application materials are updated.

### **C. Universal Identifier**

Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and register with the Central Contractor's Registry (CCR). **The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number.**

DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

The website indicates a 24-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, **we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date.** Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by following instructions found here: <http://smallbusiness.dnb.com/establish-your-business/12334338-1.html>.

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

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

### **D. Content and Form of Application Submission**

#### ***1. Submitting in eGrants***

The Corporation requires that all applicants submit applications electronically via the Corporation's web-based application system, [eGrants](#). Applications must arrive at the Corporation by January 25, 2011 at 5 p.m. ET in order to be considered. The Corporation reserves the right to extend the submission deadline. Any notice of such extended deadline will be posted in eGrants.

We recommend that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the document into eGrants no later than 10 days before the deadline.

Contact the eGrants Help Desk at 888-677-7849 if a problem arises while creating an account, preparing, or submitting an application. Be prepared to provide the application ID. eGrants Help Desk hours are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET Monday through Friday.

If technical issues will prevent an applicant from submitting an application on time, please contact the eGrants Help Desk prior to the deadline to explain the technical issue and receive a ticket number. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, the applicant must continue working with the eGrants Help Desk to submit via eGrants.

## ***2. Late Applications***

The Corporation may consider an application after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter explaining the extenuating circumstance which caused the delay. The letter must be sent to [LateApplications@cns.gov](mailto:LateApplications@cns.gov) within the 24-hour period following the deadline. Late applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

If extenuating circumstances make the use of eGrants impossible, applicants may send a hard copy of the application to the address below in Section IX. Agency Contacts, via overnight carrier. Please use a non-U.S. Postal Service because of security-related delays in receiving mail from the U.S. Postal Service. All deadlines and requirements in this *Notice* apply to hard copy applications. Hard copy applications must include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via e-Grants.

**Do not submit supplementary materials such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested in these application instructions. The Corporation will not review or return them.**

## ***3. Character Limits***

In eGrants, applicants will enter text for

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

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

## **E. Coordination among State Commissions and Multi-state Applicants**

The Corporation expects State Commissions and multi-state grantees to consult and coordinate activities at the local level, as specified in Section 131. [42 U.S.C. 12583] of the National Community Service Act (NCSA). This consultation is designed to ensure the most effective use of national service resources and lead to enhanced coordination among grantees. The list of State Commissions can be found here:

<http://www.americorps.gov/about/contact/statecommission.asp>.

Multi-state applicants and grantees are expected to:

- Consult with the State Commission of each state in which the organization knows it will operate **prior to application submission**.
- Provide the State Commission with contact information for multi-state programs in their state **after grants are awarded**, and update these lists on an annual basis.

- Participate in the State Commission’s annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state service plan, as well as appropriate training and other events.
- Include the State Commission on the multi-state grantee’s mailing list and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

State Commissions are expected to:

- Consult with the multi-state applicants and grantees that contact them prior to application submission.
- Consider the schedules and needs of multi-state programs in their states when planning annual events and technical assistance activities.
- Include multi-state programs in their annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state service plan.
- Add staff of multi-state programs in their state to their mailing list and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

The Corporation will solicit State Commission input on multi-state applicants proposing to operate in their state. Participation by State Commissions is optional. This input will be provided via eGrants.

#### **F. Funding Restrictions**

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

#### **G. Equal Opportunity Survey**

Applicants are asked to complete the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants. Applicants may complete the survey in eGrants while preparing the application for submission or contact the Corporation to obtain a hard copy.

### **VI. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

#### **A. What are the Selection Criteria?**

Each application must clearly describe a project that will effectively deploy AmeriCorps members to solve a significant community problem and respond to the following criteria.

##### ***1. Program Design (50%)***

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

- Provides persuasive evidence that the identified problem exists in the targeted community(ies).
- Demonstrates that individuals recruited and selected to be AmeriCorps members will:
  - Have the appropriate backgrounds, qualifications and skills to succeed.

- Receive orientation, training, and supervision to ensure impact in the community.
- Provides evidence that the program will provide AmeriCorps members a powerful service experience that leads to continued engagement in active civic participation.
- Makes the case that engaging AmeriCorps members is a highly effective means of solving the identified community problem(s).
- Describes, to the extent possible based on evidence, how the activities in which AmeriCorps members and volunteers will engage will have a measurable impact on the identified community problem(s).

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

## **2. *Organizational Capability (25%)***

Reviewers will assess the extent to which:

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

## **3. *Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25%)***

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

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

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

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

## **B. What are the goals of the review and selection process?**

The Corporation's review and selection process is designed to:

- Give every eligible application full and fair consideration.
- Select a high-quality, well-balanced portfolio of programs that will engage AmeriCorps members in solving pressing problems in communities across the nation.

The Corporation's assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. As in the past, the Corporation will engage external reviewers to provide insight and input with respect to eligible applications. In addition, Corporation staff will apply their experience and expertise in evaluating applications. In the end, the review and selection process will produce a balanced set of high-quality programs that represent the priorities and selection factors described in this *Notice*.

Specifically, the review and selection process is designed to:

***1. Identify eligible applications that satisfy the following considerations:***

- **High-quality response to criteria.**
- **Priorities, in the order of preference outlined in Section B, above.**
  
- **Additional Considerations:**
  - Recruitment and deployment of community volunteers to leverage impact.
  - State Commission rank and recommendations on single-state applicants.
  - State Commission input on multi-state applications.
  - Data on applicant history and performance.
  - Relative risk and opportunity.
  
- **Strategic Characteristics:**
  - Building capacity for individuals, nonprofits and communities to solve problems.
  - Expanding opportunities to serve; particularly for new Americans, low-income individuals, rural residents, older Americans, veterans, members of faith-based organizations, communities of color, Native Americans, and people with disabilities.
  - Embracing innovative approaches to solving problems.

***2. Compile a balanced portfolio based on the following characteristics:***

- Geographic representation.
- Equitable treatment of
  - Rural and urban communities.
  - Small and large programs.
  - Single and multi-state programs.
- Involvement of underserved and economically disadvantaged communities.

**C. What are the stages in the review and selection process?**

***1. Compliance Review***

Corporation staff will review all applications to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completeness requirements. Applications that are submitted by eligible organizations, submitted by the deadline, and that are complete, will advance to External Review.

***2. External Review***

External reviewers will assess applications based on the Program Design criteria. Each application will be reviewed by at least three external reviewers. Reviewers will be recruited

and selected on the basis of demonstrated expertise in AmeriCorps programming, and/or the selection criteria, focus areas, and national performance measures. All external reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

### ***3. Post External Review Quality Control (Quality Control)***

Quality Control is designed to ensure that every eligible application receives full and fair consideration in the review process. After the external reviewers complete their assessment, staff will review the results to determine whether any applications should receive a Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review may be used for:

- Applications ranked first by a state commission that received low scores in External Review.
- Applications for which there are significant panel anomalies.
- Applications submitted by high-performing current grantees that received a low rating in peer review.

Applications identified for additional assessment will be reviewed by an external Quality Control reviewer. The Quality Control reviewer provides an assessment of the application's key strengths and weaknesses, and compares his or her findings to that of the original panel.

### ***4. Selection of Applications for Internal Review***

Upon completing External Review and Quality Control, Corporation staff will determine which applications advance to Internal Review. Applications will advance to Internal Review based on the results of the External Review and Quality Control, as well as the consideration of the priorities, balancing characteristics, additional considerations, and strategic characteristics, listed above. In addition to applications that perform well in External Review, staff may advance applications that did not perform well in External Review on the basis of the Quality Control results and the considerations listed above.

### ***5. Internal Review***

Corporation staff will assess Program Design, particularly focusing on evidence-basis for the proposed solution(s) to the identified community problem(s), appropriateness of national service as a solution, and potential quality of the member experience; Organizational Capability; and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy. Following staff assessment, some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information. Clarification information is used by Corporation staff in making final recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to requests for information in a timely fashion will result in the removal of applications from consideration.

Corporation staff will determine which applications to recommend for selection based on the results of External Review, Quality Control, Internal Review, and Clarification; and the priorities, balancing characteristics, additional considerations, and strategic characteristics listed above.

## **6. Selection**

The Chief Executive Officer will select the final portfolio based on staff recommendation, and considering overall quality, priorities, balancing characteristics, additional considerations, and strategic characteristics listed above.

### **D. What feedback will applicants receive?**

Following grant awards, each applicant will receive the results of external and, if applicable, internal review pertaining to their application.

### **E. Will the priorities also be used in making decisions regarding continuation expansion requests?**

Yes. Requests for continuation expansions will be assessed using the same priorities as the new and recomplete applications.

### **F. How long will the selection and review process take?**

Processing and selecting applications for funding will require approximately four months.

## **VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **A. When will grants be awarded?**

The Corporation will award grants following the grant selection announcement. We anticipate announcing the results of this competition by May 31, 2011.

### **B. What documents govern the grant?**

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

### **C. What is the Project/Award Period?**

The Corporation generally makes grant awards for three years, with funding in annual increments. Grantees will be eligible for continuation funding in the second and third year contingent on the availability of appropriations, compliance, and satisfactory performance. **The project start date may not occur prior to the date the Corporation awards the grant. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.**

### **D. What are the reporting requirements for these grants?**

Grantees other than fixed-amount grantees and Professional Corps are required to provide annual performance, bi-annual financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740. Professional Corps programs are required to provide annual program and financial reports only. Fixed-amount grantees are required to provide annual performance reports only. All grantees provide quarterly expense reports through the Payment Management System at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

If you receive an award, you will be required to report at [www.FSRS.gov](http://www.FSRS.gov) on all subawards over \$25,000 and may be required to report on executive compensation for your organization and for

your subgrantees. You must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 C.F.R. Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

### **E. Disaster Funding**

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

## **VIII. NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

### **A. EDUCATION FOCUS AREA**

- Tutoring programs must select Measures ED1, and ED2, and then at least one measure from ED5-ED11 or ED26.
- Mentoring programs must select Measures ED3A, ED4A, and then at least one measure from ED5-ED11 or ED26.
- Teacher Corps must select Measures ED1 and ED2 and Measures ED12-ED 14 and Measures ED16-ED17. Measures ED 15, ED 18, and ED 19 are optional Teacher Corps measures.
- Early Childhood programs must choose measures ED20 and ED21 and then at least one measure from ED22-25.
- Education Programs other than the above must select measures ED1, ED2, and then at least one measure from ED5-ED11 or ED26.

ED1 Number of students who start in an AmeriCorps education program.

ED2 Number of students who complete participation in an AmeriCorps education program.

ED3A Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that are commenced by the AmeriCorps program.

ED4A Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that were sustained by the AmeriCorps program for at least the required time period.

ED5 Number of students with improved academic performance, including on-time course completion.

ED6 Number of youth who have improved their school attendance over the course of the AmeriCorps program's involvement with the student.

ED7 Number of students with no or decreased disciplinary referrals and suspensions over the course of the AmeriCorps program's involvement.

ED8 Number of youth with decreased substance abuse, arrest, or gang involvement.

ED9 Number of students graduating from high school on time with a diploma.

ED10 Number of students entering post-secondary institutions.

ED11 Number of students earning a post-secondary degree.

- Teacher Corps must select Measures ED1 and ED2, ED12-ED 14 and Measures ED16-ED17.

- Measures ED 15, ED 18 and ED 19 are optional Teacher Corps measures.

ED12 Number of AmeriCorps members who begin serving as teachers through a Teacher Corps program.

ED13 Number of AmeriCorps members who completed serving as teachers through a Teacher Corps program.

- ED14 Number of individuals teaching in high need schools.
- ED15 Number of students in AmeriCorps teacher classrooms with improved academic performance.
- ED16 Number of individuals teaching in schools in the year after term of service.
- ED17 Number of teachers remaining in the education field, but not teaching in a school (school support staff, school administration, district administration policy, education nonprofits, etc.) after their term of service.
- ED18 Number of teachers who have had a positive impact on student learning as determined by observation-based assessments of teacher performance.
- ED19 Number of individuals receiving certification to teach in schools after their term of service.

- Early Childhood programs must choose measures ED20 and ED21 and then at least one measure from ED22-25.

- ED20 Number of children who start in an AmeriCorps early childhood education program.
- ED21 Number of children who complete participation in an AmeriCorps early childhood education program.
- ED22 Number of children accessing high quality early childhood education programs.
- ED23 Number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of social and emotional development.
- ED24 Number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of literacy skills.
- ED25 Number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of numeracy (math) skills.

- Tutoring programs, mentoring programs and other education programs except Teacher Corps or early childhood programs must select at least one measure from ED5-ED11 or ED26.

ED26 Number of students acquiring a GED.

### **HEALTHY FUTURES FOCUS AREA**

- Applicants must select at least one of the measures (H1-H8) that matches their program model.
- Applicants must develop their own aligned outcome measures.
- H1 Number of individuals who are uninsured, economically disadvantaged, medically underserved, or living in rural areas utilizing preventive and primary health care services and programs.
- H2 Number of clients to whom information on health insurance, health care access and health benefits programs is delivered.
- H3 Number of clients enrolled in health insurance, health services, and health benefits programs.
- H4 Number of clients participating in health education programs.
- H5 Number of children and youth engaged in in-school or afterschool physical education activities with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity.
- H6 Number of children and youth receiving nutrition education with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity.
- H7 Number of clients receiving language translation services at clinics and in emergency rooms.

H8 Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food, transportation, or other services that allow them to live independently.

### **OPPORTUNITY FOCUS AREA**

- Applicant must select at least one measure (O1-O8) that matches their program model. (See measures O12-O17 if primary focus of program is on member development.)
- If selecting Measure O1, must also select Measure O9.
- If selecting Measure O3, must also select Measure O10.
- If selecting Measure O5, must also select Measure O11.
- If selecting Measures O2, O4, O6, or O7, applicants must develop their own aligned measure.

O1 Number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving financial literacy services.

O2 Number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving job training and other skill development services.

O3 Number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving job placement services.

O4 Number of housing units developed, repaired, or otherwise made available for low-income individuals, families or people with disabilities.

O5 Number of economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless individuals, receiving housing placement services.

O6 Number of individuals receiving emergency food from food banks, food pantries, or other nonprofit organizations.

O7 Number of individuals receiving support, services, education and/or referrals to alleviate long-term hunger.

O8 Measure O8 has been intentionally deleted. There is no Measure O8.

- If selecting Measure O1, must also select Measure O9.

O9 Number of economically disadvantaged individuals with improved financial knowledge.

- If selecting Measure O3, must also select Measure O10.

O10 Number of economically disadvantaged individuals placed in jobs.

- If selecting Measure O5, must also select Measure O11.

O11 Number of economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless individuals, transitioned into safe, healthy, affordable housing.

### **Opportunity Measures Related to Creating Greater Opportunity for AmeriCorps Members**

- Applicants must select at least one of the measures (O12-O14) that matches their program model and then the accompanying measure (O15-O17).

- If selecting Measure O12, then applicant must also select Measure O15.

- If selecting Measure O13, then applicant must also select Measure O16.

- If selecting Measure O14, then applicant must also select Measure O17.

O12 Number of economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members who are unemployed prior to their term of service.

O13 Number of economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service.

- O14 Number of AmeriCorps members who have their high school diploma or equivalent but have not completed a college degree prior to their term of service.
- O15 Number of economically disadvantaged AmeriCorps members that secure employment during their term of service or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps.
- O16 Number of members that obtain a GED/diploma while serving in AmeriCorps or within one year after finishing AmeriCorps.
- O17 Number of members that complete a college course within one year after finishing AmeriCorps.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP FOCUS AREA**

- Applicants must select at least one of the measures (EN1-EN6) that matches their program model.
  - Applicants selecting EN1 must also select EN7.
  - Applicants selecting EN2, EN3, EN4, EN5, or EN6 must also develop their own aligned measure.
- EN1 Number of housing units of low-income households and structures weatherized or retrofitted to significantly improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.
  - EN2 Number of low-income households home and public building energy audits conducted.
  - EN3 Number of students and youth receiving education or training in energy-efficient and environmentally-conscious practices, including but not limited to sustainable energy and other natural resources, and sustainable agriculture.
  - EN4 Number of acres of national parks, state parks, city parks, county parks, or other public lands and tribal communities that are cleaned or improved.
  - EN5 Number of miles of trails or rivers (owned/maintained by national, state, county, city governments or tribal communities) that are cleaned, improved, and/or created.
  - EN6 Number of tons of materials collected and recycled.
  - EN7 Annual energy usage reduction for housing units and structures from weatherizing and retrofiting (in units).

### **VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES FOCUS AREA**

- Applicants must select at least one measure (V1-V7) that matches their program model.
  - Applicants must develop their own aligned measures.
- V1 Number of veterans receiving services and assistance, including veterans with disabilities, veterans who are unemployed, older veterans, and veterans in rural communities.
  - V2 Number of veterans engaged in service opportunities (other than mentoring economically disadvantaged students).
  - V3 Number of veterans assisted in pursuing educational opportunities.
  - V4 Number of veterans assisted in receiving professional certification, licensure, or credentials.
  - V5 Number of veterans engaged in mentoring relationships with economically disadvantaged students.
  - V6 Number of housing units developed, repaired, or otherwise made available for veterans.
  - V7 Number of military families receiving services and assistance.

## **DISASTER FOCUS AREA**

In 2011, there are no national performance measures for applicants in the Disaster Focus Area. Applicants will develop their own aligned measures(s).

## **IX. AGENCY CONTACTS**

This *Notice* is available at [www.americorps.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp](http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp). The TTY number is 202–606-3472. For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice*, call (202) 606-7508. For questions regarding multi-state or Indian Tribes applications submitted directly to the Corporation, please call (202) 606-7508 or send an e-mail to [americorpsnational@cns.gov](mailto:americorpsnational@cns.gov). Send questions concerning a single-state application, to [americorpsapplications@cns.gov](mailto:americorpsapplications@cns.gov) or contact the State Commission. A list of all State Commissions can be found here:

<http://www.americorps.gov/about/contact/statecommission.asp>. The mailing address is:

Corporation for National and Community Service  
ATT: Office of Grants Policy and Operations/ASN Application  
1201 New York Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20525

## **X. OTHER INFORMATION TO KNOW BEFORE APPLYING**

In addition to consulting the *Notice* and AmeriCorps regulations as directed in these instructions, multi-state applicants may also consult the Corporation web site for a schedule of technical assistance conference calls, Frequently Asked Questions, and other resources targeted to multi-state applicants. Applicants in a single state should consult with their State Commission.