

INVITATION TO APPLY

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service
Funding Opportunity Title: 2017 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 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 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

Incumbent projects who received a grant renewal letter from their program officer are invited to submit renewal applications for Year 1 of 3 of the RSVP 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 renewal process are:

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

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 and make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their 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>.

Incumbents must 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 requirements:

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. Evidence-based Programming Funding Augmentation

Eligible incumbents may request one-time funding to support the engagement of seniors in evidence-based programming. Regardless of budget period start date, all such requests will be assessed in May 2017. **Requests for funding augmentation must be submitted with the appropriate application in eGrants by April 17, 2017.** All program regulations apply with the full amount of an augmented grant. For a full description of the funding augmentation opportunity and instructions on making an augmentation request, see Appendix C, Evidence-based Programming.

Interested applicants with an anticipated project start date of January 1, 2017 or April 1, 2017 must submit an amendment application following their initial award. Applicants with an anticipated project start date of July 1, 2017 or later must submit the request as part of the initial renewal application.

A schedule of webinars and question/answer opportunities will be posted with Appendix C, Evidence-based Programming on the [Managing Senior Corps Grants](#) page.

5. 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 \$12,400,000 for the 2017 RSVP Grant Renewals.

Across all RSVP renewals, CNCS anticipates that up to \$500,000 will be available for evidence-based programming augmentations through the selection process described in Appendix C, Evidence-based Programming. 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 grant renewal letter. The funding amount listed reflects the end of FY 2016 base level funding.

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, base funding level plus augmentation, 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 2017 RSVP Grant Renewals will be awarded on a cost reimbursement grant.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Incumbents

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.

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. 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.

Incumbents proposing to support the development and implementation of evidence-based programs must be prepared to provide non-federal share on the amount of a requested augmentation. Requests for evidence-based programming augmentation must include information on the source non-federal share that will be applied. See Appendix, C, Evidence-based Programming, for instructions.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

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.

Under section 132A(B) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this Invitation to Apply.

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 Invitation to Apply. 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 Invitation to Apply should be read together with the RSVP Grant Application Instructions, the RSVP Performance Measures Instructions, the Evidence-based Programming 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 that apply to grant renewal applications. 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 [Managing Senior Corps Grants website](#) to obtain the necessary information to apply. Incumbents can also send an email to the CNCS state office to request 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 (if applicable, see Appendix C, Evidence-based Programming)
- **Standard Form 424A Budget**
- **Performance Measures (See Appendix B)**

- **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 “Other” section of the narrative, Budget, Performance Measures, or any required additional documents.

Incumbents proposing to support the development and implementation of evidence-based programming must enter the request in the “Other” section of the Narratives as instructed in Appendix C, Evidence-based Programming. This should be the only information entered in the “Other” section.

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 incumbents 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. 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 the [DUNS Request Service](#). 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](#).

4. Submission Dates and Times

a. Application Submission Deadline

The application deadline will vary. *Please refer to your grant renewal letter for the application deadline for your grant renewal.*

Incumbents proposing to support the development and implementation of evidence-based program must submit the proposal with the appropriate application in eGrants by April 17, 2017 (see Appendix C, Evidence-based Programming).

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.

b. Late Applications

CNCS may consider an application after the deadline, but only if the incumbent submits a letter to their CNCS state office explaining the extenuating technical circumstances that caused the delay. CNCS must receive the letter within a business day after the deadline. If technical issues prevent an incumbent from submitting an application on time, the letter should include the eGrants ticket number provided by the National Service Hotline. Communications with CNCS staff, including an incumbent's Program Officer, is not a substitute for sending the letter. CNCS will determine whether or not to accept a late application on a case-by-case basis.

5. Intergovernmental Review

This Invitation to Apply is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

6. Funding Restrictions

a. Indirect Cost

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, incumbents 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 outlined in [2 CFR § 200.413](#). 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 cognizant agency, the entity/incumbent must file a request. The option utilized methods must be applied consistently across all federal awards.

b. 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 CNCS. Incumbents may budget for an additional staff member to attend the training events, 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.

7. Other Submission Requirements

a. Electronic Application Submission in eGrants

Incumbents must submit applications electronically via [eGrants, CNCS's web-based system](#). CNCS recommends that incumbents create an eGrants account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Incumbents should draft the application as a Word document, then copy and paste the text into the appropriate eGrants field no later 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.

Incumbents 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 NOFA Name 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 document: Aggregate Dollar Amount of Funding Form/Breakdown of Funding Sources is available online here: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/managing-senior-corps-grants>.

All required additional documents must be **emailed to the CNCS state office** with the following subject line: 2017 RSVP Grant Renewals 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 Invitation to Apply and Grant Application Instructions. 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

Category	Percentage	Sub-Category	Percentage	Relevant part of the application
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

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

CNCS will engage 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 incumbents that represent the priorities and strategic considerations described in this Invitation to Apply. The stages of the review and selection process follows:

a. Application Review

Internal Review

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

b. Applicant Clarification

CNCS may ask some incumbents for clarifying information. CNCS staff will use this information 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 clarifying information. An incumbent's failure to respond to a request for clarification adequately and in a timely fashion may result in the 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, the application may be rescored to reflect the updated information and could affect funding decisions.

c. 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; 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 assessed risk may be applied to the award. Additionally, if CNCS concludes that the reasons for incumbents having poor risk assessment are not likely to be mitigated; those application may not be selected for funding.

In evaluating risks, CNCS may consider:

- 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 [2 CFR Part 200 Subpart F – Audit Requirements](#) and findings and reports of any other available audits
- IRS Tax Form 990
- incumbent 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

d. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information

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

Any incumbent, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM 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 SAM.

CNCS will consider any comments by any incumbent, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the incumbent'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 Invitation to Apply.

e. 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.

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:
 - CNCS Funding Priorities (*See Section A.2 Funding Priorities*)
 - meaningful representation of
 - the priority area as a significant part of the program focus and intended

- outcomes with a high quality program design
- the National Performance Measures requirements and other criteria established in this Invitation to Apply (Appendix B)
- equitable treatment of rural and urban communities

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, incumbents will receive summary comments from the Staff Review of their application. This feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect information provided during clarification.

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 (NGA) signed by the CNCS 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, 2017 and July 1, 2017, contingent on the availability of appropriations.

- For grants with an April 1, 2017 start date, CNCS anticipates the awards will be issued by late March 2017.
- For grants with a July 1, 2017 start date, CNCS anticipates the awards will be issued by late June 2017.

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

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The NGA incorporates the approved application, the approved budget, as well as the requirements of applicable sections of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and provisions of the DVSA, as part of the binding commitments under the grant award. 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 and/or Special Conditions attached to the award. If necessary, incumbents will have the opportunity to negotiate conditions before they accept an award.

a. Uniform Guidance

All awards made under this Invitation to Apply 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. Requests for Improper Payment Information

CNCS may, from time to time, request documentation from incumbents 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 Invitation to Apply 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-cnccs-grants>.

Awards will also be subject to the specific terms and conditions established for discretionary grants or defined in the Terms and Conditions and/or Special Conditions attached to the award. If necessary, incumbents will have the opportunity to negotiate conditions before they accept an award.

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 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. 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

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 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, processed, 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

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 CNCS 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. Incumbents can also use this link: [eGrants Questions](#). 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. Technical Assistance

CNCS will host technical assistance calls to answer questions about this Invitation to Apply. CNCS strongly encourages all applicant to participate in these sessions. Call-in information for the technical assistance calls is on CNCS's website: [Managing Senior Corps Grants](#).

2. Re-Focusing of Funding

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

3. 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.

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