

# INVITATION TO APPLY

**Federal Agency Name:** Corporation for National and Community Service  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** 2016 RSVP Grant Renewal  
**Announcement Type:** Invitation to Apply  
**CFDA Number:** 94.002

**Please review this entire invitation to apply prior to creating your project application in eGrants.**

## A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### 1. Purpose of RSVP Funding

The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Through its AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, 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 organizations in the nation, RSVP engages nearly 300,000 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 chose how, where, and how often they want to serve, with commitments ranging from a few hours to 40 hours per week. While serving, RSVP volunteers improve their own lives by staying active and civically engaged.

### 2. Invitation to Apply

We invite you to submit your application for renewal (Year 1 of 3) of the Senior Corps grant sponsored by your organization. You are invited to re-apply based on the determination that your project is continuing to meet the eligibility criteria as detailed in Section C. of this document.

Through this grant renewal process, CNCS intends to fund RSVP grant renewals from current projects that support volunteers 55 years and older serving in a diverse range of activities that meet specific community needs and that respond to the National Performance Measures.

RSVP grant applications must:

- continue to meet the eligibility criteria;
- have satisfactory administration and management; and
- meet the National Performance Measure requirements and other criteria established in this Invitation to Apply

This RSVP Invitation to Apply prioritizes grant-making in the following six focus areas identified by the Serve America Act (SAA) and in alignment with the CNCS Strategic Plan:

Disaster Services; Economic Opportunity; Education; Environmental Stewardship; Healthy Futures; Veterans and Military Families.

Incumbents will be asked to choose a Primary focus area from the six focus areas above. Work plans must include service activity in the selected Primary focus area. The Primary focus area should represent the area in which the incumbent aims to make the most impact.

In order to receive consideration, incumbents 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.

A brief description of the six CNCS focus areas and the key goal of Capacity Building relevant to this invitation to apply follow:

### **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 economically disadvantaged individuals. 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 economically disadvantaged people, 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 increased 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 homebound, 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.

### **3. National Performance Measures**

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 set of issue areas. CNCS's five-year Strategic Plan established an ambitious set of objectives that guided the development of 16 agency-wide National Performance Measures. CNCS expects incumbents 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, as well as make strategic adjustments to achieve its goals. Incumbents are required to use the specific Performance Measures outlined in this Invitation to Apply. For more information, please refer to Appendix B for the RSVP National Performance Measures Instructions at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/managing-senior-corps-grants>.

RSVP Performance Measures provide incumbents clear performance goals, indicators, and milestones as required by Section 200.301 of the Uniform Guidance. Incumbents will identify a Primary focus area and work plans must include service activity in the selected Primary focus area.

This funding opportunity requires incumbents 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 guidelines:**

The required number of unduplicated RSVP volunteers in outcomes will 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 when assigned to a 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**

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, (42 U.S.C. § 12501 et seq.). The Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4950 et seq.). The full RSVP regulations may be found at [45 CFR Part 2553](#). See section F., *Federal Award Administration Information*, for specifics on the full range of administrative and national policy requirements.

## **B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

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

CNCS anticipates approximately \$1,400,000 for the 2016 RSVP Grant Renewals. The actual level of funding is subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

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

Award amounts will vary as determined in the individual renewal letter. The funding amount listed reflects end of FY 2015 base level funding. Final Award amount is based on final FY16 appropriations.

Incumbents proposing the use of evidence-based programs may be eligible for a higher level of federal funding per volunteer, up to \$500,000. Incumbents must provide documentation of how a higher level of funding supports the implementation of evidence-based programs. (For more information on evidence-based programming, see Appendix C)

There is no guarantee of availability of additional funding to support evidence-based programs. The final amount to be awarded may be less than the amount requested, but will not be higher than the amount requested in the application. The final award will not be higher than \$500,000.

### **3. Project Period**

The project period (multi-year) will vary as determined in the individual grant renewal letter. While the project period will be 3 years, the funding award for the first year is referenced in the individual grant renewal letter.

Continuation funding for year 2 and 3 is not guaranteed and may be dependent upon:

- Satisfactory performance that signals the grantee is on track to achieve its proposed performance measures at the end of the grant
- Demonstrated capacity to manage the grant

- Compliance with grant requirements, including terms and conditions, criminal history checks, reporting, and securing the required non-federal share
- Availability of Congressional appropriations

CNCS reserves the right to adjust the amount of an award or elect not to continue funding.

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

The 2016 RSVP Grant Renewals will be awarded on a cost reimbursement grant or fixed amount grant.

### **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

#### **1. Eligible Incumbents**

The following entities are eligible to apply: 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); government-recognized veteran service organizations; labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; and Indian Tribes.

An Indian Tribe is defined as an 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 is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States under Federal law to Indians because of their status as Indians. Indian Tribes also include tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by an entity described above. An entity that desires to apply for an award as a tribal organization on behalf of a Federally-recognized Tribe, or multiple specific Federally-recognized Tribes, must submit a sanctioning resolution adopted by the Tribal Council (or comparable tribal governing body) of each Indian Tribe. The resolution 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.

The incumbent 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 incumbent.

Organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this Invitation to Apply.

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

Only incumbent RSVP grantees who receive federal funds may apply to this Invitation to Apply and may only apply for funding for their current geographic service areas.

#### **2. Non-Federal Share**

Incumbent applicants applying to renew an RSVP project for the purpose of this Invitation to Apply are required to fund their projects in part through local, non-federal contributions. The required local contribution is **at least 30 percent of the total project budget**. The local contribution portion should be reflected in the Budget Section of the application. The non-federal share can be cash or in-kind matching funds.

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

This Invitation to Apply should be read together with the RSVP Grant Application Instructions, the RSVP Performance Measures Instructions, the Evidence-based Programs Instructions, and the RSVP Regulations [[45 CFR Part 2553](#)]. Additional documents that may be useful are the eGrants Instructions for Entering Volunteer Station Rosters and the Performance Measures Worksheet.

*All of these documents are available online*

at: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/managing-senior-corps-grants>.

Please Note: There have been **recent** revisions of the Grant Application Instructions and Performance Measures Instructions. Both documents have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). You will use these versions of the Grant Application Instructions and Performance Measures Instructions for your completion of the RSVP grant renewal.

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

Incumbents should refer to the [CNCS website](#) to obtain the necessary information to apply. Incumbents can also send an email to the state office for a printed copy of the application package.

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

#### **a. Application Content**

Complete applications must have the following components:

- **Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet:** This is automatically generated when incumbents complete the data elements in the eGrants system. Many of the fields will be filled automatically with information entered during the registration process.
- **Narratives:**
  - 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 1 page. Executive Summaries of all compliant applications are published on the CNCS website following grant awards.
  - Strengthening Communities Narrative
  - Recruitment and Development Narrative
  - Program Management Narrative
  - Organizational Capability Narrative
  - Other (Evidence-based programming, see Appendix C)
  - Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
- **Standard Form 424A Budget**

- **Performance Measures (See Appendix B)**
- **Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications.**

#### **b. Page Limits**

Applications may not exceed **15 double-spaced pages** for the Narrative, including the SF 424 Face Sheet and Executive Summary as the pages print out from eGrants. The 15-page limit does not include the Budget section, Performance Measures or the “Other” field in the Narrative section.

Incumbents proposing evidence-based programming, the evidence-based narrative must not exceed 3 double-spaced pages. The evidence-based narrative should be entered in the “Other” section of the Narratives. This should be the only information entered in the “Other” section.

Reviewers will not consider material past the page limit in the printed report, even if eGrants allows incumbents to enter and submit text over the limit. CNCS strongly encourages incumbents to print out the application from the “Review and Submit” page prior to its submission in order to check that it does not exceed the page limit.

### **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. Incumbents can obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. CNCS recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date.

All incumbents are required to maintain a valid registration, which must be renewed annually. The information previously maintained in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is contained with the Entity Management area in SAM. Even if you are previously registered in the CCR, you must register in SAM to transition and manage your data. Incumbents that are not already registered with SAM are urged to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in the awarding process, if selected.

Incumbents that do not comply with these requirements may become ineligible to receive an award. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at: [https://www.sam.gov/sam/transcript/SAM\\_Quick\\_Guide\\_Grants\\_Registrations-v1.6.pdf](https://www.sam.gov/sam/transcript/SAM_Quick_Guide_Grants_Registrations-v1.6.pdf).

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

#### **Application Submission Deadline**

The application deadline will vary. ***Please refer to the renewal letter for the application deadline for your grant renewal.*** CNCS will not consider applications received after the deadline, except as noted below. CNCS reserves the right to extend the submission deadline and any notice of such extended deadline will be posted on the CNCS website.

## **5. Funding Restrictions**

The Administrative and National Policy Requirements section (F.2.) of this Invitation to Apply contains the regulations that outline the funding restrictions.

### ***Indirect Cost***

CNCS allows incumbents to include administrative (indirect) costs in CNCS grant budgets. Incumbents have the option of using an indirect cost rate that is approved by their cognizant state or federal agency, claiming selected costs directly, or using the de minimis indirect cost rate option of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (except state entities that receive more than \$35 million in federal awards) [2 CFR 200.414](#). Please note: if CNCS serves as the cognizant agency, the entity/incumbent must file a request. The option utilized methods must be applied consistently across all federal awards.

### ***Budget Guidance***

All incumbents must include a line item in the budget for training of the Project Director, which may include any training events approved by the CNCS. Incumbents may budget for an additional staff member to attend the event, if funds permit. The recommended amount, for budgeting purposes is \$1,000. Long distance travel funds may be re-budgeted later in the year, depending on actual training activities.

## **6. Other Submission Requirements**

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

Incumbents must submit applications electronically via eGrants, CNCS's web-based application system (<https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp>). CNCS recommends that incumbents create an eGrants account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Incumbents should draft and save the application as a word document prior to copying and pasting into eGrants.

The person who submits the application must be the incumbent's authorized representative. Usually, this person is the sponsoring organization's Executive Director or CEO. It should not be the Project Director. The authorized representative must have his or her own eGrants account and must use that account to sign and submit the application. A copy of the sponsor organization's governing body's authorization for this authorized representative to sign, must be on file in the applicant's office.

Contact the National Service Hotline at (800) 942-2677 or via ([https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask\\_eg](https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask_eg)) if a problem arises when creating an account or preparing or submitting the application. National Service Hotline hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. EST. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the NOFA to which the organization is applying. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, incumbents must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants.

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

Please refer to the column for Current Senior Corps Grantees in the Grant Application

Instructions for a complete list of required documents. Incumbents are required to submit all documents by the application submission deadline.

The additional documents: the Financial Management Survey and Aggregate Dollar Amount of Funding Form/Breakdown of Funding Sources are available online here: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/managing-senior-corps-grants>

All required additional documents must be **emailed to the state office** with the following subject line: 2016 RSVP Administrative Grant Renewals Additional Documents – Applications ID number. Within the body of the email, please include the following information:

- the legal applicant name and its point of contact Information
- the Application ID
- individually saved files that are clearly labeled
- a List of Documents that should be attached to the email
- files that include the Legal Applicant Name and Application ID number within the body of each document

***Do not submit supplementary material such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any items not requested in this Invitation to Apply. CNCS will not review or return them.***

## **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **1. 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, incumbents must address everything requested in the selection criteria. To achieve an Excellent assessment, incumbents must go beyond what is requested by the selection criteria.

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

<b>Category</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Relevant part of the application</b>
Program Design	50%	Strengthening Communities	35%	Work Plan
		Recruitment and Development	15%	Narrative
Organizational Capacity	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
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**a. Program Design (50%):**

**Strengthening Communities (35%)**

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

Q1. (5%)

Work plans describe and demonstrate the community need

Q2. (5%)

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. (5%)

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. Work plans include target numbers that lead to outcomes or outputs, and are appropriate for the total number of volunteers assigned to the work plan

Q4. (5%)

Work plan outputs and outcomes are aligned with National Performance Measure instructions

Q5. (5%)

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

Q6. (5%)

Work plans have performance measure outputs and outcomes that were reported in alignment with National Performance Measure requirements and data collection plans as stated in approved prior application as submitted in the most recent required Project Progress Reports and Project Progress Reports Lite.

Q7. (5%)

The program is achieving its unduplicated volunteer recruitment goals in the current grant cycle.

**Recruitment and Development of Volunteers (15%)**

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:

Q8. (5%)

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

Q9. (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

Q10. (5%)

Demonstrates a plan and infrastructure to retain and recognize RSVP volunteers

**b. Organizational Capability (30%):**

**Program Management (15%)**

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

Q11. (3%)

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

Q12. (3%)

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

Q13. (3%)

Demonstrated an organizational track record in work plans that lead to national performance measure outcomes (see Appendix B)

Q14. (3%)

The project has met deadlines.

Q15. (3%)

The project demonstrated a pattern of consistent communication and receptiveness to instructions from CNCS over the life of the grant.

**Organizational Capability (15%)**

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

Q16. (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

Q17. (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

Q18. (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%):**

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

Q19. (10%)

Have a reasonable cost per volunteer in proposed work plans that lead to national performance measure outcomes (see Appendix B)

Q20. (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**

The assessment of applications involves a wide range of considerations. CNCS will engage External and Staff Reviewers with relevant knowledge and expertise to assess and provide insight and input on the eligible applications. In the end, the review and selection process will produce a diversified and balanced set of high-quality incumbents that represent the priorities and strategic considerations described in this Invitation to Apply.

**Stages in the Review and Selection Process**

**Internal Review**

CNCS Staff Reviewers will assess applications based on the Program Design, Organization Capability, and Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy Selection Criteria. Staff Reviewers will also consider the comprehensiveness and feasibility of the application, as well as the priorities and strategic considerations detailed in this Invitation to Apply.

**Evidence-Based Review**

A set of additional Expert External Reviewers will assess the “Other” section of the Narrative. Reviewers will have demonstrated expertise in developing and implementing evidence-based programs, and/or in scaling or replicating successful evidence-based programs, and in assessing applications. All reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

**Clarification Process**

CNCS may ask some incumbents to provide clarifying information. This information is used by CNCS staff to make funding recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee an award. Incumbents may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked for clarification.

Failure to respond to a request for clarification in a timely fashion will result in removal of the application from consideration. CNCS staff may conduct a site visit inspection, 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.

### **Risk Assessment Evaluation**

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

In evaluating risks, CNCS may consider the following:

- financial stability
- quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- incumbent'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
  - "Do Not Pay"
- reports and findings from single audits performed under Subpart F – Audit Requirements, 2 CFR Part 200 and 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
- incumbent's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients.

### **Negotiation**

CNCS may negotiate the funding level or special award conditions with incumbents before the final grant award. The final funding:

- May be less than the amount proposed in the application, but

- Cannot be higher than the amount proposed in the application.

### **Selection for Funding**

CNCS staff will recommend applications for selection based on the results of the Internal Review, Evidence-Based Review (Optional), Clarification, Risk Assessment Evaluation, Negotiation, and the assessment of the proposed portfolio.

The review and selection process is designed to:

- identify applications that demonstrate:
  - high alignment with the selection criteria
  - high alignment with the priorities outlines in the Invitation to Apply
- yield a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
  - demonstrates that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes, and must include high quality program design
  - meets the National Performance Measures requirements and other criteria established in this Invitation to Apply
  - representation of organizations that embrace evidence-based programs (Appendix C)
  - equitable treatment of rural and urban communities (Appendix E)

*CNCS reserves the right to change the review and selection process in case of extenuating circumstances.*

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

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

Incumbents will be notified via email as to funding decisions. This notification 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. Unsuccessful incumbents will also receive a notification that their application was not approved for funding.

There are two grant start dates associated with this Invitation to Apply: April 1, 2016 and July 1, 2016, contingent on the availability of appropriations.

- For grants with an April 1, 2016 start date, CNCS anticipates the awards will be issued by late March 2016.
- For grants with a July 1, 2016 start date, CNCS anticipates the awards will be issued by late June 2016.

An awardee may not expend federal grant funds until the start of the Project Period identified on the Notice of Grant Award.

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

The Notice of Grant Award (NGA) incorporated the approved application as part of the binding commitments under the grant award, the approved application, budget, as well as the requirements of applicable sections of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and provisions of the DVSA. The NGA will also require all RSVP grantees to adopt the CNCS National Performance Measures. Awards will also be subject to the specific terms and

conditions established for discretionary grants or defined in the Terms and Conditions of Special Conditions attached to the award. If necessary, incumbents will have the opportunity to negotiate conditions before they accept an award.

Grants under this program are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance, now consolidated in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 2205). This final guidance supersedes and streamlines requirements from OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, and A-122 (the former Cost Principles), A-110, and A-102 (the former Administrative Requirements), A-133 and A-50 (the former Audits and Audit Follow up), and A-89 (the former Federal Domestic Assistance Program Information).

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

- [45 CFR Part 2553](#)—RSVP Federal Regulations
- [2 CFR Part 175](#)—Award Term for Trafficking in Persons
- [2 CFR Parts 180 and 2200](#)—Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension
- [45 CFR Part 2545](#)—Government-wide Requirements For Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)
- [45 CFR Part 2555](#)—Nondiscrimination On The Basis Of Sex In Education Programs Or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance
- The Single Audit Act ([31 U.S.C. Chapter 75](#))
- [45 CFR Part 2553](#)—Legal limitations including prohibited activities

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

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires grantees to conduct and document NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, national service participants, or volunteers) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend or education award through a program receiving CNCS funds. 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 grantee with a written exemption or written approval of an alternative search procedure, grantees 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 C.F.R. § 2540.200–§ 2540.207 and <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check> for complete information and FAQs.

#### **4. Reporting**

Incumbents are required to submit a variety of reports which are due at specific times during the life cycle of an award. All reports must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time.

Incumbents 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 incumbents 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, grantees 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 grantee collects data in a consistent manner
- The grantee takes steps to correct data errors
- The grantee actively reviews data for accuracy prior to submission.

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

For further guidance and training resources see – Resources: Data Collection and Instruments: [https://www.nationalserviceresources.gov/npm/home#.U9qVL\\_IdW3o](https://www.nationalserviceresources.gov/npm/home#.U9qVL_IdW3o).

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

The Invitation to Apply, Grant Application Instruction, and Appendices are available at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/managing-senior-corps-grants>. For questions, more information, or a printed copy of related material(s), email your state office.

For technical questions and problems with the eGrants system, call the National Service Hotline at (800) 942-2677. National Service Hotline hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Potential applicants can also use this link: <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask>. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the name of the NOFA to which the organization is applying.

## **H. OTHER INFORMATION**

### **1. Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act**

For more information regarding the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, please go to: [http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/09\\_0331\\_recovery\\_summary.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/09_0331_recovery_summary.pdf).

CNCS is not obligated to make any award as a result of this Invitation to Apply. .

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

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

### **3. 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)]. This collection is approved under OMB Control #: 3045-0035, Senior Corps: RSVP Grant Application, Expiration Date: 06/30/2018.

Appendix B: 2016 RSVP Performance Measures Instructions  
Appendix C: Evidence-Based Programming  
Appendix D: Definition of Terms