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Executive Summary

GRID Alternatives proposes to have 40 AmeriCorps members who will gain hands-on training and skill to access jobs in the booming solar industry, while providing clean energy to local low-income families who need the savings to pay for basic expenses, in 12 GRID Alternatives affiliates and offices throughout the country. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for helping retrofit 1500 low-income homes with solar power and help 200 economically disadvantaged individuals gain jobs in the solar industry, while successfully securing green jobs for themselves at the end of their years of service. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 4000 volunteers who will be engaged in installing solar for low-income families.

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of Economic Opportunity and Environmental Stewardship. The CNCS investment of \$521,084.40 will be matched with \$1,189,956.86, \$59,498 in public funding and \$1,130,459 in private funding.

Rationale and Approach/Program Design

SolarCorps provides job trainees throughout the country with ladders of opportunity into the booming solar industry, through a "triple bottom line" strategy that provides additional economic opportunity and environmental stewardship outcomes for the broader community. As described in this proposal in more detail, SolarCorps has five key components that make it a successful, high impact intervention:

HUGE JOBS OPPORTUNITY: The solar industry now employs over 173,000 workers, a growth rate of 21.8% over the last year and 86% over the past five years, and projects to grow an additional 20.9% in the year ahead. The majority of these positions are installation jobs that don't require a degree and can't be outsourced.

DIRECT EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS: GRID Alternatives has strong, existing relationships with dozens of national, regional, and local solar employers throughout the country to facilitate placement. As part of this effort, these employers will have direct online access to a centralized database of qualified job trainees, in addition to more traditional staff support around placement.

JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS: GRID Alternatives also has strong, existing relationships with 70+ community colleges and grassroots training organizations to provide a national pipeline of job trainees for the program, including people of color, opportunity youth, and other difficult to serve populations. Trainees will also come from existing partnerships with other federal programs, including residents of federally assisted housing through GRID Alternatives' partnership with HUD, and trainees from the Department of Energy's SunShot Solar Installer Training Network.

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PROVEN IMPLEMENTATION: SolarCorps is built on more than a decade of experience that GRID Alternatives has providing solar training and services in low-income communities. GRID also has eight years of experience successfully implementing AmeriCorps national service programs under AmeriCorps*VISTA and AmeriCorps State, and has hosted CNCS leadership at events in California and Washington DC.

COMMITTED CORPORATE SPONSOR: Leading national solar company SunEdison has committed to match AmeriCorps funding with corporate sponsorship dollars to help support this program. The remaining funds needed for this program are also already committed through a variety of existing solar incentive programs.

The result is a cost-efficient national solar service corps that speaks to three of the biggest issues facing the country - the need for good, living-wage jobs; the need for economic relief for working families; and the need to deploy clean power and fight climate change. National AmeriCorps funding will bring these pieces together, and demonstrate a powerful, highly scalable model for how national service can create jobs and economic opportunity in the communities that need them the most.

1. Problem/Need

The primary need being addressed by SolarCorps is the need for good jobs in low-income communities. Economically disadvantaged workers are desperate for living wage jobs like those offered by the solar industry. According to the most recent Bureau of Labor Statistics data, 15.5 million workers are unable to find full-time work. 2.8 million of these individuals have been out of work for 27 weeks or more. And millions more are losing hope or giving up entirely - 2.3 million additional workers want work but are no longer classified as unemployed since they haven't looked for work in the last four weeks, and a 2014 Harris Poll found that a full 47% of unemployed respondents said they had "completely given up looking for work". Nationally, the overall labor force participation rate is the lowest it has been since 1978. These employment challenges are heavily concentrated in the targeted low-income communities where members will serve. In the most recent Local Area Employment Statistics from the BLS, 13 of the worst 14 metropolitan areas for unemployment are in service areas for the SolarCorps program, with an average unemployment rate more than twice the national average.

The jobs that are available are increasingly low-wage, dead-end positions that provide little to no opportunity for advancement. A 2014 study by the National Employment Law Project found that as the job market recovered from the crash of 2008, nearly two million jobs in medium- and higher-

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wage industries had been replaced by 1.85 jobs in lower-wage industries. For low-income households to escape the cycle of poverty, they need to be able to access sustainable careers that provide living wages and opportunities for advancement.

Meanwhile, solar power represents one of the fastest growing areas of job growth in the country - according to the just-released 2014 Solar Jobs Census, solar jobs grew by 21.8% from the previous year, nearly 20 times faster than employment in the overall economy. The Census reports that the majority of these jobs are in solar installation, and that installer jobs pay an average hourly wage of \$24/hour, with opportunities to go up to \$36/hour for workers who can work their way up into the rapidly growing areas of sales and design. Solar installation positions are particularly compelling opportunities in low-income communities that have comparatively low average levels of educational attainment - of new installers hired in 2014, 86.5% had no bachelor's degree, associate's degree, or formal credential.

What these workers did have, in large part, was prior experience. 68.4% of solar installers hired in 2014 had prior experience as their primary credential for being hired. At the same time, 83% of solar employers surveyed by the Census are currently reporting difficulty finding qualified solar installers. SolarCorps directly addresses this gap by providing job trainees with hands-on training and experience on real-world solar installations for low-income families. Not only will members gain training and experience themselves through a full year of service, they will also provide training and experience to other local job trainees throughout the year. SolarCorps also addresses the related gap of unequal access to job opportunities through GRID Alternatives' strong, direct relationships with major solar employers across the country. The result: clear and direct ladders of opportunity for economically disadvantaged workers to access good, living wage jobs with a future.

The additional need addressed by the program model is high energy costs faced by low-income families. As described in more detail at hud.gov/energy, utility bills burden the poor and can cause homelessness, and the energy burden for the poor is more than 4 times what others pay. Low-income families also have the least access to solar power and the savings it can provide. SolarCorps members will directly address this issue by helping install solar power for low-income families in their own communities. The result: long-term energy savings for families that need it most to pay for basic expenses, through a cost-effective national service model that layers these impacts with job training impacts on the same projects.

2. Theory of Change and Logic Model

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SolarCorps addresses the needs for good, living wage jobs and energy cost savings in economically disadvantaged communities, through a single proposed intervention built around community service. Under this program, 40 AmeriCorps members throughout the country will help train and lead teams of job trainees and other volunteers to install solar electric systems for local low-income families. Members will be engaged in one of the following roles:

SolarCorps Construction Fellows will spend a year working directly on GRID Alternatives' low-income solar installation projects, helping complete all aspects of installation work from system design and permitting, to the actual installation workdays, to final approval and utility interconnection. Members will get training and supervision from GRID's experienced solar installation supervisors, and will in turn have opportunities to supervise and train local job trainees and other volunteers throughout the year. In the process, these members will gain the skills and experience necessary to access careers in solar installation and related fields, all while helping other job trainees do the same.

SolarCorps Volunteer Training Fellows will spend a year helping recruit, train and manage job trainees and other volunteers to directly participate in GRID Alternatives' solar installation projects. Members will get training and supervision from GRID's regional program staff. The members' training and recruitment efforts will focus heavily on schools and other job training groups that predominantly serve low-income job trainees and people of color, and members will work particularly closely with these partners to directly integrate our installations into their curriculum. As these participants gain skills and experience, these members will help connect them to employment opportunities in the solar industry. In the process, Volunteer Training Fellows will gain these same experiences themselves alongside the people they train, and by teaching others they will gain an even broader solar knowledge base that will expand their own employment opportunities.

SolarCorps Outreach Fellows will spend a year helping educate low-income families about the benefits of solar, determining if they qualify for GRID Alternatives' programs, and helping support qualifying families through the solar installation process. Members will also educate families about energy efficiency and help them sign up for low-income energy efficiency programs before going solar. Members will get training and supervision from GRID's experienced outreach coordinators, and gain skills and experience that can directly translate into careers in solar sales. These members will also have opportunities for cross-training in other areas to broaden their potential career opportunities at the end of their term of service.

SolarCorps Program Fellows will engage in a mix of the activities described above. Members will get training and supervision from GRID Alternatives' regional program staff. These members will

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gain a broad range of skills and experience to qualify for a range of different solar careers, while helping other job trainees do the same.

GRID Alternatives expects the following changes/outcomes to result from this intervention:

a. AmeriCorps members will be placed in green jobs at the end of their term of service. (EN2.1) The theory of change behind this outcome is based on the evidence cited above about the intense demand for qualified employees in the solar industry, particularly candidates with prior experience. This evidence indicates that there will be exceptional demand for members with a full year of real-world solar experience, combined with the robust training and certification program described under Member Training. Operational components that will support these changes through GRID Alternatives' national headquarters include a central job candidate database accessible by GRID's national network of solar employers; related programming including job fairs and group interviews with major employers; and soft skill development opportunities such as mock interviews and resume reviews.

b. Economically disadvantaged individuals placed in jobs. (O10). The theory of change behind this outcome is based on the same evidence of intense demand for qualified employees in the solar industry. Given this level of demand, a shorter intervention period will be sufficient for many job candidates to secure positions in this rapidly growing industry. Operational components to support these changes are the same as with the previous outcome.

c. Retrofitted low-income households with reduced energy consumption or reduced energy costs. (EN1.1) The theory of change behind this outcome is based on extensive evidence documenting the long-term energy savings provided by solar energy systems, both on GRID Alternatives' projects and in general, and reinforced by the external evaluation data referenced below under Evidence Base. Operational components that will support these changes through GRID's national headquarters include the ongoing ability to leverage solar incentives and rebates, and continued partnerships with major solar companies that provide in-kind donations of solar panels and related equipment.

AmeriCorps members will produce significant and unique contributions to existing green job training efforts. The vast majority of existing solar training programs are conducted in a classroom setting, sometimes with a mock roof to provide a hands-on component. GRID Alternatives is unique in providing training in real-world solar installation environment, under the same conditions that job trainees will see once they gain employment. In addition, by gaining direct experience with all aspects of solar projects from start to finish, AmeriCorps members will gain non-installation skills that can't be replicated in a classroom setting, such as securing a building permit or talking to real solar clients

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about the benefits of going solar. The significance and uniqueness of this work is demonstrated by the strong demand from community college and job training programs throughout the country to directly integrate our program into their curricula.

AmeriCorps members will also produce significant and unique contributions to existing efforts to reduce energy costs for low-income families. The vast majority of programs that work to address this issue focus on energy efficiency and weatherization, and do not have the capacity or expertise to extend that work into renewable energy deployment. There is no other program in the country that provides solar power specifically for low-income households, while directly integrating national service participants, local job trainees, and other community volunteers into each project. The significance and uniqueness of this work is demonstrated by the various state and federal agencies that have identified it as a model for larger policies and programs, including the California Public Utilities Commission, the California Department of Community Services and Development, the Colorado Energy Office, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

3. Evidence Base

The evidence for the proposed intervention in this proposal meets the Moderate evidence tier. A study by Navigant Consulting provides positive findings to support the intended outcome under EN1.1, "Number of weatherized or retrofitted low-income households with reduced energy consumption or reduced energy costs". Navigant was commissioned by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to evaluate GRID Alternatives' Single-family Affordable Solar Homes (SASH) solar incentive program, whose program model incorporates the core intervention described in this proposal. Navigant is a leading global consulting firm with approximately 3,000 employees worldwide, and has extensive experience evaluating programs for the public and private sector. Dated August 24, 2011, the study is entitled "California Solar Initiative Low-Income Solar Evaluation". Navigant's methodology was to evaluate financial outcomes for low-income families receiving solar power through GRID Alternatives' model as compared to the outcomes for low-income families receiving energy efficiency services through the CPUC-funded Low Income Energy Efficiency (LIEE) program. The study compared two groups: low-income families receiving solar PV only, and a matched comparison group of families participating in both programs, to evaluate both their absolute and relative impact. On Page 48, the study concludes that "participants saw a typical annual bill reduction of approximately \$336; participants that also participated in the LIEE program saw only modest bill reductions from

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LIEE as compared to the SASH program."

For the workforce development outcomes under this program, the 2014 Solar Jobs Census provides robust evidence to support the proposed interventions. GRID Alternatives has already begun gathering additional pre-preliminary evidence in this area by collecting quantitative and qualitative data from program participants and employers through electronic surveys. This data is being tracked in GRID Alternatives' central database and analyzed for use in program improvement, reporting and tracking purposes.

4. Notice Priority

SolarCorps fits within the Economic Opportunity 2015 funding priority. A substantial portion of both the population served and the AmeriCorps members themselves will be Opportunity Youth, as a result of the program's focus on economically disadvantaged individuals and communities and the community-based organizations that serve them. Opportunity Youth will be recruited through partner organizations such as Green City Force in New York City, Sasha Bruce Youthwork in Washington DC, and Homeboy Industries in East LA; through partnerships with YouthBuild affiliates throughout the country; and through direct outreach to the communities and families receiving solar power through GRID's program. This includes targeted outreach to residents of multifamily low-income housing projects, as part of our partnership with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development around the President's call for 100 megawatts of renewable energy on federally assisted housing.

5. Member Training

Members will receive comprehensive, high quality training throughout the year to provide effective service. All members will start with participation in the same two-day New Staff and Member Orientation in Oakland attended by all GRID Alternatives employees. Over these two days, members will learn about GRID's mission, meet the organization's senior leadership, gain general knowledge about solar power, and learn about practices and tools that they will use while serving at GRID Alternatives. After these two days, we will hold an additional three-day orientation for AmeriCorps members only, led by the SolarCorps Program Manager, HR Officer, and GRID's co-founders. The orientation will introduce the various program areas that the members will be working in throughout the year, and offer classes in practical skills such as First Aid/CPR. This orientation will also include a detailed presentation of the rules and regulations that AmeriCorps members will have to follow while

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engaging in service, and ensure that members are aware of all prohibited activities. This information will also be reinforced and monitored throughout the year by the SolarCorps Program Manager to ensure compliance.

Once these orientations are complete, members will travel to their respective service sites to begin on-the-job orientation with their site supervisors. On-the-job training will be supplemented throughout the year with a combination of online training, two offsite training intensives, professional certification, and peer learning. The online training will be through a combination of GRID Alternatives' online training materials, and classes from industry leader Solar Energy International. These will be supplemented with a one-week, in-person group solar intensive training course, and a three day Staff and Member Summit where members will meet with GRID staff from throughout the country for trainings and workshops on a broad variety of professional topics. All training, travel, lodging and food costs will be covered by GRID Alternatives. Members will also have the opportunity to obtain professional certifications pertinent to their positions and desired future careers, including Entry Level certification by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP), the leading solar industry certification agency. Members will have the opportunity to pursue OSHA certification and GRID's own Team Leader certification during their year of service as well. Finally, members will have structured opportunities to learn from their peers both locally and around the country throughout the year, through a combination of informal mentorship and regular conference calls.

6. Member Supervision

All SolarCorps members will be assigned experienced, well-trained supervisors who will ensure that the members receive high quality support and guidance throughout their terms. Once the members have arrived at their service site, each supervisor will develop a work plan for their members that will include goals and projects they need to accomplish. Supervisors will check in with their members on a weekly basis to make sure that their goals are being met and their satisfaction level is high. In addition, each supervisor will also hold quarterly check-ins with the member to give the member feedback, encouragement, and support in moving forward.

Before members begin their service, supervisors will go through a training designed to educate them on AmeriCorps guidelines and regulations; best practices for encouraging and supporting individuals from diverse backgrounds and helping members maintain work/life balance; and general supervisory guidelines for ensuring that members have effective and powerful service experiences.

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After the start of service, the SolarCorps Program Manager will have regular check-ins with the supervisors to make sure they are following these guidelines and are comfortable in their role.

7. Member Experience

Members' training and service will provide them with a robust, highly marketable professional skill set that will enable them to launch long-term careers in the booming solar industry. In addition to the structured training and certification opportunities described above, members will gain a year's worth of the real-world experience that solar employers are looking for.

These experiences will also be meaningful service experiences that will be reinforced every time an AmeriCorps member sees a family's electric meter run backwards for the first time, or helps someone get a job. In addition, GRID Alternatives will provide members with structured opportunities throughout the year for reflection and building esprit de corps with other national service members. These opportunities will be incorporated into members' initial orientation at GRID's headquarters, the weeklong offsite solar intensive training course, the Staff and Member Summit, and regular conference calls.

GRID Alternatives will also help members become more active and productive citizens. Members will be introduced to the importance of community service at the initial orientation, where they will learn about the impact they will have within GRID Alternatives' broader organization, and the significance their work has in the community. We will reinforce these values by encouraging members to collect and share stories of the impact of their service throughout the year. Members will also develop the skills necessary for active citizenship, through opportunities to practice leadership with teams of volunteers from diverse backgrounds. At the end of their year of service, graduating members will be encouraged to build on these experiences and continue to engage in public and community service after their AmeriCorps term.

8. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification

Members will be educated on their role as AmeriCorps members during their initial orientation at GRID Alternatives' headquarters, with reinforcement throughout the year from the SolarCorps Program Manager via conference calls and electronic communications. Staff at GRID Alternatives' service sites throughout the country will be educated about the members' participation in the AmeriCorps program through video conference calls and programming at GRID Alternatives' Staff and Member Summit. Community members where the members are serving will know they are

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AmeriCorps members through AmeriCorps-branded service gear, and through publicity efforts via GRID Alternatives' electronic communications channels. Members will receive and wear AmeriCorps-branded t-shirts, sweatshirts and hard hats at the beginning of their year of service for use as part of their daily service gear.

Organizational Capability

1. Organizational Background and Staffing

GRID Alternatives has ample experience, staffing and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program. Headquartered in Oakland, GRID Alternatives is the country's largest nonprofit solar installer, with a unique "barn raising" installation model that integrates hands-on job training into every project. Over the last 10+ years, GRID Alternatives has trained nearly 20,000 individuals from all walks of life to complete over 5,000 solar installations for low-income families across the country. These accomplishments were recognized by the Obama Administration last year with a "Champion of Change" award at the White House Solar Summit in April.

GRID Alternatives has regional affiliates and offices serving the New York/Tri-State area; the Washington DC/Mid-Atlantic region; Colorado; and the San Francisco Bay Area, Greater Los Angeles, San Diego, Central Valley, Central Coast, Inland Empire, and Sacramento/North Valley regions of California. In 2015 GRID Alternatives is expanding into the New England region with an office in Boston coming online this summer. We also operate a tribal solar program to serve low-income tribal communities in both these markets and in more remote tribal lands in the western US.

GRID Alternatives has a strong track record of successfully administering AmeriCorps grants over the last eight years through the AmeriCorps*VISTA and AmeriCorps State programs. AmeriCorps placements have ranged in size during that period from one member to 13 members at a given time, and are regularly supplemented with additional internally-funded service positions. GRID Alternatives also received an FY 2009 AmeriCorps*VISTA Support Grant under the Recovery Act. GRID Alternatives' work with AmeriCorps was honored in 2010 with a site visit by CNCS CEO Patrick Corvington. More recently, senior CNCS leadership attended GRID Alternatives' launch events in Washington DC last fall, along with HUD Secretary Julian Castro, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy, and White House advisors Dan Utech and Mike Boots.

GRID Alternatives also has a strong track record of successfully administering large grants and programs from other funding sources, including serving as the statewide Program Manager for the California Public Utilities Commission's \$108 million Single-family Affordable Solar Homes (SASH) incentive program. Our successful management was validated when the CPUC recently

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recommended that GRID Alternatives manage the next \$54 million phase of the SASH program, running through the year 2021.

GRID Alternatives is governed nationally by a volunteer Board of Directors that provides management and financial oversight to the overall organization. The organization is administered by the CEO and COO/CFO, GRID's co-founders and senior-most staff members, who report directly to the Board of Directors and also serve as non-voting members of the Board. The CEO provides day-to-day management and leadership of the organization and its national team, and leads the organization's fundraising efforts. The COO/CFO provides day-to-day management and supervision of the organization's programmatic operations, and also serves as the organization's chief financial officer. Together the Board, CEO, and COO/CFO will provide high-level leadership to ensure that the AmeriCorps program effectively serves the mission of the organization, and that the program has the funding necessary to support full program implementation. The COO/CFO will work with the Controller and GRID Alternatives' accounting staff to ensure proper financial management and oversight of the AmeriCorps grant. Financial oversight will also be provided by GRID Alternatives' Board Finance Committee. The proposed program will be supervised by GRID Alternatives HR Officer, and a dedicated SolarCorps Program Manager reporting to her. In addition to experience and training in the field of Human Resources, the HR Officer has extensive experience with the AmeriCorps program as an AmeriCorps Program Director, an AmeriCorps*VISTA Leader, and an AmeriCorps member herself.

Local GRID Alternatives regional offices are led by experienced Regional /Executive Directors who lead teams that directly implement programs across the country. These directors have strong track records of supervising national service members. Many of these offices are now formal affiliates supervised by local Boards of Directors who provide additional management and oversight and ensure that local programming is customized to the needs of each market.

GRID Alternatives is a partnership-based organization. Every GRID Alternatives project is completed in collaboration with a national network of 100+ affordable housing developers, workforce development programs, local government housing agencies, weatherization providers, and community based organizations in communities across the country. Partners range from small, grassroots groups to major national networks like Habitat for Humanity, NeighborWorks, and YouthBuild. The development and implementation of SolarCorps is based on extensive engagement with these partner groups over the past 10 years, as well as through direct engagement with individual community members and beneficiaries, including a GRID client who serves on our national Board of

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Directors.

2. Compliance and Accountability

GRID Alternatives will prevent and detect compliance issues around AmeriCorps rules through its training of the members and the supervisors that will be working with them, and through rigorous program management and oversight from GRID's national headquarters. Thanks to eight years of experience with different AmeriCorps programs, GRID Alternatives' co-founders and senior leadership all understand the compliance and accountability that goes along with receiving an AmeriCorps grant, including the list of prohibited and unallowable activities described in AmeriCorps regulation §2520.65.

As referenced before, there will be a supervisor training that takes place before the arrival of the members to their GRID offices. Supervisors will be well versed in AmeriCorps rules and regulations before the members even start their service. Once the members arrive, they will go through a start of service orientation and training at the headquarters office, as well as a second on-site orientation when they arrive to their location. Both orientations and trainings will go over and reiterate the rules and regulations of AmeriCorps that members must abide by. Throughout their service year, the supervisors and the SolarCorps Program Manager will remind and advise members of these rules, and the SolarCorps Program Manager and HR Officer will be on continuous lookout for signs of any potential compliance issues. If compliance issues do arise, incident reports will be made and brought to the supervisor, then to GRID Alternatives' CEO and COO/CFO, and then to CNCS itself.

3. Past Performance for Current Grantees

While this is a new project and is not a re-competing application, GRID Alternatives has previously received formula funding in California for a related project, and is providing past performance data as a courtesy. GRID Alternatives successfully met its performance targets in the most recently completed program year (2013-14), and is on track to meet PM targets for the current program year as well. The initial targets for the first year of the project (2012-13) were set incorrectly and not met, and were re-set collaboratively with California Volunteers. This was not based on poor performance, but rather on an incorrect calculation by GRID Alternatives when we were asked to significantly reduce the scope of our initial proposal due to funding limitations.

GRID Alternatives had 100% member enrollment in our most recent full year of program operations. We were able to do this through targeted and timely recruitment of candidates as well as

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following up on all required paperwork to enroll members including background checks. GRID Alternatives also had 100% member retention in the most recent full year of program operations. We have proven over time that we are able to successfully recruit and retain members. We achieve good retention through a rigorous application process where we discuss the difficulties of living on a member living stipend and ongoing professional support throughout the member service year. Other than the target re-assessment noted above, GRID Alternatives has not had any compliance issues. GRID Alternatives also has a strong track record of performance data through the AmeriCorps*VISTA program as well.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

GRID Alternatives is proposing a fixed amount grant of \$13,027.10 per MSY, as described in the Budget Narrative. We have developed a comprehensive internal program budget based on GRID Alternatives' experience in successfully implementing other national service programs. The budget includes core program costs such as living allowances, FICA, workers' compensation, health coverage, travel costs, and training costs, along with staffing costs for program management and member supervision.

The SolarCorps program is designed to be cost-effective through a "triple bottom line" strategy that delivers measurable results for three CNCS performance measures through a single, integrated program model built around national service. The long-term economic benefits of the program design justify the cost many times over, through a combination of the long-term savings for low-income households from reduced energy costs, and the enhanced lifetime earnings of service members and economically disadvantaged job trainees who secure new careers in the solar industry.

While methodologies for calculating increases in lifetime earnings vary widely, they all point to hundreds of thousands of dollars in increased lifetime earnings for high school graduates who secure long-term careers in the solar industry. Even in a highly conservative scenario where just 50 of the projected 232 employment beneficiaries in the first year achieve long-term solar careers with a lifetime earnings increase of \$250,000, that represents \$12.5 million in total benefits. In addition, the long-term energy savings benefit for low-income families receiving solar is calculated at between \$30 and \$40 million for the 1500 projects that will be completed in the first year.

GRID Alternatives has secured commitments of the necessary non-CNCS resources to fully support the program. Leading national solar company SunEdison has made a multi-year commitment to serve as the corporate sponsor for this program. As one of the top solar employers in the country, SunEdison is an ideal partner for this effort. SunEdison funds will be supplemented with

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funds from existing, committed solar incentive programs including Single-family Affordable Solar Homes incentives; incentives from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority; and proceeds from federal solar tax credits through leading solar finance company Clean Power Finance. GRID Alternatives' ability to raise these funds is further demonstrated through our successful track record with a fixed amount AmeriCorps formula grant through CaliforniaVolunteers.

At the request of CNCS we have reviewed the application's cost per MSY, and confirmed that we are not able to reduce the proposed cost/MSY below the fixed amount in our application. GRID Alternatives has already made a major commitment to provide the large majority of the program budget through other funds, as detailed in this application. While we could reduce the cost/MSY by reducing living allowances, we believe this would have significant negative consequences for recruitment, retention, and overall quality of member experience, particularly because many SolarCorps members will be based in areas with high costs of living, such as the San Francisco Bay Area and New York City. GRID Alternatives has made an organizational commitment to equity for the living allowances across the organization, both for fairness and to ensure that we can successfully recruit good candidates in more remote geographies, so lowering living allowances selectively for specific geographic markets is not an option.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A - not a re-competing application

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

A1. Please clarify if the dosage of the training that members will receive will be sufficient to help recruit, train and manage job trainees as well as provide their specific member service activities.

Members will receive enough training to sufficiently exceed at recruiting, training, and managing job trainees. All AmeriCorps positions at GRID integrally recruit, manage, and train job trainees. A summary of these activities by job description is noted below.

Construction Fellows:

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Construction fellows receive intensive training for leading installations in addition to progressive assessments by supervisors to evaluate capabilities, progress, and skill development.

Construction Fellows begin their tenure at GRID with a series of orientation sessions covering both common construction related topics and matters specific to solar installations. After satisfactory completion of the orientation training, fellows participate in an installation day. Solar install days commence with an opening safety discussion, then fellows break into work groups, one of the roof and the other on the ground. A Solar Installation Supervisor (SIS) will oversee the site during the entire installation. SIS's do not leave the site during the duration of the install and are there for supervision and training. Team Leaders also attend installations to assist SIS's with ensuring a safe and productive work site.

Team Leaders are volunteers or fellows who have attended a minimum of 5 installations and completed a team leader orientation. Their capabilities have been verified and documented by a SIS. Team Leaders are intermediaries between SIS's and work groups, assisting with training volunteers and supporting SIS's onsite. In addition, team leaders have the opportunity to become SIS's or move into the field of professional solar installation.

Volunteer Training Fellows:

Volunteer Training Fellows train job trainees at orientation; recruit and manage volunteers; schedule teams for sites; organize trainings for solar industry and public on auxiliary topics like system design and soft skill trainings. Volunteers include job trainees who are trying to get experience in the industry for job promotion and retention such as local community colleges and nonprofit job training organizations.

Outreach Fellows:

Outreach Fellows are responsible for pre-screening clients to see if they're qualified for the program. Fellows conduct outreach in the field to find new clients, recruit volunteers, help homeowners understand their systems, assist Outreach Coordinators with client meetings and contracts, and develop partnerships with local organizations.

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Program Fellows:

Program Fellows are an amalgamation of the above positions. Each position by regional office depending on the requirements of the region.

2. Please clarify how the members will be placed into the different member service areas of the program - solar corps construction fellows, outreach fellows, program fellows and volunteer training fellows and if one member fellow type will have more of an opportunity for job placement at the end of a member service year.

The general public will have ample opportunity to apply to any or multiple member service areas of their choosing using our open source national job board. Announcements will be made on our website, newsletter, social media, and targeted notification to partner job training organizations. Members will be selected for interviews based on the necessities of each regional office and the selection criteria varies in each office.

During their tenure with GRID, all member fellows will have ample opportunity to develop their skills and networks to ensure long-term gainful employment placement. Although GRID's focus is on training members for employment in the solar industry, skills developed will be cross industry such that members may choose to stay in solar or expand out within the green energy sector or community based organizations. While the skill set learned will be different depending on the service area, every fellow will receive extensive learning and networking opportunities by interacting with their colleagues, formal trainings, and interfacing with various constituents.

3. Please clarify how volunteers (trainees) will be made aware of, and will adhere to, the rules including prohibited activities.

GRID has developed an AmeriCorps Member Handbook, similar to an employee handbook that contains all of the program rules, requirements, and expectations. A section on prohibited activities is included in the handbook. Members are required to review this handbook with the program manager

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and sign a contract that they understand the expectation laid out in the handbook and they will abide by them. In addition, the Program Manager trains each Site Supervisor on member prohibited activities as the site supervisors are responsible for day to day supervision.

For trainees, volunteer activities are construction in nature and would not normally extend to activities that are prohibited by Americorp. That being said, volunteers complete a mandatory volunteer application process and agree to abide by GRID Alternatives' volunteer handbook which incorporates language around prohibited activities that is consistent with Americorps guidelines.

4. Please clarify if the members will be supervised on a daily basis at the service sites.

Members are supervised on a daily basis. Construction members have a supervisor at every job site that does not leave while staff, volunteers, and members are on site.

Other member positions are also supervised on a daily basis and have access to multiple levels of leadership at the organization on a regular basis

D. Strategic Engagement Slots

1. What percentage of your slots will be targeted to recruiting members with disabilities? What is your program's plan, if any, for outreach and recruitment of members of the disability community?

GRID currently does not have a plan to specifically recruit members with disabilities. However, GRID is an equal opportunity organization and we will reasonably accommodate any qualified candidate with a disability.

2. In order to increase the number of individuals with disabilities serving as AmeriCorps members, CNCS is offering applicants the opportunity to request additional MSYs to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities. The additional MSYs would be funded at the clarification cost per MSY level. Applicants must describe their intent to recruit, engage and retain additional members with disabilities and provide a detailed outreach plan for how these members will be recruited and supported (e.g. established recruitment partners or strategies.) In addition, programs receiving these

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additional member positions will be required to report specific details on the success of the recruitment, supervision and retention of AmeriCorps members with disabilities in semi-annual progress reports. If you would like to request additional MSYs to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities, please describe your intent as requested above. Also indicate how many MSYs your program would like to request, the number of slots by slot type, and where the additional members will serve. Add these additional MSYs to your budget.

Also adjust your performance measure targets, MSY allocations, and executive summary to reflect these additional members.

GRID Alternatives is not requesting additional MSYs for members with disabilities at this time.

E. MSY with No Program Funds Attached Clarification

GRID Alternatives is not requesting No-Cost MSYs at this time.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Grant Characteristics