



# AmeriCorps Planning Grant Application Guidance and Instructions

**California Volunteers**

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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

This Planning Grant Application Guidance and Instructions is available on the California Volunteers (CV) AmeriCorps funding webpage at [CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov/grants/ameri-corps](http://CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov/grants/ameri-corps).

California Volunteers is committed to providing the most current information available to all applicants. We will rely primarily upon our website to keep applicants apprised of changes. Please check our website frequently for updates and information on technical assistance opportunities.



## OVERVIEW

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**Administering State Entity Name:** California Volunteers  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** AmeriCorps State Planning Grants  
**CFDA Number:** 94.006

**Important Note:** Application for an AmeriCorps planning grant is through invitation only. Applicants must successfully complete Steps 1-3 of the planning grant application process (described below) to be eligible to receive an invitation to apply.

### **Funding Opportunity:**

As part of the Office of the Governor, California Volunteers addresses state and community challenges by investing in high impact service solutions, while leveraging public, private, and nonprofit partnerships and resources. California Volunteers invests \$40 million annually in AmeriCorps grants to support effective community service solutions.

This funding opportunity provides planning grants to support organizations interested in engaging Californians as AmeriCorps members to help tackle community problems through service and volunteer action. This funding opportunity provides successful applicants with training and technical assistance and a federal planning grant up to \$75,000 to design and develop new AmeriCorps programs that can address community problems and demonstrate impact through an evidence-informed<sup>1</sup> or evidence-based<sup>2</sup> approach

The *AmeriCorps Planning Grant Application Guidance and Instructions* document is necessary to complete the AmeriCorps Planning Grant Application.

### **Application Process:**

The application is through invitation only. You must successfully complete Steps 1-3 below in order to be eligible to receive an invitation to apply. These mandatory steps are designed to help you and CV staff determine your overall fit with AmeriCorps and how CV can best support you.

**Step 1:** Schedule an exploratory call/meeting with CV staff by emailing [Funding@cv.ca.gov](mailto:Funding@cv.ca.gov).

**Step 2:** Complete an [AmeriCorps Readiness Self-Assessment](#).

**Step 3:** Schedule a Consultation Session with CV staff.

**Step 4:** If invited by CV to apply, submit an electronic copy of the completed application to CV via email to [Funding@cv.ca.gov](mailto:Funding@cv.ca.gov).

California Volunteers is committed to providing the most current information available to all applicants. We will rely primarily upon our website, <http://CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov/grants/ameriCorps/>, to keep applicants apprised of changes. Please check our website frequently. Additionally, our website will also provide information on available technical assistance opportunities. If you have questions, please contact us via email at [funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov](mailto:funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov).

### **Application Submission Deadline:**

AmeriCorps planning grant applications are due approximately four weeks from the date an applicant is officially invited by CV to apply. Applications must be received by CV by 5:00 P.M. Pacific Time on the due date identified by CV at the time the Invitation to Apply was issued.

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<sup>1</sup> An evidence informed program uses the best available knowledge, research, and evaluation to guide program design and implementation but does not have scientific research or rigorous evaluation of the program itself and is not replicating an evidence-based program.

<sup>2</sup> A program that is evidence based uses a program model that has been rigorously evaluated and has demonstrated positive results. Rigorous evaluation means at least one random control trial study or quasi-experimental evaluation, either of the program itself or of another program that the applicant is proposing to replicate.



## FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

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### A. Funding Program Description

#### California Volunteers

As the State Service Commission for California, California Volunteers (CV) addresses community and state challenges by investing in high impact service solutions, while leveraging public, private, and nonprofit partnerships and resources. Through AmeriCorps, Disaster Volunteering, and Volunteer Action, CV transforms small investments into big community impact. Karen Baker, State of California Chief Service Officer, leads the agency in consultation with a 25-member Commission appointed by the Governor. The Commission develops and adopts policies that guide the State's AmeriCorps grant making process.

CV receives federal funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to support AmeriCorps programs. CNCS's mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, CNCS has helped to engage millions of citizens in community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

#### Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

AmeriCorps is a national service program that provides opportunities for Americans each year to serve their country as AmeriCorps members by engaging in intensive results-driven service that addresses community problems. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. AmeriCorps members are recruited, trained, supervised, and managed by the funded organization, and may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, AmeriCorps members are eligible to receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust that they can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans. Members must be: U.S. Citizens, U.S. Nationals or Lawful Permanent Residents of the United States, at least 17 years of age (no upper age limit), high school graduates or GED recipients (or working towards this goal), and are subject to criminal history checks. AmeriCorps Programs may add program-specific requirements. For more information on member eligibility requirements, please visit: [http://www.americorps.gov/for\\_individuals/ready/eligibility.asp](http://www.americorps.gov/for_individuals/ready/eligibility.asp).

AmeriCorps implementation grants are awarded on a competitive basis to eligible organizations that engage members in *evidence-based* or *evidence-informed* interventions to strengthen communities. AmeriCorps grants include an allotment of AmeriCorps member positions and provide partial funding to support AmeriCorps projects and programs. Grants are solely for program expenses and cannot be used for general organizational operating expenses. **AmeriCorps members or grant funds can help meet unmet needs or can expand an organization's ability to better address community needs, but cannot be used to duplicate, displace or supplant resources that already exist in a community.**

#### California Volunteers AmeriCorps Values

As home to the largest and most diverse population in the country, California faces many challenges that need our attention. California Volunteers is seeking to invest AmeriCorps resources in programs that are:

##### ***Targeted at solving a critical challenge facing California.***

While there are a large number of issues that are identified as "challenges," CV is most interested in those that have been publicly labeled as concerns for California's long-term quality of life by state government leaders as well as key civic and research institutions. While CV will generally view programs and initiatives addressing statewide challenges as more compelling, CV will also give consideration to those that are designed to tackle problems faced by a particular locality or region of the state. Issues that have been addressed in the past include low academic achievement, unemployment, child welfare, and many others.



***Using national service as an appropriate strategy.***

California Volunteers is committed to continuing to demonstrate that service is a powerful strategy to address community challenges. Successful program designs clearly identify those directly impacted by the challenges, identify an intervention proven to address the need, and clearly articulate why the efforts of AmeriCorps members are an appropriate strategy to deliver the intervention. This includes demonstrating how AmeriCorps member service activities will enhance or expand an organization's ability to better address a community problem, and how the AmeriCorps program will not duplicate, displace or supplant resources that already exist to address the stated problem.

***Applying an evidence-based approach.***

California Volunteers expects those seeking an investment from AmeriCorps to demonstrate that their proposed intervention is guided by the best available research evidence that supports its effectiveness. This includes demonstrating that the proposed intervention will lead to the desired outcomes, and providing strong evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the target population and community challenge identified. CV is particularly interested in programs that directly involve leading experts from the relevant subject area in the design and/or evaluation of the program. CV values programs that can demonstrate the intervention is implemented with fidelity across sites and that apply performance data and evaluation findings to continuously strengthen their model.

***Based on a well-aligned logic model and focused on measurable outcomes.***

California Volunteers values strong program designs built to address community needs by logically connecting all program components and services back to these needs. Programs funded through AmeriCorps are expected to achieve results that can be quantifiably measured and reported on annually (i.e. California Performance Measurement Worksheets).

***Dedicated to quality.***

California Volunteers seeks to invest in programs that are committed to making a difference and incorporate quality management practices to oversee the program and ensure appropriate investment of public funds. California Volunteers values programs that can successfully implement the program design by assuring that the systems and processes necessary for managing and assessing the effectiveness of the program model are in place prior to operation. This includes adequate oversight in the management of each component to assure that the program design and systems are implemented and assessed, the capacity to collect data and report on program effectiveness, and that stakeholder feedback leads to continuous improvement.

**B. AmeriCorps Planning Grants**

An AmeriCorps Planning Grant provides successful applicants with resources needed to develop program components and to build operational capacity critical to managing an AmeriCorps grant. Grant recipients also receive training and technical assistance from CV to strengthen their AmeriCorps program design and to create implementation plans and systems for managing a compliant AmeriCorps program. Grantees who successfully complete their planning grant deliverables will be better prepared to apply for an implementation grant as well as operate an AmeriCorps program, once funded.

**C. National Service Focus Areas**

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended by the Serve America Act, emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on a core set of issue areas. In order to carry out Congress's intent and to maximize the impact of the investment in national service, AmeriCorps planning grants support the development of programming in following focus areas:

1. ***Disaster Services***— The AmeriCorps program will provide support to increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters, improve individuals' readiness to respond to disasters, help individuals recover from disasters, and/or help individuals mitigate disasters.
2. ***Economic Opportunity***— The AmeriCorps program will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of



economically disadvantaged people; help economically disadvantaged people to have improved access to services that enhance financial literacy; transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable housing; and/or have improved employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.

3. **Education**— The AmeriCorps program will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children; improved school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children; improved educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools; and/or support economically disadvantaged students prepare for success in post-secondary educational institutions.
4. **Environmental Stewardship**— The AmeriCorps program will support responsible stewardship of the environment, while preparing communities for challenging circumstances and helping Americans respond to and recover from disruptive life events: programs that conserve natural habitats; protect clean air and water; maintain public lands; support wildland fire mitigation; cultivate individual and community self-sufficiency; and provide reforestation services after floods or fires.
5. **Healthy Futures**— The AmeriCorps program will provide support for activities that will address the opioid crisis; improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities; increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible; and/or increase physical activity and improve nutrition in youth with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity.
6. **Veterans and Military Families**— The AmeriCorps program will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength; increase the number of veterans, wounded warriors, military service members, and their families served by CNCS-supported programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS-supported programs.

**Capacity Building:** In addition to the above core focus areas, the AmeriCorps program may provide support for capacity building activities provided by AmeriCorps members. CV considers capacity building activities to be *indirect services* that enable CV-supported organizations to provide stronger, expanded, and sustained *direct services* in the six focus areas. Capacity building activities cannot be solely intended to support the administration or operations of the organization. Examples of capacity building activities include:

- Recruiting and/or managing community volunteers.
- Implementing effective volunteer management practices.
- Completing community assessment that identifies goals and recommendations.
- Developing new systems and business processes (technology, performance management, training, etc.) or enhancing existing systems and business processes.

#### D. Fundable Activities

Grant funds support activities that are directly tied to AmeriCorps program planning and development. The grant shall only be used to cover costs that directly support the development of planning grant deliverables described in *Section V.C. Reporting Requirements*. Fundable grant activities include, but are not limited to:

- Staff or consultant(s) to facilitate project planning and provide training and technical assistance aimed at improving the Grantee's ability to implement an AmeriCorps program effectively;
- Assessing and analyzing community needs-related information to identify specific gaps or needs that can be addressed through AmeriCorps (i.e., an organization has already determined that there is a need to provide services to the elderly at risk of losing independence, but would like to conduct surveys to determine what specific services would be most valuable);
- Researching appropriate evidence-based interventions to inform service activities to be performed by AmeriCorps members;
- Developing a program theory of change and logic model;



- Outreach and establishment of community partnerships to support the planning and implementation of the AmeriCorps program;
- Partnership planning meetings;
- Meeting or office space;
- Developing plans for member recruitment, selection, placement, training, and supervision;
- Developing plans for managing and supporting program site partners;
- Developing plans and systems for ensuring grant compliance and accountability
- Travel to training and technical assistance sessions provided by CV
- Travel to see and learn about program models the applicant would like to replicate

Applicants must obtain prior written approval from CV for out of state travel costs or planning activities that occur outside of California.

#### **E. Grant Award Amount**

The maximum grant amount that can be requested through this opportunity is \$75,000.

#### **F. Matching Requirement**

The grantee is required to provide a match to support at least 24% of the project's total cost. Match may be cash and/or in-kind. For example, an applicant that is proposing a planning project at a combined total cost of \$65,000 (federal share and grantee match combined) and is requesting for \$49,400 from CV will need to provide a match of \$15,600 in cash or in-kind.

#### **G. Award Period**

The project period for this grant is 6 -12 months. Grantees may choose to contract for six to twelve months depending on the amount of time needed to complete deliverables. **The project start date may not occur prior to a grantee's contract execution date with CV.**

#### **H. Authority**

These funds are available under authority of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1990, as amended, (NCSA) (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.).

#### **I. Funding Restrictions**

Grants under this program are subject to 2 CFR Part 200 and CNCS regulations issued to implement Part 200.





## ELIGIBILITY

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### A. Eligible Applicants

The following non-federal entities (as defined in [2 CFR §200.69](#)) that propose to operate only within California who have DUNS numbers and are registered in System for Award Management (SAM) are eligible to apply for AmeriCorps funding through California Volunteers:

- Nonprofit organizations ([2 CFR §200.70](#))
- Institutions of higher education([2 CFR §200.55](#))
- Local government/public agencies ([2 CFR §200.64](#))
- State government agencies ([2 CFR §200.90](#))
- Indian Tribes within the state of California ([2 CFR §200.54](#))

### Other Requirements

Under section 132A(b) of the National & Community Service Act, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this RFA.

Note that under section 745 of Title VII, Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, if CNCS is aware that any corporation has any unpaid Federal tax liability which—

- 1) Has been assessed,
- 2) For which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and
- 3) That 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 RFA. A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this RFA.

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

### B. Dun and Bradstreet University Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management System (SAM)

Applications must include a DUNS number **and** an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: [DUNS Request Service](#). CNCS recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date.

After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants **must** register with the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete and, if a grant is awarded, throughout the life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. CV suggests finalizing a new registration or renewing an existing one at least two weeks before the application deadline to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and address on all grant applications to CV.

Applicants that do not comply with these requirements may become ineligible to receive an award. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at [https://sam.gov/sam/transcript/Quick\\_Guide\\_for\\_Grants\\_Registrations.pdf](https://sam.gov/sam/transcript/Quick_Guide_for_Grants_Registrations.pdf)





## APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

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### A. Application Review and Selection Process

AmeriCorps planning grants are awarded on a non-competitive basis in which funding decisions are determined based on the applicant meeting a set of criteria that demonstrate overall fit with AmeriCorps and organizational capability. Grants are provided on a rolling basis contingent on the availability of AmeriCorps State formula funds. The following describes key components of the application and selection process. Applicants that successfully complete each of these components will be offered a planning grant if funds are available.

1. Exploratory call/meeting: CV will provide informational materials to interested organizations and conduct 1:1 informational sessions to explain AmeriCorps and California Volunteers as well as learn more about the potential applicant's ideas and interests for leveraging AmeriCorps. Organizations will gain a deeper understanding of AmeriCorps grant requirements and CV will gain a better understanding of their readiness to apply. Following the exploratory meeting, organizations that remain interested in applying for AmeriCorps funds will be advised to complete an AmeriCorps Readiness Self-Assessment and request for a more in-depth consultation session with CV to determine overall fit with AmeriCorps.
2. AmeriCorps Readiness Self-Assessment and Consultation: When an organization requests a consultation session, CV staff will review the organization's AmeriCorps Readiness Assessment results to determine whether they are ready to receive a CV grant (*planning or operating*). Determination is based on feedback from the applicant as well as review of capacity assessment tool.
3. Invitation to apply: Subject to the availability of funds, organizations that meet the capacity threshold will be invited to apply for a planning grant. An email explaining the application process and all forms required will be sent to the applicant. Generally, applications will be due four weeks from the official email invitation to apply.
4. Application Review and Feedback: Compliance checks will be run on all applications received. Those that pass compliance will be reviewed for quality and completeness by a CV team of no less than two staff. Applications which meet the minimum threshold will be considered for funding. CV will conduct a meeting (phone or in-person) to request clarifications needed and discuss next steps.
5. Planning Grant Awarded: Subject to the availability of funds, planning grants are awarded to organizations that complete steps 1-5 successfully. Final grant awards are approved by the Director of AmeriCorps. Grants support a 6-12 month project period focused on program design and/or program readiness development. Grantees who satisfactorily complete all planning grant deliverables will be prepared and equipped to apply for an implementation grant.



## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

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### A. Application Checklist

A complete application must be submitted electronically to [Funding@cv.ca.gov](mailto:Funding@cv.ca.gov) approximately **four weeks from the date an organization is officially invited to apply by 5:00pm Pacific Time.**

A “complete” AmeriCorps application includes all required and applicable components in the order listed in the Application Checklist. Place a checkmark [✓] next to each item included in your original application submission. Write “NA” next to each item that is not applicable to your application. Applications missing items without marking them “NA” on the checklist will be considered out of compliance.

You must include a signed copy of the checklist with your application.

### Application Components

A “complete” AmeriCorps application consists of items #1-7 as stated below:

1. Application Checklist
2. AmeriCorps Planning Grant Title Page
3. Project Narrative <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ no more than 10 double-spaced pages in portrait format</li><li>○ 12 point Times New Roman font</li><li>○ One-inch margins</li><li>○ Use CV narrative headings in the order provided</li></ul>
4. Planning Grant Deliverables Timeline (use <i>CV Excel Template</i> )
5. Budget Narrative & Budget Form (use <i>CV Excel Template</i> )
6. Organizational Self-Assessment Form (must be signed and dated by authorized agent)
7. Financial Management Survey and required supporting documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Financial Management Survey (Completed and Signed)</li><li>○ IRS Determination letter, and any amendments, reflecting approval or denial of tax-exempt status</li><li>○ Internal Revenue Service Form 990 “Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax” including all applicable schedules and attachments; if Form 990 filing can be downloaded, provide the website address.</li><li>○ Audited financial statements including auditor’s Management Letter (single audit, or other audits if not subject to federal audit requirements).</li><li>○ List of federal grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and subgrants/sub-contracts awarded to the organization in the last two years including the identifying award numbers, amounts, and awarding agencies.</li></ul>
8. Authorization, Assurances, and Certification (Signature Page signed & dated by authorized agent)

### B. AmeriCorps Program Title Page

Complete all fields on the Title Page, including information on the Legal Applicant representative, the primary contact information, and the specifics of the grant request.

### C. Narrative Instructions

In no more than **10 double-spaced, single-sided pages** in portrait format, please address the following:

#### 1. Executive Summary

Provide a one-paragraph executive summary of your proposed planning project. You may fill in the following template to complete your executive summary.

This planning grant will be used to develop an AmeriCorps program which will engage AmeriCorps members (members) to *[anticipated AmeriCorps member activities]* in *[geographic locations where member activities will take place]*. Members will address the needs of *[beneficiaries to be served]*. Program activities will primarily be in the areas of *[identify relevant National Service Focus Areas]*.



## 2. Rationale and Approach

1. Indicate which type of planning grant you are applying for:
  - a. Option A: Development of Program Design and Program Readiness (up to 12 months)
  - b. Option B: Program Readiness Development (approximately 4-6 months)
2. Option A Only: Describe your plan for developing each required component below. Include details on who, when, and how each piece will be developed as required by CV. (see *Award Administration Information – Section C “Reporting Requirements”* for more detail on deliverable of each component)
  - a. Community Need
  - b. Theory of Change/Logic Model
  - c. Evidence Base for Intervention
  - d. Member Experience
  - e. Performance Measures
  - f. Service Site Locations (Program Diagram)
  - g. Program Budget
  - h. Program Staffing and Management Structure
  - i. Partnership Development and Management
  - j. Member Support and Management
  - k. Compliance and Accountability Plans
  - l. Plans to Secure Match Funding
  - m. Data Collection Plan

## 3. Organizational Capability

1. Describe the applicant organization’s experience and it’s staffing and management structure for the proposed planning project.
2. Identify the lead staff person that will be responsible for managing the planning grant and overseeing planning grant activities, include their qualifications and relevant experience.
3. Describe other key roles staff, board of directors, administrators, and/or partners will play in the planning process.

## D. Planning Grant Deliverables Timeline

**All applicants are required to submit a completed timeline using the CV Planning Grant Deliverables Timeline Template in Excel format available on the CV website at [http://www.California Volunteers.org/index.php/Grants/ameri corps/](http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org/index.php/Grants/ameri corps/). Complete Column C “Timeframe”, noting the specific months assigned for the planning of each component. If applying for Option B, Program Readiness Development only, the “Program Design Development” section does not need to be completed.**

## E. Budget Narrative and Budget Form Instructions

**All applicants are required to submit a detailed budget using the CV AmeriCorps Budget Template in Excel format available on the CV website at [http://www.California Volunteers.org/index.php/Grants/ameri corps/](http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org/index.php/Grants/ameri corps/).**

**Note:** The Budget Form is included as a tab within the CV AmeriCorps Budget Template and will automatically populate as information is entered on the Budget Narrative tab. Be sure to include a copy of both the completed Budget Form and Budget Narrative as part of your application.

### Match Requirements

Program requirements, including requirements on match, are located in the AmeriCorps regulations and summarized below.

**Table 1: Match Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations**

Grant Type	Match Requirement
Cost-Reimbursement Grants, including Non-	Minimum grantee share is 24% of program costs for the first three years. Overall grantee share of total program costs increases gradually beginning



Fixed Amount Professional Corps	in Year 4 to 50% by the tenth year of funding and every year thereafter.
Fixed-Amount Full-Time/ Less than Full-Time Serving in a Full-Time Capacity Grants	There are no specific match requirements for fixed-amount grants. Grantees pay all program costs over the maximum cost per MSY in the RFA.
Fixed-Amount EAP Grants	There are no specific match requirements for fixed-amount grants. Grantees pay all program costs over the maximum cost per MSY in the RFA.
Fixed-Amount Professional Corps Grants	There are no specific match requirements for fixed-amount grants. Grantees pay all program costs over the cost per MSY in the RFA.

**Table 2: Minimum Match Requirements for Cost Reimbursement Grants**

AmeriCorps Funding Year	1,2,3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Grantee Share Requirements	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

- Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as the minimum match of 24% for the first three years, and the increasing minimums in years thereafter, are maintained. See 45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90 for the specific regulations.
- If you are applying for the first time, you must match with cash or in-kind contributions at least 24% of the project’s total Operating Costs (Section I) plus Member Costs (Section II) plus Administrative Costs (Section III). If you are re-competing, please see 45 CFR §§ 2521.40-2521.95 for the match schedule.
- The acceptable sources of matching funds are federal, state, local, and/or private sector funds in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements.
- In the “Source of Funds” field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the match. Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal) for your **entire match**. Define all acronyms the first time they are used.

**Note:** CNCS legislation permits the use of non-CNCS federal funds as match for the grantee share of the budget. Please discuss your intention of using federal funds to match an AmeriCorps grant with the other agency prior to submitting your application. Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act requires that grantees that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to CNCS. If you use other federal funds as match, you must ensure you can meet the requirements and purpose of both grants. Grantees that use federal funds as match will be required to report the sources and amounts on the Federal Financial Report (FFR).

**Preparing Your Budget**

Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your narrative. Reviewers will consider the information you provide in your detailed Budget Narrative in their assessment of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criterion. To prepare your budget, follow the detailed budget instructions below. Use the CV Excel *Budget Narrative* tab to create your program budget. The *Budget Form* tab will be automatically populated from the information you enter in the Budget Narrative tab. Be sure to review your completed budget against the *Budget Analysis Checklist* provided at the end of this section to ensure that your budget is complete and accurate.



As you prepare your budget:

- All the amounts you request must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.
- Itemize each cost and present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.
- Do not include unallowable expenses, e.g., entertainment costs (which include food and beverage costs) unless they are justified as an essential component of an activity.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).

Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and Omni Circular. Please refer to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2CFR Part 200) for allowable, allocable, and reasonable cost information, as well as, audit requirements, including the need to provide audits to the Clearinghouse if expending over \$750,000 in federal funds as required in the OmniCircular. The OMB OmniCircular can be found online at [www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars](http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars).

### **Detailed Budget Instructions**

These instructions apply to all applicants. Please note that it may be requested that you include description/calculation breakdowns for costs that are covered by funds outside of the grant.

### **Section I. Program Operating Costs**

#### **A. Personnel Expenses**

Under "Position/Title Description," list each staff position separately and provide position description, salary, and percentage of effort devoted to this award. Each staff person's role listed in the budget must be described in the application narrative and each staff person mentioned in the narrative must be listed in the budget as either CNCS or Grantee Share. For Column 2, under "% of FTE Time Spent on Program", please include the percentage of time for a full-time equivalent (FTE) employee. For example, if a part-time staff member who works 20 hours a week spends 100% of their time working on the AmeriCorps program, Column 2 should reflect 50%. This section should contain costs associated only with those staff performing direct program services. Those providing general administrative or management functions should be budgeted under Section III.

All time spent on the grant must be tracked using functional timesheets that allow for time allocation. No time can be charged to the grant unless National Service Criminal History Checks have been completed. Verification of timesheets and background check status must occur before any expenses can be incurred.

#### **B. Personnel Fringe Benefits**

Under "Purpose/Description," identify the types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position. Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Worker's Compensation, Retirement, SUTA, Health and Life Insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If a fringe benefit amount is over 30%, please list separately. Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item. Uncommon or exceptionally high-cost benefits should be itemized and justified.

#### **C. 1. Staff Travel**

Describe the purpose for which program staff member will travel. Provide a calculation to include itemized costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel-related expenses multiplied by the number of trips/staff. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage daily per diem, and similar supporting information. Reimbursement should not exceed the federal mileage rate unless a result of applicant policy and justified in the budget narrative. Only domestic travel is allowable. Only domestic travel is allowable. Any out of state travel requires advance approval from CV.

**We expect all applicants to include funds in this line item for travel for program staff and site staff to attend CV-sponsored technical assistance meetings or trainings. There may be two to three such opportunities per year, including opportunities for fiscal training.** At a minimum, all applicants



are required to have at least two staff attend the CV-sponsored annual California AmeriCorps Conference. This requirement should be considered when creating the budget.

For example: Two staff members will attend the California AmeriCorps Conference in Los Angeles. California AmeriCorps conference: 2 staff X \$250 airfare + \$50 ground transportation + \$250 registration fee+ (2 days) X \$100 lodging + \$35 per diem = \$1,640

## **C. 2. Member Travel**

N/A

## **D. Equipment**

N/A

## **E. Supplies**

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials, including member service gear and equipment that does not fit the definition above. You must individually list any single item costing \$1,000 or more.

## **F. Contractual and Consultant Services**

Include costs for consultants related to the project's operations, except training or evaluation consultants, who will be listed in Sections G. or H., below.

## **G. 1. Staff Training**

Include the costs associated with training staff on project requirements and training to enhance the skills staff need for effective project implementation, i.e., project or financial management, team building, etc. Please include any training/conference registration in this line item.

## **G. 2. Member Training**

N/A

## **H. Evaluation**

N/A

## **I. Other Program Operating Costs**

Allowable costs in this budget category should include when applicable:

- State Criminal Registry and FBI Criminal history background checks for all employees or other individuals who receive a salary, education award, living allowance, or stipend or similar payment from the grant (federal or non-federal share). If your program covers the cost for background checks outside of grant funds, these items should still be included in "Other" with zero costs and explain how your program will be covering the cost in the budget narrative.
- Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
- Utilities, telephone, Internet and similar expenses that are specifically used for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps project staff, and are not part of the organizations indirect cost/admin cost allocation pool. If such expenses are budgeted and shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.

## **Section II. Member Costs**

All Member Costs are N/A.

## **Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs**

### **Definitions**

Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives CNCS funds and do not include particular project costs. These costs may include administrative staff positions. For organizations that have an established indirect cost rate for federal awards, administrative costs mean those costs that are included in the organization's indirect cost rate





agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the organization's overall operation and are further described in Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-21 (2CFR 220), A-87 (2 CFR 225), and A-122 (2 CFR 230).

### **Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs (choose either A, B, or C)**

Applicants can choose to use one of two methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a CNCS fixed percentage method or a federally approved indirect cost rate method. Regardless of the option chosen, CNCS's share of administrative costs is limited to 5% of the total CNCS funds **actually expended** under this grant.

#### **A. CNCS Fixed Percentage Method**

##### **Five Percent Fixed Administrative Costs Option**

CNCS fixed rate allows you to charge administrative costs up to a cap without a federally approved indirect cost rate and without documentation supporting the allocation. If you choose CNCS Fixed Percentage Method (Section IIIA in eGrants), you may charge, for administrative costs, a fixed 5% of the total of CNCS funds expended. In order to charge this fixed 5%, the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10% of all direct cost expenditures.

1. To determine CNCS share for Section III: Multiply the sum of CNCS funding shares of Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can request as CNCS share. The 5% maximum is calculated by multiplying the sum of CNCS's share of Section I and Section II by the factor 0.0526. The factor 0.0526 is used to calculate the maximum amount of federal funds that may be budgeted for administrative (indirect) costs, rather than 0.0500, as a way to mathematically compensate for determining Section III costs when the total budget (Sections I + II + III) is not yet established. (If 0.0500 was used, the resulting Section III costs would be less than the maximum 5% of total costs that are permitted under CNCS's regulations.)
2. To determine the maximum Grantee share for Section III: Multiply the total (both CNCS and grantee share) of Sections I and II by 10% (0.10) and enter this amount as the grantee share for Section III A.
3. Enter the sum of CNCS and grantee shares under Total Amount.

#### **B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate Method**

If you have a Federally Approved Indirect Cost (IDC) rate and choose to use it, the IDC rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs including the 5% maximum payable by CNCS. Specify the Cost Type for which your organization has current documentation on file, i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost rate. Supply your approved IDC rate (percentage) and the base upon which this rate is calculated (direct salaries, salaries and fringe benefits, etc.). It is at your discretion whether or not to claim your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate in the Rate Claimed field.

1. Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both CNCS and Grantee's shares, as prescribed by your established rate agreement (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other). Then multiply the appropriate direct costs by the rate being claimed. This will determine the total amount of indirect costs allowable under the grant.
2. To determine CNCS share: Multiply the sum of CNCS funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as CNCS share of indirect costs.
3. To determine the maximum Grantee share: Subtract the amount calculated in step 2 (CNCS administrative share) from the amount calculated in step 1 (the Indirect Cost total). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for administrative costs.

#### **C. De Minimis Rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs**

Organizations who have **never**, at any point in time, held a federally negotiated indirect cost rate (except for those non-Federal entities described in Appendix VII to Part 200—States and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, paragraph (d)(1)(B)) and who receive less than \$35 million in direct federal funding, may indefinitely use a de minimus rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Additional information regarding what is included in MTDC and use of this option can be found at 2 CFR 200.414(f) and 200.68. If this option is elected, it must be used consistently across all federal awards..





### Source of Match

In the "Source and Types of Match Contributions" table that appears at the bottom of the *Budget Narrative*, enter the specific source of match (i.e. The Star Foundation, Franklin Unified School District, etc.), the match type [State/Local, Federal, or Private], the amount of cash and the dollar amount of in-kind, and a brief description of the intended purpose of the match (e.g. personnel expenses, travel, etc.). Define any acronyms the first time they are used. In the brief description, indicate whether the match is "proposed" or "secured."

### F. Organizational Self-Assessment Form

This form is included in AmeriCorps Application Forms and is required of all applicants. Please follow the instructions included on the form.

### G. Financial Management Survey

Complete the Financial Management Survey and submit an original signed copy with your hardcopy application. Submit all required supporting documents (listed below) electronically by email to [funding@cv.ca.gov](mailto:funding@cv.ca.gov). Organizations with documents that are particularly large but publically available online may submit a single document that explains why any documents cannot be provided and identifies where each can be found, including a hyperlink to each document's location. Please ensure documents submitted electronically are clearly labeled. The following financial documents are required:

- Financial Management Survey (Completed and Signed)
- IRS Determination letter, and any amendments, reflecting approval or denial of tax-exempt status
- Internal Revenue Service Form 990 "Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax" including all applicable schedules and attachments; if Form 990 filing can be downloaded, provide the website address.
- Audited financial statements including auditor's Management Letter (single audit, or other audits if not subject to federal audit requirements).
- List of federal grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and subgrants/sub-contracts awarded to the organization in the last two years including the identifying award numbers, amounts, and awarding agencies.

### H. Authorization, Assurances, and Certification

Please read the following Assurances and Certifications before signing the Assurance and Certification Signature Page.

**By signing and submitting this application, as the duly authorized representative of the applicant, you certify that the applicant will comply with the Assurances and Certifications described below.**

- a) Inability to certify  
Your inability to provide the assurances and certifications listed below will not necessarily result in denial of a grant. You must submit an explanation of why you cannot do so. We will consider your explanation in determining whether to enter into this transaction. However, your failure to furnish an explanation will disqualify your application.
- b) Erroneous certification or assurance  
The assurances and certifications are material representations of fact upon which we rely in determining whether to enter into this transaction. If we later determine that you knowingly submitted an erroneous certification or assurance, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, we may terminate this transaction for cause or default.
- c) Notice of error in certification or assurance  
You must provide immediate written notice to us if at any time you learn that a certification or assurance was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous because of changed circumstances.



- d) **Definitions**  
The terms “covered transaction”, “debarred”, “suspended”, “ineligible”, “lower tier covered transaction”, “participant”, “person”, “primary covered transaction”, “principal”, “proposal”, and “voluntarily excluded” as used in this clause, have the meanings set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of the rules implementing Executive Order 12549. An applicant shall be considered a “prospective primary participant in a covered transaction” as defined in the rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact us for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.
- e) **Assurance requirement for subgrant agreements**  
You agree by submitting this proposal that if we approve your application you shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by us.
- f) **Assurance inclusion in subgrant agreements**  
You agree by submitting this proposal that you will obtain an assurance from prospective participants in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions that the participants are not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction.
- g) **Assurance of subgrant principals**  
You may rely upon an assurance of a prospective participant in a lower-tier covered transaction that is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless you know that the assurance is erroneous. You may decide the method and frequency by which you determine the eligibility of your principals. You may, but are not required to, check the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs.
- h) **Non-assurance in subgrant agreements**  
If you knowingly enter into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, we may terminate this transaction for cause or default.
- i) **Prudent person standard**  
Nothing contained in the aforementioned may be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the assurances and certifications required. Your knowledge and information is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.

## **ASSURANCES**

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that the applicant:

- Has the legal authority to apply for federal assistance, and the institutional, managerial, and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-federal share of project costs) to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in this application.
- Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, and if appropriate, the state, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
- Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their position for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
- Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
- Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the nineteen statutes or



regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 CFR 900, Subpart F).

- Will comply with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1681-1683, and 1685-1686). which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability (d) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) The Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) The Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) sections 523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. 290dd-3 and 290ee-3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended; and (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
- Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of federal or federally assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of federal participation in purchases.
- Will comply with the provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.
- Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C 276a and 276a-77), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C 276c and 18 U.S.C. 874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 327-333), regarding labor standards for Federally assisted construction sub-agreements.
- Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires the recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
- Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved state management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C 1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).
- Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C 1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
- Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16U.S.C. 469a-l et seq.).
- Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.



- Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
- Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
- Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act of 1984, as amended, and OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.
- Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, application guidelines, and policies governing this program.
- Will comply with all rules regarding prohibited activities, including those stated in applicable Notice, grant provisions, and program regulations, and will ensure that no assistance made available by CNCS will be used to support any such prohibited activities.
- Will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions in the national service laws, which provide that an individual with responsibility for the operation of a project or program that receives assistance under the national service laws shall not discriminate against a participant in, or member of the staff of, such project or program on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, disability, or on the basis of religion. (NOTE: the prohibition on religious discrimination does not apply to the employment of any staff member paid with non-CNCS funds or paid with CNCS funds but employed with the organization operating the project prior to or on the date the grant was awarded. If your organization is a faith-based organization that makes hiring decisions on the basis of religious belief, your organization may be entitled, under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb, to receive federal funds and yet maintain that hiring practice, even though the national service legislation includes a restriction on religious discrimination in employment of staff hired to work on a CNCS-funded project and paid with CNCS grant funds. (42 U.S.C. §§ 5057(c) and 12635(c)). For the circumstances under which this may occur, please see the document “Effect of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act on Faith-Based Applicants for Grants” on CNCS’s website at: <http://www.usdoj.gov/archive/fbci/effect-rfra.pdf>.
- Will comply with all other federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination, including any self-evaluation requirements. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1681-1683, and 1685-1686). which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps (d) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) The Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) The Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) sections 523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. 290 dd-3 and 290 ee-3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; and (i) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
- Will provide, in the design, recruitment, and operation of any AmeriCorps program, for broad-based input from – (1) the community served, the municipality and government of the county (if appropriate) in which the community is located, and potential participants in the program; and (2) community-based agencies with a demonstrated record of experience in providing services and local labor organizations representing employees of service sponsors, if these entities exist in the area to be served by the program;
- Will, prior to the placement of participants, consult with the appropriate local labor organization, if any, representing employees in the area who are engaged in the same or similar work as that proposed to be carried out by an AmeriCorps program, to ensure compliance with the nondisplacement requirements specified in section 177 of the NCSA;



- Will, in the case of an AmeriCorps program that is not funded through a State, consult with and coordinate activities with the State Commission for the state in which the program operates.
- Will ensure that any national service program carried out by the applicant using assistance provided under section 121 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and any national service program supported by a grant made by the applicant using such assistance will address unmet human, educational, environmental, or public safety needs through services that provide a direct benefit to the community in which the service is performed;
- Will comply with the nonduplication and nondisplacement requirements set out in section 177 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, and in CNCS's regulations at § 2540.100;
- Will comply with the grievance procedure requirements as set out in section 176(f) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and in CNCS's regulations at 45 CFR § 2540.230;
- Will provide participants in the national service program with the training, skills, and knowledge necessary for the projects that participants are called upon to perform;
- Will provide support services to participants, such as information regarding G.E.D. attainment and post-service employment, and, if appropriate, opportunities for participants to reflect on their service experiences;
- Will arrange for an independent evaluation of any national service program carried out using assistance provided to the applicant under section 121 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 or, with the approval of CNCS, conduct an internal evaluation of the program;
- Will apply measurable performance goals and evaluation methods, which are to be used as part of such evaluation to determine the program's impact on communities and persons served by the program, on participants who take part in the projects, and in other such areas as required by CNCS;
- Will ensure the provision of a living allowance and other benefits to participants as required by CNCS;
- Has not violated a Federal criminal statute;
- If a state applicant, will ensure that the State subgrants will be used to support national service programs selected by the State on a competitive basis;
- If a state applicant, will seek to ensure an equitable allocation within the State of assistance and approved national service positions, taking into consideration such factors as the locations of the programs, population density, and economic distress;
- If a state applicant, will ensure that not less than 60% of the assistance will be used to make grants to support national service programs other than those carried out by a State agency, unless CNCS approves otherwise.

## **CERTIFICATIONS**

### **Certification – Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters**

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

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

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

### **Certification – Drug Free Workplace**

This certification is required by CNCS's regulations implementing sections 5150-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-690), 45 CFR Part 2545, Subpart B. The regulations require certification by grantees, prior to award, that they will make a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to maintain a drug-free workplace. The certification set out below is a material representation of fact upon which





reliance will be placed when the agency determines to award the grant. False certification or violation of the certification may be grounds for suspension of payments, suspension or termination of grants, or government-wide suspension or debarment (see 45 CFR Part 2542, Subparts G and H).

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

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

### **Certification - Lobbying Activities**

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

- No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the applicant, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer of Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement;
- If any funds other than federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the applicant will submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;



- The applicant will require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subcontracts at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients will certify and disclose accordingly.

### **Certification - Grant Review Process (State Commissions Only)**

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

### **Erroneous certification or assurance**

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

### **Notice of error in certification or assurance**

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

### **Definitions**

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

### **Assurance requirement for subgrant agreements**

You agree by submitting this proposal that if we approve your application you shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by us.

### **Assurance inclusion in subgrant agreements**

You agree by submitting this proposal that you will obtain an assurance from prospective participants in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions that the participants are not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction.

### **Assurance of subgrant principals**

You may rely upon an assurance of a prospective participant in a lower-tier covered transaction that is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless you know that the assurance is erroneous. You may decide the method and frequency by which you determine the eligibility of your principals. You may, but are not required to, check the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs.

### **Non-assurance in subgrant agreements**

If you knowingly enter into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, we may terminate this transaction for cause or default.

### **Prudent person standard**

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





## APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

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### A. Submission to California Volunteers

A complete application must be submitted electronically to [Funding@cv.ca.gov](mailto:Funding@cv.ca.gov) approximately **four weeks from the date an organization is officially invited to apply by 5:00pm Pacific Time.**

#### Application Components

A “complete” AmeriCorps application consists of items #1-8 as stated below:

1. Application Checklist
2. AmeriCorps Planning Grant Title Page
3. Project Narrative
  - no more than 10 double-spaced pages in portrait format
  - 12 point Times New Roman font
  - One-inch margins
  - Use CV narrative headings in the order provided
4. Planning Grant Deliverables Timeline (use *CV Excel Template*)
5. Budget Narrative & Budget Form (use *CV Excel Template*)
6. Organizational Self-Assessment Form (must be signed and dated by authorized agent)
7. Financial Management Survey and required supporting documents
8. Authorization, Assurances ,and Certification (Signature Page signed & dated by authorized agent)

#### Late Applications

CV may, at its discretion, consider an application received after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter to [funding@cv.ca.gov](mailto:funding@cv.ca.gov) explaining the extenuating circumstance that caused the delay. Communication with CV staff, including program officer of a current grantee, is not a substitution for the above protocol. The letter must be received no later than one business day after the application deadline. CV determines whether or not to accept a late application for review on a case-by-case basis.

#### Post-Review Process

California Volunteers staff may contact applicants to seek clarification on aspects of the application and request revised budgets as part of the grant review process. Failure to respond to requests for information in a timely manner may result in the removal of applications from consideration.

### B. Submission to CNCS

Once selected for AmeriCorps funding, applicants will be required to submit their applications electronically into CNCS’s web-based management system. Please ensure staff availability to enter the application into the system as well as respond to CVs’ requests for clarification. California Volunteers will provide instructions for submitting applications into CNCS’s web-based management system at a later date.



## AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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### A. Governing Documents

A grantee's fully executed AmeriCorps contract incorporates the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant as well as the AmeriCorps regulations (45 CFR Sections 2520-2550), CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions, and California Volunteers Policies and Requirements.

### B. CNCS Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this *Guidance* will be subject to the CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and the CNCS Specific Terms and Conditions for the fiscal year in which the grant award is tied to. 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 <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnsc-grants>.

### C. Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants will be required to complete and submit a variety of deliverables related to AmeriCorps program design and operation readiness. These deliverables are due to CV at specific times throughout the project period. Some deliverables may be waived by CV if an applicant can demonstrate that those components are already in place. All deliverables must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time. California Volunteers may withhold payment of invoices if required deliverables are incomplete or are of poor quality.

The following provides a brief description of each planning grant deliverable to be completed by the Grantee during the planning project period. Detailed instructions regarding each item will be provided during the planning period.

#### Program Design Deliverables

- 1) **Community Need:** Submit a summary of the community need that will be addressed. The summary should describe how the community problem the program will address is prevalent and severe in the communities where members will serve. The need should be well documented with relevant and recent data. Include gaps in current services and the role of AmeriCorps members. Explain how the interventions members provide will result in meaningful outcomes.

Specific data presented should demonstrate the following:

- *Scope:* Who and how many are directly affected by this community issue? How severe is the issue?
- *Significance:* What makes this community need compelling? If ignored, is the problem likely to become worse?
- *Cause(s):* Why does the need exist? How is it perpetuated?

- 2) **Theory of Change and Logic Model:**

Theory of Change: Submit a summary of the theory of change for the AmeriCorps program that describes:

- The program's intervention or service activities members will perform to address the community problem/need, including dosage, high-need beneficiary population, and the role(s) of members and (if applicable) leveraged volunteers.
- How the intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified
- How the anticipated outcomes represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem identified by the applicant.
- How utilizing AmeriCorps members to deliver the intervention(s) is reasonable.
- How AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.



Logic Model (see CV Logic Model template): Submit a completed program logic model using the Logic Model Worksheet provided by CV. A logic model is a graphical representation of program activities and their intended outcomes as depicted in the theory of change. The logic model shall depict the following:

- A summary of the community problem outlined in the narrative.
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention (i.e. collaborative partners, funding, program staff, volunteers, training, research, etc.),
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including the duration, dosage, and high-need target population for the intervention,
- The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention,
- Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur within the program year as a result of the intervention.

- 3) Evidence Base for Intervention:** Submit a summary of relevant evidence, including past performance measure data, evaluation reports, and/or cited research studies, to inform their proposed program intervention. The described evidence should be relatively recent, preferably within the last six years. The evidence should also indicate a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest. The description must include specific citations of studies and/or publicly available evaluation and research reports.
- 4) Member Experience:** Submit a summary of how members will gain skills as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed. Explain how the program will make efforts to recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate and will foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds talents, and capabilities are welcome and leveraged for learning and effective service delivery.
- 5) Performance Measurement Worksheets (see CV PMW Worksheet template):** **Submit completed** set of performance measures using the PMW template provided by CV (include primary service activities as well as Community Strengthening and Member Development worksheets). Performance measures are quantifiable goals developed by programs to determine the impact of AmeriCorps on communities and participants.
- 6) Service Site Locations (see CV Program Diagram template):** **Submit completed** program diagram, a graphic presentation of the AmeriCorps program's structure that includes information on staffing, member supervision, service locations or member placement sites, member positions and slot types allocated to each site.
- 7) Program Budget and Plans to Secure Match Funding (see CV Budget template):** Submit completed program budget using the template provided by CV. In addition, grantees will create a plan for securing the match necessary to support program implementation for at least the first three-year grant period.
- 8) Program Staffing and Management Structure:** Submit a summary of each staff person's roles, responsibilities, and overall structure of the staff that will be implementing the AmeriCorps program as well as providing oversight and monitoring of the program.
- 9) Partnership Development and Management:** Community partnerships are critical to AmeriCorps program success. To help ensure that AmeriCorps programs are sustainable and reflective of the communities in which they serve, California Volunteers requires that each program be supported by a public and private partnership. Partners should be identified through the planning period and include **a minimum of three independent organizations** that include **at least one public and one private partner** (nonprofit or for-profit entity). 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations are considered private entities. The primary members of the partnership must each have a significant role in planning, operating, and sustaining the program. The partner plans



must describe the AmeriCorps program's major partners and each partner's contribution to the program in supporting the implementation, oversight, and sustainability of the program.

**10) Member Support and Management:** Submit a summary of how AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their daily supervisors to provide effective service. Include plans for how supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations as well as program plans for onboarding, training, support and supervision.

**11) Compliance and Accountability Plans:** Submit summary of the monitoring and oversight plan to prevent and detect non-compliance and enforce compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities and criminal history checks at the grantee, subgrantee (if applicable), and service site locations. Include plans for how the program will address non-compliance.

**12) Data Collection Plan (see *CV Data Collection Plan template*):** Submit a summary of the data collection system and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data during the first three years of the grant. If a data collection system has not yet been developed, describe the plan and timeline for developing a high quality system. Describe how the program will use performance data (including proposed performance measures and other process and outcome measures if applicable) to improve its program in the first three years of funding.

#### **AmeriCorps Program Readiness Deliverables**

AmeriCorps Program Readiness deliverables are critical preparedness pieces to effectively operate an AmeriCorps program. In some cases entirely new systems and documents will be developed while in other instances, the legal applicant will need to adapt current systems to reflect the addition of AmeriCorps members. California Volunteers has a wealth of resources that can be used to aid in this development as well as an assigned Program Officer who will provide ongoing assistance.

#### **Program Staffing and Management Structure:**

- Program Oversight Plan
- Staff Position Descriptions
- Staff Timesheet Template (must be "functional")
- Staff Training Plan

#### **Partnership Development and Management:**

- Member Placement Site Application/Selection Process
- Member Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities
- Partnership Agreements (MOUs)
- Orientation and Training Plan for Site Supervisors
- Policy and Procedure for Collecting and Approving Member Timesheets
- In-Kind Match Documentation for Partners (if applicable)

#### **Member Support and Management:**

Onboarding:

- Member Recruitment, Application, and Selection Plan (My AmeriCorps Portal optional)
- Member Position Description
- Member Eligibility/Citizenship Screening and Documentation Process
- Member Service Agreement



Training:

- Member Pre-Service Orientation Plan
- Member Placement Site Orientation Plan
- Member Ongoing Training Plan
- Member Timesheet Template
- Member Performance Evaluation Template

Support and Supervision:

- System for Tracking Member Hours
- Member Individual Development Plan
- Performance Review and Feedback Plan
- Performance Improvement Process

**Compliance and Accountability Plans**

- Prevention: Training for staff, partners, sites and members on grant requirements and prohibited activities
- Detection: Monitoring plans for program oversight
- Resolution: Process for resolving compliance issues

**Data Collection:**

- Data Collection Plan (*CV form*)
- Performance Measurement Instruments (as noted in *Performance Measure Worksheets*)

**Other**

- Labor Organization Certification
- Secure Match Commitments
- Fiscal Readiness
- National Service Criminal History Checks Policy and Procedure for Staff and Members
- Member Service Gear Plan
- Website Page for AmeriCorps Program
- AmeriCorps Branding and Communication Policy and Procedure

**D. National Service Criminal History Check Requirement**

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a 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, AmeriCorps members, or volunteers) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend or education award through a program receiving CNCS funds (through either federal or grantee share of the budget). 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. Please budget on the CNCS share at least \$54 plus the cost of a state criminal history check per covered individual (both staff and members).

California Volunteers requires that all “Covered Positions” (program staff and AmeriCorps applicants) must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. Nationwide<sup>3</sup> name-based National Sex Offender Public Registry Check using NSOPW.gov;
2. Statewide Name- or Fingerprint-based Criminal History Registry Check in the State of residence at the time of application **and** in the State where the individual will serve or work;
3. FBI National Fingerprint-based Check

All checks must be conducted and any results considered according to Program and CV policy, with

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<sup>3</sup> An “Advanced Search” of geographic region will not satisfy this requirement. All states that make up the nationwide NSOPR database must be checked before the check is considered complete. Use of a vendor for this check is often not compliant. (See CNCS’ NSCHC FAQs regarding Vendors).



the individual cleared prior to the start of service and/or time on the grant. **This includes anyone listed on the budget whether grantee or match funded.**

In addition, California Volunteers requires that grantees comply with the following:

1. Follow all CNCS requirements outlined in 45 CFR §§ 2540.200 – 2540.207 and CNCS' most recent *NSCHC FAQs*; and
2. Follow CVs' definition that since all programs/grantees serve and/or enroll vulnerable populations, all covered staff and potential AmeriCorps members must complete the **State, FBI and NSOPW.gov** checks; and
3. Recheck the NSOPW.gov nationwide search prior to the start of each term of service for all returning AmeriCorps members; and
4. Ensure all required checks are completed, results are considered and the individual is cleared prior to becoming an AmeriCorps member eligible to earn hours and/or a staff person beginning work on an AmeriCorps grant; and
5. Appropriately documents the checks process and retains a verification form and NSOPW.gov results in each staff/member file; and
6. Has a written policy and procedures in place, which at a minimum addresses requirements 1-5.
7. Ensure one staff member be trained annually in National Service Criminal History Checks using CNCS' training module and maintain the resultant training certificate (per AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions).

Vendor checks (checks performed by commercial vendors) are often noncompliant with these requirements. Inability of a grantee to demonstrate that they have conducted an NSOPW and other required criminal history checks, as specified by CV may result in disallowance of all or part of the costs associated with noncompliance.

