



Operation AmeriCorps

CONCEPT PAPER (STEP 1) INSTRUCTIONS

**OMB Control #: 3045-0038
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IMPORTANT NOTICE

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

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

Time Burden: The time required to complete this collection of information is estimated to average 10 hours per Concept Paper submission, including the time to review instructions; search existing data resources; gather the data needed; and complete and review the information collection before submitting.

Purposes and Uses: The information requested is collected for the purposes of reviewing project applications and granting funding requests.

Routine Uses: Routine uses may include disclosure of the information to federal, state, or local agencies pursuant to lawfully authorized requests. In some programs, the information may also be provided to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to determine the existence of any prior criminal convictions. The information may also be provided to appropriate federal agencies and Department contractors that have a need to know the information for the purpose of assisting the Department's efforts to respond to a suspected or confirmed breach of the security or confidentiality of information maintained in this system of records, and the information disclosed is relevant and unnecessary for the assistance.

Effects of Nondisclosure: The information requested is mandatory in order to receive benefits.

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

Universal Identifier: When registering your organization, you are required to provide a [Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System](#) (DUNS) number and register with the federal System for Award [Management](#) (SAM). All project sponsors are required to maintain a valid registration, which must be renewed annually.

Concept Paper Instructions

Your Concept Paper consists of the following components. Please be sure to complete each component.

- I. Applicant Info
- II. Application Info
- III. Narratives
- IV. Review
- V. Authorize and Submit

To begin an Operation AmeriCorps application, login to your eGrants account at: <https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp>. Before starting the Applicant Info section, you will need to:

- Under “Creating an Application,” select “Concept Paper”
- Under “Select a NOFA” Select “2015 Operation AmeriCorps.” Write down the system-generated Concept Paper ID number for later reference
- State Commissions will ensure that a separate Concept Paper is submitted for each application in their state. Of note, in states where the State Commissions opt in to participate in Operation AmeriCorps, State Commissions will conduct their own application review process outside of eGrants. Applications will be submitted in eGrants upon approval of the State Commission and prior to the January 13 application deadline. Either the State Commission or applicant(s) that they approve from their state may submit the Concept Paper in eGrants. Tribes and applicants in states where the State Commission opts out of Operation AmeriCorps will submit their concept papers directly via eGrants prior to the January 13 application deadline.

I. Applicant Information

In eGrants, complete the Applicant Information section. Some information is already in the system from when the eGrants account was created. Please take the time to verify the information is correct.

II. Application Info

In the Application Info section, list the areas affected by your project. List ONLY cities/towns and/or counties and states if multiple. Please indicate if area(s) is rural or urban, if applicable.

III. Narratives

The Narratives section of the Concept Paper is your opportunity to demonstrate to reviewers that your proposed project would be an appropriate use of Operation AmeriCorps resources.

Be sure to:

- Include activities for the entire project period for which you are requesting resources.
- Enter data for the Executive Summary and the Rationale/Approach Program Design as directed in the Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity. To enter information into

the field, click “View/edit narrative” next to the corresponding narrative item. Enter text into the fields that appear.

IV. Review

The Review section lists the information entered for the three previous sections: Applicant Info, Application Info, and Narratives. You can to these sections to review or change what you have entered, prior to submission.

You can also view and print the information as a report. The report opens as an Adobe PDF read-only file. You may print the Concept Paper in PDF format or save a copy of it onto your computer.

Because the PDF report is a read-only file, you cannot type in the report. To make changes, you must edit in the eGrants system and run the report again for the updated version. Once you submit the Concept Paper, you may not make changes unless it is returned to you.

V. Authorize and Submit

eGrants requires that you verify your entire Concept Paper before submitting it, by completing the following sections in eGrants:

- Authorization
- Certification
- Submit

Read carefully the Authorization and Certification sections.

The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant organization’s authorized representative. This representative must have the authority to commit resources at your organization. To complete this section, the appropriate staff person should logon to eGrants and go to the Authorize and Submit section. **The Authorized Representative must have a personal eGrants account.** To create an account and access the eGrants system, visit www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/index.asp.

Check the entire application to make sure there are no errors before submitting it. When you verify the application, eGrants will also generate a list of errors if sections need to be corrected prior to submission.

NOTE: Submission of a concept paper does not assure receipt of Operation AmeriCorps resources.

Operation AmeriCorps Certifications

Certification – Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters

This certification is required by the government-wide regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 2 CFR Part 180, Section 180.335, *What information must I provide before entering into a covered transaction with a Federal agency?*

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that neither the applicant nor its principals:

- Is presently excluded or disqualified;
- Has been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in § 180.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against it for one of those offenses within that time period;
- Is presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission or any of the offenses listed in § 180.800(a); or
- Has had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.

Certification – Drug Free Workplace

This certification is required by the Corporation's regulations implementing sections 5150-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-690), 45 CFR Part 2545, Subpart B. The regulations require certification by grantees, prior to award, that they will make a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to maintain a drug-free workplace. The certification set out below is a material representation of fact upon which reliance will be placed when the agency determines to award the grant. False certification or violation of the certification may be grounds for suspension of payments, suspension or termination of grants, or government-wide suspension or debarment (see 45 CFR Part 2542, Subparts G and H).

As the duly authorized representative of the grantee, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief that the grantee will provide a drug-free workplace by:

- A. Publishing a drug-free workplace statement that:
 - a. Notifies employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace;
 - b. Specifies the actions that the grantee will take against employees for violating that prohibition; and
 - c. Informs employees that, as a condition of employment under any award, each employee will abide by the terms of the statement and notify the grantee in writing if the employee is convicted for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace within five days of the conviction;
- B. Requiring that a copy of the statement described in paragraph (A) be given to each employee who will be engaged in the performance of any Federal award;
- C. Establishing a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
 - a. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
 - b. The grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
 - c. Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
 - d. The penalties that the grantee may impose upon them for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;
- D. Providing us, as well as any other Federal agency on whose award the convicted employee was working, with written notification within 10 calendar days of learning that an employee has been convicted of a drug violation in the workplace;
- E. Taking one of the following actions within 30 calendar days of learning that an employee has been convicted of a drug violation in the workplace:
 - a. Taking appropriate personnel action against the employee, up to and including termination; or
 - b. Requiring that the employee participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for these purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;
- F. Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs (A) through (E).

Certification - Lobbying Activities

As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, as the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that:

- No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the applicant, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer of

Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement;

- If any funds other than federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the applicant will submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;

Erroneous certification or assurance

The assurances and certifications are material representations of fact upon which we rely in determining whether to enter into this transaction. If we later determine that you knowingly submitted an erroneous certification or assurance, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, we may terminate this transaction for cause or default.

Notice of error in certification or assurance

You must provide immediate written notice to us if at any time you learn that a certification or assurance was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous because of changed circumstances.

Definitions

The terms "debarment", "suspension", "excluded", "disqualified", "ineligible", "participant", "person", "principal", "proposal", and "voluntarily excluded" as used in this document have the meanings set out in 2 CFR Part 180, subpart I, "Definitions." A transaction shall be considered a "covered transaction" if it meets the definition in 2 CFR part 180 subpart B, "Covered Transactions."

Prudent person standard

Nothing contained in the aforementioned may be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the assurances and certifications required. Your knowledge and information is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.

Certification - Grant Review Process (State Commissions Only)

I certify that in conducting our review process, we have ensured compliance with the National and Community Service Act of 1990, the Corporation's peer review requirements, and all state laws and conflict of interest rules.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE: NOTE: Sign this form and include in the application.

SIGNATURE:

By signing this certification page, you certify that you agree to perform all actions and support all intentions in the Certification sections of this application. The three Certifications are:

- Certification: Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters
- Certification: Drug-Free Workplace
- Certification: Lobbying Activities