

## NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

**Federal Agency Name:** Corporation for National and Community Service  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** FY 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition  
**Announcement Type:** Initial Announcement  
**CFDA Number:** 94.002

**Disclosure:** Publication of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (Notice) does not obligate the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to award any specific number of grants or to commit any particular amount of funding.

### Important Dates

- CNCS strongly encourages applicants to submit a Notification of Intent to Apply for this competition. Notifications of Intent to Apply should be submitted by March 7, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.
- Applications are due April 4, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.
- Successful applicants will be notified by mid July 2017.

## FULL TEXT OF THE NOTICE

### A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

#### 1. Purpose of Senior Corps RSVP Funding

The mission of CNCS is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, the Social Innovation Fund, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, CNCS has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

Established in 1971 and now one of the largest senior volunteer programs in the nation, RSVP engages people age 55 and older in diverse range of volunteer activities. Volunteers tutor children, renovate homes, teach English to immigrants, assist victims of natural disasters, provide independent living services, recruit and manage other volunteers, and serve in their communities in many other ways. Senior Corps RSVP volunteers choose how, where, and how often they want to serve, with commitments ranging from a few hours to a maximum of 40 hours per week. While serving, RSVP volunteers improve their own lives by staying active and civically engaged.

Through this expansion competition, CNCS focuses on increasing the impact of national service in certain counties across the country. **Please note that this competition is limited to only those counties across the country that are currently not being served.** A complete list of all such counties is set forth by state in Appendix A.

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended by the Serve America Act, emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on a core of issue areas. In order to carry out Congress's intent and to maximize the impact of investment in national service, CNCS has the following Focus Areas: Disaster Services; Economic Opportunity; Education; Environmental Stewardship; Healthy Futures; Veterans and Military Families. CNCS's priorities

for this grant competition include these six Focus Areas and the key goal of Capacity Building as describe below:

### **Disaster Services**

Grants will help individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate disasters and increase community resiliency. Activities may include assisting in disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and/or mitigation.

### **Economic Opportunity**

Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of individuals who are economically disadvantaged. Activities may include providing housing-related assistance for economically disadvantaged people, including homeless individuals.

### **Education**

Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for people who are economically disadvantaged, especially children, and for children with special and/or exceptional needs. Activities may include providing support and/or facilitating access to services and resources that contribute to school readiness; providing support that improves academic performance; and providing support that improves academic engagement.

### **Environmental Stewardship**

Grants will provide services that contribute to increased energy and water efficiency, renewable energy use, or improved at-risk ecosystems. Grant activities will support increasing citizen behavioral change leading to increased efficiency, renewable energy use, and ecosystem improvements particularly for economically disadvantaged households and communities. Activities may include improving at-risk acres (land and/or water) in national, state, city or county parks, or other public or tribal lands.

### **Healthy Futures**

Grants will assist with meeting health needs within communities including access to care, aging in place, and childhood obesity. Activities may include supporting the ability of adults who are homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities, to live independently and assisting individuals with access to food resources.

### **Veterans and Military Families**

Grants will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength. Activities may include supporting veterans, veterans' family members, military service members, and military service members' families.

### **Capacity Building**

In addition to the Focus Areas described above, grants will also provide support for volunteer capacity building activities provided by national service participants. These activities are indirect services that enable CNCS-supported organizations to recruit and manage community volunteers.

RSVP grant applications must include these two requirements:

- propose to serve one or more geographic service areas listed in Appendix A of this Notice
- meet the National Performance Measure requirements and other criteria established in this Notice

## 2. Funding Priorities

In addition to addressing one or more of the Focus Areas above, which is a requirement, CNCS is particularly interested in supporting applications that propose to include one or more of the priorities listed below.

**Evidence-Based Program Implementation:** Senior Corps RSVP volunteers provide support to the implementation of evidence based program models for which a set of activities and practices is supported by a theory of change tested through a rigorous program evaluation.

Programs that emphasize or focus on programming including:

- **Elder Justice:** applicants focus on the Elder Justice Act priorities by placing volunteers in assignments that mitigate the potential that clients and caregivers served by RSVP volunteers will be victims of financial fraud, abuse, and/or neglect and/or that provide assistance and support services to victims of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- **Education—Intergenerational Programming:** applicants address ways to increase older adult engagement with young people in the areas of school readiness and K-12 success.
- **Access to Care—Opioid Abuse:** applicants address ways to increase access to care and participation in health education, including prevention activities, related to opioid abuse.
- **Aging in Place—Transportation:** applicants focus on the access to preventive/medical appointments or other services that allow them to live independently.
- **Economic Opportunity—Housing:** applicants contribute to the provision of services for individuals who are economically-disadvantaged, including individuals who are homeless, to transition into safe, healthy, affordable housing.

In order to receive priority consideration, applicants must demonstrate that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes, and must include a high quality program design. Applicants proposing programs that receive priority consideration are not guaranteed funding. Inclusion of these activities is optional.

## 3. National Performance Measures

CNCS expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of a comprehensive performance management strategy that relies on both performance and evaluation data to learn from its work, and make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals.

Applicants are required to use the specific performance measures outlined in this Notice. For more information, please refer to Appendix B for the RSVP National Performance Measures Instructions at [www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition](http://www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition).

Applicants must identify a Primary focus area, and work plans must include service activity in the selected Primary focus area.

This funding opportunity requires applicants to demonstrate cost-effective practices in achieving performance goals through the service described in the proposed work plans. **Applications must include work plans that meet the following minimum requirements:**

The required number of unduplicated RSVP volunteers in outcomes must be phased in over three years, as follows:

**Year 1: For every \$1,250 in annual base federal funding,** at least one unduplicated RSVP volunteer\* must be placed in work plans that:

1. Result in National Performance Measure outcomes in a combination of any of the focus areas and/or Capacity Building Measures, or
2. Engage volunteers in an evidence-based program that results in a National Performance Measure output in health education programming. (Evidence Based, see Appendix C)

**Year 2 and 3: For every \$1,000 in annual base federal funding,** at least one unduplicated RSVP volunteer\* must be placed in work plans that:

1. Result in National Performance Measure outcomes in a combination of any of the focus areas and/or Capacity Building Measures, or
2. Engage volunteers in an evidence-based program that results in a National Performance Measure output in health education programming (Evidence Based, see Appendix C).

*\*Unduplicated RSVP Volunteers:* Each volunteer can only be counted once even if they are assigned to more than one service activity. The volunteer should be counted in the area where he/she will make the most impact – in terms of the focus area (such as outcome based service activity area vs community priority), in terms of the type of service, or in terms of the scope of service, (such as the most number of hours served).

#### **4. Program Authority**

CNCS's legal authority to award these grants is found in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, ([42 U.S.C. § 12501 et seq.](#)), and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended ([42 U.S.C. § 5000 et seq.](#)).

The full RSVP regulations may be found at [45 CFR Part 2553](#).

## **B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

### **1. Estimated Available Funds**

CNCS anticipates approximately \$3 million for the 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition and no more than 40 awards. The actual level of funding is subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

### **2. Estimated Award Amount**

Award amounts will vary, as determined by the scope of the projects. CNCS expects to make awards of a minimum of \$75,000.

### **3. Project Period**

The grant award covers a 3-year project period. CNCS generally funds the first year of operation. Continuation funding for subsequent years is not guaranteed and may be dependent upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance. **Please note that at the end of the 3-year performance period, the service areas funded through this special competition will be eligible to compete in the statutorily-mandated competition process for RSVP.**

### **4. Type of Award**

The 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition will be awarded on a cost reimbursement basis.

### **5. Funding Opportunities and the Associated Geographic Service Areas**

Funds are available for funding opportunities designated in Appendix A of this Notice. Appendix A lists all of the available vacant geographic service areas.

Refer to *Grant Application Part I: Facesheet Instructions* for guidance on identifying in your application the geographic service areas for which you are applying.

## **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **1. Eligible Applicants**

The following non-federal entities (as defined in [2 CFR §200.69](#)) that have DUNS numbers and are registered in System for Award Management (SAM) are eligible to apply:

- Indian tribes ([2 CFR §200.54](#))
- institutions of higher education ([2 CFR §200.55](#))
- local governments ([2 CFR §200.64](#))
- nonprofit organizations ([2 CFR §200.70](#))
- states ([2 CFR §200.90](#))

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

### **2. Matching**

Applicants are required to match funds in part for their projects through local, non-federal contributions. The required local contribution in Year 1 of the grant is at least 10 percent of the

total project budget. The required portion is at least 20 percent in Year 2, and at least 30 percent in Year 3 and subsequent years, if the grant is renewed beyond three years.

The applicant's match may be cash and/or in-kind contributions. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet the 10 percent match requirement at the time of application submission in the Budget Section of the application. See section *D.6. Funding Restrictions* for more information.

If a current RSVP grant recipient applies for a new service area, the requirement is for match funds of at least 10 percent non-federal share for the new service area.

### **3. Other Eligibility Requirements**

The legal applicant must have sufficient local presence to directly manage the proposed RSVP grant. The operation of an RSVP grant cannot be delegated to another organization, even if the other organization is an affiliate of the legal applicant.

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

Note that under Title IV, Division H of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, if CNCS is aware that any corporation has any unpaid federal tax liability which—

- has been assessed
- all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed
- is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability—

that corporation is not eligible for an award under this Notice. However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation which a federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the federal government.

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

## **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

This Notice should be read together with the RSVP Regulations ([45 CFR Part 2553](#)), the RSVP Grant Application Instructions, the List of Available Funding Opportunities by State, the National Performance Measures Instructions, and the Evidence-Based Programs Instructions. These documents are available online at: [www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition](http://www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition).

### **1. Address to Request Application Package**

Applicants should refer to the [CNCS Funding Opportunities](#) for more information and instructions on how to fully respond to this Notice. Applications can also send an email to [2017RSVP@cns.gov](mailto:2017RSVP@cns.gov) for an electronic copy of the application materials. The TTY (Text Telephone) number is (800) 833-3722.

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

### **a. Application Content**

Complete applications must have the following:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet: This is automatically generated when applicants complete the data elements in eGrants.
- Narrative Sections:
  - Executive Summary: This is a brief description of the proposed program and service activity in the application's Primary focus area. The Executive Summary should not be longer than one page. Executive Summaries of all compliant applications are published on the CNCS website following grant awards.
  - Strengthening Communities
  - Recruitment and Development
  - Program Management
  - Organizational Capability
- Standard Form 424A Budget
- Performance Measures
- Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications.

### **b. Page Limits**

Applications may not exceed 15 double-spaced pages as the pages print out from eGrants. The application sections that count towards the page limit are:

- the SF-424 Face Sheet
- Executive Summary
- the Program Design and Organizational Capability narratives

The application page limit does not include the Budget, Performance Measures, or any required additional documents.

Please note that the length of the application in word processing software may be different than how it will print out from eGrants. **CNCS strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the “Review and Submit” tab in eGrants prior to submission in order to confirm that the application does not exceed the page limit.**

CNCS will not consider the results of any alternative printing methods when determining if an application complies with the page limit. Reviewers will also not consider material that is over the page limit, even if eGrants allows applicants to enter and submit additional text.

### **3. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)**

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

After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants **must** register with the [SAM](#) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If an applicant is awarded a grant, it must maintain an active SAM registration throughout the life of the award.

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

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

#### **4. Submission Dates and Times**

##### **a. Notification of Intent to Apply**

CNCS strongly encourages applicants to submit a **Notification of Intent to Apply** by March 7, 2017. Please submit your intent to apply by using this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/rsvpintent17>.

The Notification of Intent to Apply must include:

- the name of the applicant organization
- the proposed service area by county
- the name of a contact person, as well as the mailing address, email address, and phone number
- how the organization heard about the 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition.

All Notifications of Intent to Apply will receive an email response acknowledging receipt.

##### **b. Application Submission Deadline**

Applications are due **April 4, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.**

CNCS will not consider applications submitted after the deadline, except as noted in Section *D.4.d. Late Applications*. CNCS reserves the right to extend the submission deadline. CNCS will post notification in the event of an extended deadline on CNCS's website.

##### **c. Additional Documents Deadline**

Additional documents are due by the application submission deadline. See *Sections D.4.b. Application Submission Deadline* and *D.7.b. Submission of Additional Documents* for more information.

##### **d. Late Applications**

All applications received after the submission deadline published in the Notice are presumptively non-compliant. In order to overcome this presumption, the applicant must:

- provide a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay, including:
  - the timing and specific cause(s) of the delay

- the ticket number if a request for assistance was submitted to the National Service Hotline
- any information provided to the applicant by the National Service Hotline
- any other documentation or evidence that supports the justification.
- ensure that CNCS receives the justification and any other evidence that substantiates the claimed extenuating circumstance(s) via email to [LateApplications@cns.gov](mailto:LateApplications@cns.gov) no later than one business day after the published application deadline, or as stated in the Notice.

Communication with CNCS staff, including an applicant’s program officer, is not a substitute for the following written procedure described here. Applicants are required to continue working in [eGrants, CNCS’s web-based system](#) and with the National Service Hotline to submit the application. CNCS will determine whether or not to accept a late application on a case-by-case basis.

Applicants that do not submit a justification or any other evidence to overcome the presumption of non-compliance within the published timeframe will not be reviewed or selected for award.

**Please note:** CNCS will *not* consider an advance request to submit a late application. Please carefully review and follow the guidance in this section, and submit your application as soon as possible.

## **5. Intergovernmental Review**

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

## **6. Funding Restrictions**

### **a. Award Funding Requirements**

Awards under this Notice are subject to matching requirements. The amount of federal funding provided under awards will be limited to 10, 20, and 30 percent of the total allowable costs for the funded activity, as determined under [2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E-Cost Principles](#). See section *C.2. Matching* for more information.

### **b. Indirect Costs**

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants may either use a federally-approved indirect cost rate, a 10% *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly, as outline in [2 CFR 200.414](#). States, local governments, and Indian tribes may use previously approved cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across all federal awards. Applicants that hold a federal negotiated indirect cost rate or that will be using the 10% *de minimis* rate must enter that information in the Organization section in eGrants.

Please note: if CNCS serves as the oversight agency, the entity must formally request an indirect cost rate. The option utilized methods must be applied consistently across all federal awards.

## **7. Other Submission Requirements**

### **a. Electronic Application Submission in eGrants**

Applicants must submit applications electronically via [eGrants, CNCS's web-based system](#). CNCS recommends 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 document, then copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants field no more than 10 days before the deadline.

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

Applicants should contact the National Service Hotline at (800) 942-2677 or [eGrants Questions](#) if they have a problem when they create an account or prepare or submit the application.

The general public hours for the National Service Hotline are as follows:

- Mon - Fri, 9 am – 7 pm ET (Jan, May, June, July, Aug, Sept)
- Mon - Thu, 9 am – 7 pm ET (Feb, Mar, Apr, Oct, Nov, Dec)

Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the Notice to which the organization is applying. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, applicants must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants.

If circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit in eGrants, applicants may send a paper copy of the application via overnight carrier to the following address:

Corporation for National and Community Service  
ATTN: Office of Grants Policy and Operations/ 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition  
Application  
250 E Street, SW, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20525

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

### **b. Submission of Additional Documents**

Please refer to the Grant Application Instructions for a complete list of required documents. Applicants are required to submit all documents by the application submission deadline.

Additional documents must be emailed to [2017RSVPAttachments@cns.gov](mailto:2017RSVPAttachments@cns.gov) with the following subject line: 2017 RSVP Expansion Competition Additional Documents – Legal Applicant Name and Application ID number.

Emails should include:

- the legal applicant name and its point of contact information
- the application ID number
- a list of documents that are attached to the email
- individually saved files that are clearly labeled, and that include the legal applicant name and application ID number within the body of each document.

***Do not submit any items that are not requested in this Notice and Grant Application Instructions. CNCS will not review or return them.***

**E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

**1. Review Criteria**

Applications should include a well-designed plan with clear and compelling justifications for receiving the requested funds. Reviewers will assess the applications against the following selection criteria and rate them accordingly, considering the weights assigned to each criterion. The weights assigned to each category are detailed in the following chart.

Selection criteria within each application are assessed as Excellent, Good, Fair, and Does Not Meet. To achieve a Good assessment, applicants must address everything requested in the selection criteria. To achieve an Excellent assessment, applicants must go beyond what is requested by the selection criteria.

**Basic Selection Criteria: Categories and Respective Weights**

Category	Percentage	Sub-Category	Percentage	Relevant part of the application
Program Design	50%	Strengthening Communities	35%	Work Plan
		Recruitment and Development	15%	Narrative
Organizational Capability	30%	Program Management	15%	Narrative
		Organizational Capability	15%	Narrative
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	20%	Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	20%	Work Plan, Narrative and Budget Sections

**a. Program Design (50 percent):  
Strengthening Communities (35 percent)**

Reviewers will assess the extent of the work plan proposed in the application through the following criteria:

Q1. (7%)

Work plans describe and demonstrate the community need.

Q2. (7%)

Work plans articulate a theory of change – meaning, how service activities will address the community needs, and how the service activity described provides a significant contribution to the outcomes listed in the work plan. This question will focus on work plans that lead to National Performance Measure outcomes. (see Appendix B)

Q3. (7%)

Work plans logically connect four major elements to each other:

1. The community need(s) identified
2. The service activities that will be carried out by RSVP volunteers
3. The instrument description and data collection plans
4. The work plans that include target numbers leading to outcomes or outputs, and that are appropriate for the total number of volunteers assigned

Q4. (7%)

Work plan outputs and outcomes are aligned with National Performance Measure instructions. (see Appendix B)

Q5. (7%)

Work plans have outputs and outcomes that are achievable based on resources, program design and the number of volunteers engaged.

### **Recruitment and Development of Volunteers (15 percent)**

Reviewers will assess the extent to which the narrative demonstrates a plan and infrastructure for effective RSVP volunteer recruitment and management through the presence of the following:

Q6. (5%)

Demonstrates a plan and infrastructure to ensure RSVP volunteers receive training needed to succeed in the service activities described in the work plan

Q7. (5%)

Describes the demographics of the community served and plans to recruit a volunteer pool reflective of the community served. This could possibly include:

1. Individuals from diverse races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, or degrees of English language proficiency
2. Veterans and military family members as RSVP volunteers
3. RSVP volunteers with disabilities
4. RSVP volunteers between the ages of 55 and 70 years old

Q8. (5%)

Demonstrates a plan and infrastructure to retain and recognize RSVP volunteers

### **b. Organizational Capability (30 percent):**

#### **Program Management (15 percent)**

Reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has:

Q9. (5%)

Plans and infrastructure to ensure management of volunteer stations in compliance with RSVP program regulations

Q10. (5%)

Plans and infrastructure to develop and/or oversee volunteer stations to ensure that volunteers are performing their assigned service activities

Q11. (5%)

Demonstrated an organizational track record in work plans that lead to National Performance Measure outcomes (see Appendix B)

### **Organizational Capability (15 percent)**

Reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has:

Q12. (5%)

Plans and infrastructure to provide sound programmatic and fiscal oversight (both financial and in-kind) and day-to-day operational support to ensure the following: 1) compliance with RSVP program requirements (statutes, regulations, and applicable OMB circulars); 2) accountability, and 3) efficient and effective use of available resources

Q13. (5%)

Demonstrated clearly defined paid staff positions, including identification of current staff assigned to the project, (name, title and brief position description) and how these positions will ensure the accomplishment of program objectives

Q14. (5%)

Demonstrated organizational capacity to develop and implement internal policies and operating procedures to provide governance and manage risk, such as accounting, personnel management, and purchasing

### **c. Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (20 percent):**

Reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant has demonstrated to:

Q15. (10%)

Have a reasonable cost per volunteer in proposed work plans that lead to National Performance Measure requirements (see Appendix B)

Q16. (10%)

Have plans and infrastructure to secure the non-federal share including dedicated staff, grant proposal processes and other plans

## **2. Review and Selection Process**

CNCS will engage External and CNCS Staff Reviewers with relevant knowledge and expertise to assess and provide input on the eligible applications. The review and selection process is intended to produce a diversified and balanced set of high-quality programs that represent the priorities and strategic considerations described in this Notice. The stages of the review and selection process follows:

### **a. Compliance and Eligibility Review**

CNCS will conduct a Compliance Review to determine if an application meets the compliance

requirements published in this Notice and advances to the next stage of the review process.

An application is compliant if the applicant:

- is an eligible organization
- submitted an application by the submission deadline
- submitted an application for a valid geographic service area as described in Appendix A
- has not been denied CNCS Senior Corps funding in the past three years
- is not delinquent on a federal debt

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

## **b. Application Review**

### **Blended Review**

Panels of Reviewers (a combination of External Reviewers and CNCS Staff Reviewers) will assess applications based on the Program Design, Organizational Capability, and Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criteria. CNCS will recruit and select reviewers on the basis of demonstrated expertise in senior programming and/or the Focus Areas, as well as experience assessing applications. All reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

### **Post-Review Quality Control**

After the blended review process is complete, CNCS staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Post-Review Quality Control assessment. This additional level of application review will be used to ensure fairness and provide assurances that an application was not disadvantaged in the original review.

## **c. Application Clarification**

CNCS may ask an applicant for clarifying information. CNCS staff will use this information to make funding recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee an award. Applicants may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked for clarifying information. An applicant's failure to respond to a request for clarification adequately and in a timely fashion may result in its application being removed from consideration. CNCS staff may conduct a site visit inspection as part of the clarification process, as appropriate.

Should clarification result in a reduction of the total number of unduplicated volunteers in outcome work plans or in work plans that engage volunteers in evidence based programs, the application may be rescored to reflect the updated information and could affect funding decisions.

## **d. Risk Assessment**

CNCS staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds. This evaluation is in addition to the assessment of the applicant's eligibility and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria; results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If CNCS determines that an award will be made to an applicant with assessed risks, special

conditions that correspond to the degree of assessed risk may be applied to the award. Additionally, if CNCS concludes that the reasons for applicants having assessed risk are not likely to be mitigated, those applications may not be selected for funding.

In evaluating risks, CNCS may consider the following:

- financial stability
- quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- applicant's record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
  - timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements
  - accuracy of data reported
  - validity of performance measure data reported
  - conformance to the terms and conditions of previous federal awards
  - if applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- information available through OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
  - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)
  - DUNS and SAM
  - The U.S. Department of Treasury's Do Not Pay Portal
- reports and findings from single audits performed under [2 CFR Part 200 Subpart F – Audit Requirements](#) findings and reports of any other available audits
- IRS Tax Form 990
- applicant organization's annual report
- publicly available information, including information from the applicant organization's website
- applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients
- any financial debt.

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

Prior to making any award under this Notice that exceeds \$150,000, CNCS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM and FAPIIS (see [41 U.S.C. 2313](#)).

Additionally, CNCS may expand upon these requirements and use its discretion to review and consider information about an applicant receiving an award, including those under \$150,000.

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

CNCS will consider any comments by any applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's

integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing its review of risk posed by the applicant under the Risk Assessment Evaluation section of this Notice.

#### **f. Selection for Funding**

The review and selection process is designed to:

- 1) identify how well eligible applications are aligned with the application review criteria
- 2) build a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
  - o CNCS Funding Priorities (*See Section A.2. Funding Priorities*)
  - o meaningful representation of rural and urban communities

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

CNCS reserves the right to prioritize funding existing awards over making new awards.

*CNCS reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, in the event that unforeseen challenges or urgent circumstances make it impossible, impracticable, or inefficient to conduct the review process as planned. Any such adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria that will be used to assess applications.*

### **3. Feedback to Applicants**

Following awards, applicants will receive summary comments from the Blended Review of their compliant applications. This feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect information provided during clarification.

### **4. Transparency in Grant-making**

CNCS is committed to transparency in grant-making. The following information for new and re-competing applications will be published on [CNCS Results of Grant Competitions](#) within 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

- a list of all compliant applications submitted
- executive summaries of all compliant applications
- data extracted from the SF-424 Face Sheet and the submitted program narratives for successful applications
- a blank template of the external review worksheet
- a list of all external reviewers who completed the review process

## **F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **1. Federal Award Notices**

CNCS will make awards following the grant selection announcement. CNCS anticipates announcing the results of this competition by mid July 2017. All applicants, successful or not, will be notified of funding decisions via email.

Notification of an award is not an authorization to begin grant activities. The Notice of Grant Award signed by the Grant Officer is the authorizing document for grant activities. An awardee may not expend federal funds until the start of the Project Period identified on the Notice of Grant Award.

## **2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

### **a. Uniform Guidance**

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

Awardees will also be subject to the following (as applicable):

- [45 CFR Part 2553](#)—RSVP Federal Regulations

### **b. Compliance with Requests for Improper Payment Information**

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

### **c. CNCS Terms and Conditions**

All awards made under this Notice will be subject to the 2017 CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and the 2017 Specific Terms and Conditions for the particular program (when applicable). These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnsc-grants>.

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

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

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

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

include:

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

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

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

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

### **3. Use of Material**

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

### **4. Reporting**

Recipients are required to provide bi-annual progress reports and bi-annual financial and narrative progress reports through eGrants, CNCS's web-based grants management system. All grantees must provide quarterly expense reports through the Payment Management System (PMS) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

In addition, at the end of the award period, grantees must submit final financial and progress reports that are cumulative over the entire award period and consistent with the close-out requirements of CNCS's Office of Grants Management. The final reports are due 90 days after the end of the agreement.

Once the grant is awarded, recipients will be expected to have data collection and data management policies, processes, and practices that provide reasonable assurance that they are giving CNCS high quality performance measure data. At a minimum, grantees should have

policies, processes, and practices that address the following five aspects of data quality for themselves:

- the data measures what it intends to measure
- the data reported is complete
- the recipient collects data in a consistent manner
- the recipient takes steps to correct data errors
- the recipient actively reviews data for accuracy prior to submission.

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

For further guidance and training resources see: [Resources: Data Collection and Instruments](#).

## **G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS**

For more information or an emailed copy of related material(s), email [2017RSVP@cns.gov](mailto:2017RSVP@cns.gov). The Notice is available at [www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition](http://www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition). The TTY number is (800) 833-3722.

For technical questions and problems with the eGrants system, call the National Service Hotline at (800) 942-2677.

The general public hours for the National Service Hotline are as follows:

- Mon - Fri, 9 am – 7 pm ET (Jan, May, June, July, Aug, Sept)
- Mon - Thu, 9 am – 7 pm ET (Feb, Mar, Apr, Oct, Nov, Dec)

Potential applicants can also use this link: [eGrants Questions](#). Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the name of the Notice to which the organization is applying.

## **H. OTHER INFORMATION**

### **1. Technical Assistance**

CNCS will host technical assistance calls to answer questions about the funding opportunity and about eGrants. CNCS strongly encourages all applicants to participate in these sessions. Call-in information for the technical assistance calls can be found on the competition website: [www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition](http://www.nationalservice.gov/rsvpcompetition).

### **2. Re-Focusing of Funding**

CNCS reserves the right to re-focus program dollars estimated for this competition in the event of disaster or other compelling needs.