

AmeriCorps State and National Competitions Overview

AmeriCorps State and National conducted three grant competitions in 2013:

- AmeriCorps State and National Grants, which included State or Territory Commission grants, National Direct grants, and Tribal Grants
- AmeriCorps Indian Tribes Planning Grants
- VetSuccess AmeriCorps

All AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations to recruit, train, and manage AmeriCorps members who address unmet community needs. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who is enrolled in an approved national service position and engages in community service. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust.

AmeriCorps State Commission grants are awarded by CNCS to Governor-appointed State or Territory commissions, which use those grants to provide funding to organizations that are proposing a project that operate in only within that state.

AmeriCorps National Direct grants are awarded by CNCS to organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state.

AmeriCorps Indian Tribes grants are awarded by CNCS to Indian Tribes to recruit, train, and manage AmeriCorps members who address unmet community needs in Tribal communities.

An Indian Tribe is defined as an Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Native village, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation, as defined under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. § 1602), that the United States Government recognizes as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States under federal law to Indians because of their status as Indians. The definition also include tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by one of the entities described above.

Most AmeriCorps grants are operational grants made on a standard cost reimbursement basis. Some of the CNCS grants or state commission subgrants are awarded for a fixed amount per each full-time AmeriCorps member with use of funds contingent on member enrollment and completion of service. In addition, under AmeriCorps Education Award Program (EAP) programs receive a small fixed-amount grant for each member enrolled. Under each form of grant, organizations receive only a portion of the total funding needed to operate the program (which includes the member's living allowance and other program costs). In each grant, the organization must use their own or other resources to cover the remaining costs.

In addition to the various forms of operating grants, CNCS and State or Territory Commissions may also award planning grants. An AmeriCorps planning grant is for one year and does not have AmeriCorps members. These grants are intended to provide funds to complete the planning needed to take a sound concept of how to meet an unmet community need and determine how to best use AmeriCorps members to implement that concept. By law, 1% of the funding that CNCS allocates for its AmeriCorps grants are reserved for Tribal programs. Historically, CNCS has not received enough eligible applications for Tribal programs to be able to award the full reserved amount. In order to develop more viable Tribal programs, CNCS conducted a specific Tribal planning grant competition.

Under a partnership between CNCS and the Department of Veterans Affairs, CNCS also conducted a separate competition to award VetSuccess grants. VetSuccess grants were AmeriCorps State Commission grants or AmeriCorps National Direct grants that were awarded to organizations that are proposing projects to serve student-veterans on college campuses.