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[CaliforniaVolunteers.CA.GOV](http://CaliforniaVolunteers.CA.GOV)

# 2020 AmeriCorps State-Supported Grants Continuation Funding Opportunity



## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

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## Applications due March 1, 2021

**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO APPLICANTS:** The following documents are necessary to complete an application for AmeriCorps funding under this opportunity. All can be found on the California Volunteers website, [californiavolunteers.ca.gov/Grants/ameriCorps/](http://californiavolunteers.ca.gov/Grants/ameriCorps/).

- (1) 2020 AmeriCorps State-Supported Grant Continuation Funding Opportunity Request for Applications (RFA)
- (2) 2020 AmeriCorps State-Supported Grant Continuation Funding Opportunity Application Instructions
- (3) 2020 AmeriCorps State-Supported Grant Continuation Funding Opportunity Application Forms
- (4) 2020 National Performance Measures Instructions
- (5) eGrants Instructions

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## OVERVIEW

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**State Entity Name:** California Volunteers  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** 2020 AmeriCorps State-Supported Grants Continuation  
**CFDA Number:** 94.006  
**State Funds:** 0650-102-001 General Fund

**Disclosure:** Funds requested under this opportunity are subject to applicable federal laws, rules, and regulations. References to specific regulations will be linked to e-CFR at [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov).

### Important Dates:

Proposals are due to California Volunteers at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on March 1, 2021.

### Our Purpose:

California Volunteers, within the Office of the Governor, is the State Service Commission for California tasked with engaging Californians in service, volunteering and civic action to tackle our State's most pressing challenges while lifting up all communities. California Volunteers supports more than 4,500 AmeriCorps State members annually who serve in communities across the state in the areas of education, disaster services, economic opportunity, healthy futures, environmental stewardship, and veterans and military families.

To help realize Governor Newsom's vision and commitment to build a California For All, the Fiscal Year 2020-21 California State Budget included \$10.1 million to sustain nearly 500 AmeriCorps service positions that were established with funding from the 2019 Budget Act. This historic state investment supports the expansion of AmeriCorps State service as well as augment the education award for full-time AmeriCorps members completing a minimum of 1700 service hours to \$10,000. As such, AmeriCorps programs that are currently receiving state matching funds from California Volunteers are eligible to apply for continuation under this Request for Application (RFA).

Eligible applicants may apply for a combination of state and federal funds to continue their current program design or propose a new program design that engage AmeriCorps members in activities directly related to the state's emergency response and recovery, such as COVID-19 efforts to help communities recover from the pandemic, activities that activate community climate action, services that combat food insecurity, education support to reduce learning loss, and programs that support economic opportunity. This Request for Applications should be read together with the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR Sections 2520-2550. The following documents are necessary to complete the grant application for 2020 Funding:

- (1) 2020 AmeriCorps State-Supported Grant Continuation Funding Opportunity Request for Applications
- (2) 2020 AmeriCorps State-Supported Grant Continuation Funding Opportunity Application Instructions
- (3) 2020 AmeriCorps State-Supported Grant Continuation Funding Opportunity Application Forms
- (4) 2020 National Performance Measures Instructions
- (5) eGrants Instructions



## APPLICATION TIMELINE

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This timeline is subject to change due to federal announcements and other events.

March 1, 2021	Continuation Applications due to CV; Applicants without 2020 Federal Award Enter Applications in Federal eGrants System**
March 9, 2021	Successful Applicants Notified
March 10-12, 2021	Application Resolution Period*
March 15-31, 2021	AmeriCorps HQ Review and Award Federal Grants
March – April, 2021	Contracting Process with State Begins

\* Applicants must be available during this timeframe to respond to any CV requests for additional information/clarification.

\*\* During this period, applicants must have appropriate staff available to enter and submit application into the federal web-based grants management system.



## I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

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### A. Funding Program Description

#### California Volunteers

California Volunteers (CV), within the Office of the Governor, is the state office tasked with engaging Californians in service, volunteering, and civic action to tackle our state's most pressing challenges while lifting up all communities. California Volunteers administers the AmeriCorps portfolio in California with over 80 programs providing critical services to more than 160,000 Californians annually. Led by the state's Chief Service Officer, Josh Fryday, California Volunteers is supported by a bipartisan 25-member Commission and a team of experts driven by a mission to empower and mobilize all Californians to volunteer and serve in their communities. Additionally, California Volunteers, per Executive Order and the State Emergency Plan, serves as the state lead for volunteer and donations management during disasters.

Successful grant applicants will be supported with FY 2020 State General Fund and federal funds allocated to California Volunteers from AmeriCorps, the federal agency connecting individuals and organizations through service and volunteering to tackle the nation's most pressing challenges.

#### Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

AmeriCorps provides opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to give their time and talent to strengthen communities across our country. Grant recipients identify their community need, then design and implement an AmeriCorps program that will leverage people power as a solution. They recruit, train and manage individuals, called AmeriCorps members, to deliver those services.

To serve as an AmeriCorps member (or fellow), an individual must meet the following minimum federal eligibility requirements:

- Be a U.S. Citizens, U.S. Nationals or Lawful Permanent Residents of the United States,
- Be at least 17 years of age (no upper age limit),
- Be a high school graduate or GED recipient (or working towards this goal); and
- Have passed required criminal history checks.
- Each grant recipient may add additional program-specific eligibility requirements.

AmeriCorps members may receive a living allowance and other benefits proportionate to their level of time commitment 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. In addition to receiving the federal Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, full-time members who complete a minimum of 1700 service hours will receive a California For All Education Award for a combined total value of \$10,000.

AmeriCorps grants include an allotment of service positions and provide partial funding to support program operating costs, including a living allowance for the AmeriCorps members. 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.**

### B. Priority Issue Areas

Eligible applicants may apply for a combination of state and federal funds to continue their current program design or propose a new program model that engages AmeriCorps members in activities directly related to the state's emergency response and recovery, such as:

- COVID-19 efforts to help communities recover from the pandemic, including vaccination support services such as volunteer recruitment and management, targeted outreach and education, administrative follow up and vaccination registration for vulnerable populations, particularly seniors, individuals with special needs, individuals without homes, and linguistically isolated communities.
- Activities that combat food insecurity.
- Activities that activate community climate action (see Attachment A).



- A program model that reduces learning loss due to distance education
- A program model that increases economic opportunities for communities by preparing for the workforce.

**C. Available Funds**

This opportunity includes approximately \$10.5 million in both state and federal dollars that have been appropriated for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021. The available funds provide continuation funding for programs supporting approximately 400 full-time equivalent service positions. These funds must be matched by at least 15% in other funding (in-kind and/or cash) secured by each applicant.

**D. Authority**

Federal 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.). State funds are available through 0650-102-001 2020-2021 General Fund.



## II. ELIGIBILITY

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### A. Eligible Applicants

AmeriCorps grantees that are currently receiving state matching funds from California Volunteers are eligible to apply for continuation under this RFA. This applies to specifically programs that were established through the FY 2019 Civic Action Fellowship Pilot, San Joaquin Valley Service Expansion, and Targeted Priority funding opportunities.

### B. Partnerships Requirements

#### General Community Partnerships Requirement

In order to maximize community involvement in the AmeriCorps program, all applicants are required to develop partnerships with at least three independent entities that include one public and one private partner (nonprofit or for-profit entity). Partners should have a significant role in planning, operating, and sustaining the program (e.g. match contribution, training resources, continuous improvement assessment, etc.).

#### Civic Action Fellowship Requirements

Continuation applicants originally funded under the 2019 Civic Action Fellowship Pilot RFA must also meet the following requirements:

- Participate in the Civic Action Fellowship Advisory Council
- Develop their own AmeriCorps Service Fellows admission criteria and manage their campus admissions process
- Recruit and enroll students as AmeriCorps Service Fellows
- Administers the Civic Action Fellowship program on their campus
- Integrate civic engagement and academic work for all Fellows
- Offer academic credit for civic engagement work
- Identify public/nonprofit partners to host and support the service of Fellows
- Ensures adequate support and supervision of Fellows

### C. 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](#). AmeriCorps 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)



### III. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

#### A. Project Period

Grants will support service activities for one year of operation within the performance period of April 1, 2021 through July 31, 2022. Successful applicants must allow up to 12 months for members to complete a term of service.

California Volunteers anticipates making a two-year grant commitment through this funding opportunity. California Volunteers generally makes an initial award for the first year of the period of performance, based on a one-year budget. Continuation awards for subsequent years are not guaranteed; they depend upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance. Consequently, continuation awards for subsequent years may be subject to a higher level of match requirements consistent with AmeriCorps federal regulations. California Volunteers reserves the right to adjust the amount of a grant award or elect to discontinue funding for subsequent years.

The program or project start date may not occur prior to the date the AmeriCorps grant contract is fully executed by California Volunteers. Grant contracts will not be executed until California Volunteers has received the official grant awards from AmeriCorps (the federal agency). Additionally, AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant contract and in eGrants. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period. This means AmeriCorps members may not begin service and the program must not incur costs on the AmeriCorps (CNCS) share of the budget prior to the contract execution date. More information on the contracting process will be provided prior to grant award.

#### B. Member Cost per Service Year

Applicants request for the number of AmeriCorps Member positions that are needed to address the community need stated in their application. A full-time (1700-hour) AmeriCorps Member position is equivalent to one Service Year (MSY). An AmeriCorps grant amount is determined based on the number of MSYs that a grantee will support at the cost per MSY amount established by California Volunteers for the state and federal cost shares.

Since the purpose of this RFA is to provide continuation funding to support year 2 of operation for current programs, each applicant's proposed cost per Member Service Year (MSY) should not exceed the cost per MSY awarded in year 1. The cost per Service Year limits for this opportunity are as follows:

**Table 1: California For All AmeriCorps Cost per MSY Limit**

Cost Share	Maximum Limit
Federal (AMERICORPS (THE AGENCY) Dollars)	\$7,920
State (CV Dollars)	\$20,000

**Table 2: Member Service Year Conversion**

Position Type	Minimum Hours	MSY Equivalence
Full-Time	1700	1
Third Quarter Time	1200	.70
Half-Time	900	.50
Reduced Half-Time	675	.3809524
Quarter Time	450	.26455027
Minimum Time	300	.21164022





### C. Estimated Award Amount

Grant awards have two components: operating funds and AmeriCorps Member positions. Operating funds awarded will include up to \$7,920 of federal grant funding and up to \$20,000 in state funds per one full-time equivalent service position. The total grant award will depend on the number of full-time equivalent AmeriCorps member positions requested. It does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn, which is covered directly by CV or AmeriCorps (the agency) outside of the grant.

Any program costs can be included on any combination of the federal, state, or grantee shares as reflected in the budget as long as the costs per MSY for each funding category are maintained.

CV will review applications and determine the final award amount based on availability of funds. Award amounts may vary from the requested amounts.

#### Methodology for Calculating Grant Request Amount

An applicant's grant amount is determined by the number of full-time equivalent Member positions requested multiplied by the amount of federal/state funds being requested (not to exceed the maximum limit). See Table 2 Member Service Year Conversion above.

*Example 1: Applicant is requesting for 50 Reduced Half-Time service positions (19.05 MSYs) and seeking the maximum federal and state cost per MSY:*

$(\$20,000 \text{ state dollars per MSY} \times 19.05 \text{ MSYs}) + (\$7,920 \text{ federal dollars per MSY} \times 19.05 \text{ MSYs}) = \mathbf{\$531,828 \text{ in total requested funds}}$  [\$380,952 in state funds and \$150,876 in federal funds]

*Example 2: Applicant is requesting for 40 half-time (20 MSYs) and 5 full-time (5 MSYs) Member positions, for a total of 45 positions and 25 MSYs at the maximum cost per MSY:*

$(\$20,000 \text{ state dollars per MSY} \times 25 \text{ MSYs}) + (\$7,920 \text{ federal dollars per MSY} \times 25 \text{ MSYs}) = \mathbf{\$698,000 \text{ in total requested funds}}$  [\$500,000 in state funds and \$198,000 in federal funds]

### D. Type of Award

The AmeriCorps grant award under consideration in this funding opportunity is a Cost-Reimbursement grant. Funds are accessible after costs have been incurred, on a reimbursement basis.

### E. Cost Share or Match Requirement

Successful applicants are required to provide a single overall match to the state and federal shares of at least 15 percent of the total program budget. Match may be cash or in-kind.

Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act (42 U.S.C. 12571(e)) requires that programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to CV on the Federal Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year.

The legal applicant is the entity responsible for meeting matching funds requirements. Programs may match their share of operating costs through cash or in-kind resources. Matching funds must be verifiable, not be included as match for other federal programs, be necessary and reasonable for the purpose of the proposed program, and be allowable under OMB cost principles. Successful applicants must demonstrate matching funds are secured before CV can issue the grant award. Additionally, successful applicants are required to maintain the awarded match and support any new costs not included in the grant award through match or its own or other resources.

### F. Indirect Costs

Applicants may include indirect costs in application budgets. Based on qualifying factors, applicants will either use a federally approved indirect cost rate, a 5/10 percent fixed option, a 10% *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly as outlined in [2 CFR § 200.413](#) Direct costs. States, local governments, and Indian Tribes may use approved cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across federal awards. Applicants that have a federal negotiated indirect cost rate or that will be



using the 10% *de minimis* rate must include the agreement in the application. However, under section 121(d) of the NCSA and AmeriCorps' regulations at [45 CFR 2517.710](#), no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants, of which up to two percent may be allocated to cover CV share of indirect costs. See *Grant Application Instructions* for more information on calculating indirect costs.

## G. Performance Measurement Requirements

Applicants are required to develop a set of performance measures using the California Performance Measurement Worksheets (PMWs) that addresses requirements described in the *Application Instructions*. Each applicant will need to complete at least three PMWs, that account for all service hours as follows:

- **Primary Need and Service Performance Measurement Worksheet**—Applicants must have at least one aligned performance measure (output and outcome) that corresponds to the primary service activity. Applicants proposing program service activities beyond the primary intervention are required to include additional aligned performance measures for those activities. Please note that CV values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures. Applicants should focus member service hours in service activities that are significant to the program's theory of change and intended outcomes.
- **Common Member Development Worksheet**—Applicants must have an aligned output and outcome that reflects the knowledge and skills members will gain through the program.
- **Common Strengthening Communities Worksheet**—Applicants must track the number of volunteers recruited by AmeriCorps members and service hours contributed by those volunteers to expand the impact and reach of the program in the communities served.

Due university restrictions, applicants that are currently part of the Civic Action Fellowship program may opt out of completing a Common Strengthening Communities Worksheet.

All three PMWs combined should account for all member service hours. CV values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of measures. For more information, see the *Application Instructions* for specific requirements for each required performance measurement area.

### National Performance Measures

National Performance Measures are developed by AmeriCorps (the agency) for each focus area. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance measurement strategy if the National Performance Measures are part of the applicant's theory of change. The National Performance Measures can be found in the *2020 National Performance Measures Instructions*. This document provides definitions, requirements, and guidelines that will help applicants determine which measures best apply to their program. All requirements for any National Performance Measures selected must be clearly included in the Performance Measurement Worksheets. Providing performance measures information elsewhere in the narrative cannot be in lieu of providing full information in the PMWs. Applicants will be required to report on the measures they select.

## H. Minimum Program Size

The minimum program size generally funded by CV is 20 MSY (full-time equivalent Member positions). California Volunteers believes this MSY requirement is necessary to provide members in quantities that make a substantial difference in meeting community needs. Applicants previously funded for fewer than 20 MSY may request that level in continuation. Any program requesting less than 10 MSY (regardless of if they were previously funded at that level) will need to provide a compelling justification in their Continuation Application. CV will consider the program's ability to utilize member slots awarded in making decisions on program size.

## I. Minimum Number of Members per Service Site

To ensure strong program design and to provide members with at least a minimal mutual support network, applicants must place a minimum of two AmeriCorps members at each service location as part of their program design. CV may, at its discretion, consider single-member placement sites that are proposed.



**J. Living Allowance**

The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members that are within the required range per member. Although strongly encouraged, living allowance are not required for part-time positions. A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. Programs are prohibited from comparing the member living allowance to an “hourly wage” in any recruitment materials, member handbooks, etc. Living Allowance costs can be included on the federal, state, or grantee shares of the budget or any combination of the three.

**Table 3: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance**

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Living Allowance
Full Time	1,700	\$14,279	\$28,558
Three-Quarter Time	1,200	n/a	\$20,159
Half Time	900	n/a	\$15,119
Reduced Half Time	675	n/a	\$11,339
Quarter Time	450	n/a	\$7,559
Minimum Time	300	n/a	\$5,040

**K. AmeriCorps Education Awards**

AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will receive a Segal Education Award from the National Service Trust. The amount of the Education Award is based on the value of the Pell Grant. The Education Award amounts for each member slot type is listed in the table below. Learn more about the Education Award here: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/segal-ameri-corps-education-award>.

The Segal Education Award for full-time AmeriCorps members funded through this opportunity will be supplemented by state funds for a combined total Education Award of \$10,000. At this time, the State Education Award supplement is only available to full-time members funded through this opportunity.

**Table 4: AmeriCorps Education Awards (Approved in FY 2020)**

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	Federal Education Award	State Education Award
Full Time	1,700	\$6,195.00	\$3.805
Three-Quarter Time	1,200	\$4,336.50	n/a
Half Time	900	\$3,097.50	n/a
Reduced Half Time	675	\$2,360.90	n/a
Quarter Time	450	\$1,638.89	n/a
AmeriCorps Affiliate (AT)	100	\$348.64	n/a

**L. Enrollment Requirements**

Enrollment rates ultimately affect the total number of AmeriCorps members awarded to California for service in California communities. Grantees are expected to enroll all MSYs awarded in the grant. California Volunteers reserves the right to adjust grantee budgets as needed in order to maintain awarded/contracted cost per Member MSY.

**M. Retention Requirements**

Retention rates are an indicator of the grantee’s ability to properly design and manage an AmeriCorps program that results in achieving the outcomes contracted. We expect grantees to pursue the highest member retention rate possible. Retention rates will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and recompetes processes. Applicants that do not retain members may receive a decrease in funding in subsequent years.



## IV. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

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### A. California Volunteers Review and Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed and selected for funding using an intensive multi-stage process that includes CV Staff Review, Clarification and Feedback, and CV Commission approval. This grantmaking process follows the policies adopted by the Commission, available on the CV website at [CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov](http://CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov). California Volunteers' review and selection process will occur in several stages as follow.

#### **Compliance Check**

California Volunteers staff will review all applications to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completeness requirements. Applications that are submitted by eligible organizations by the deadline and that meet minimal compliance check requirements will advance to Staff Review.

#### **Staff Review**

In Staff Review, reviewers will evaluate each application against the assessment criteria outlined in this RFA.

#### **Risk Assessment Evaluation**

CV staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds and the applicant's past performance (if applicable.) This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If CV determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. In evaluating risks, CV may consider the following, but not limited to:

- Financial capability and capacity to manage Federal funds
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant's record in managing previous AmeriCorps awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
  - Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements,
  - If applicable, meeting matching requirements, and
  - If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- Information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as—
  - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS),
  - U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
  - Dun and Bradstreet, or
  - "Do Not Pay"
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance (formerly OMB Circular A-133) and findings of any other available audits
- IRS Tax Form 990
- An applicant organization's annual report
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website
- Any other information listed in 45 CFR § 2522.140
- The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.
- Past Performance

Additionally, CV may use the results of the review of the risk assessment evaluation in determining which applications to fund. If CV concludes that the reasons for applicants having poor risk assessment evaluations are not likely to be mitigated, those applications may not be selected for funding.

#### **Selection**



Applicants must satisfactorily address all review criteria to be considered for funding. Successful applicants will be required to enter their full application into eGrants, the federal system for online awards management, after a period of clarification and feedback from CV.

**CV reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, if unforeseen challenges or exigent circumstances make it impossible, impractical or inefficient to execute the review process as planned. Any such adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria that will be used to assess applications submitted to CV in response to this RFA.**

**B. Assessment Criteria**

Each continuation applicant must demonstrate that they have met the criteria below. CV will review the Continuation Application Form as well as the program’s record in these areas:

- Compliance with member enrollment requirement
- Compliance with member retention requirement
- Progress towards meeting performance measure targets
- Compliance with National Service Criminal History Check requirements
- Compliance with other grant requirements
- Compelling justification for any waiver requested (e.g. minimum MSYs, two member per site, etc.)

In addition to meeting the above performance criteria, applicants requesting a new program design than has been implemented will be assessed on the quality of their response to the Program Narrative, Logic Model, Performance Measurement Worksheets, and Budget. California Volunteers reserves the right to not fund a new design if it does not satisfactorily address the standards identified in the Application Instructions for the Program Narrative, Logic Model, and Performance Measurement Worksheets. See the Continuation Application Form for details on addressing the above criteria.

**C. Potential Change to RFA Guidelines and Supplemental Guidance**

This *Request for Applications* was created in good faith and based on the most recent state and federal guidance available. These and other factors may require changes to the guidance and to this RFA. As necessary, CV will issue all updates and supplemental materials at the earliest possible date. All supplemental materials and updates will be available on the CV website at [CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov](http://CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov).

This RFA provides a broad overview of AmeriCorps guidance, highlighting many basic components and rules to provide a general understanding of the complexities and intricacies of AmeriCorps programming and requirements.

The full AmeriCorps regulations, [45 CFR § 2520-2550](http://www.ecfr.gov), are available online at [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov). Successful applicants will be required to comply with these regulations, AmeriCorps provisions, and federal and state policies. Federal funds provided under this grant are identified by the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 94.006. The AmeriCorps regulations include federal criteria used to select applicants for funding and other pertinent information (Table 4).

**Table 5: Program Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations**

Requirements and Selection	Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations
Member Service Activities	§2520.20 - §2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§2520.65
Tutoring Programs	§2522.900-2522.950
Matching Funds	§2521.35-2521.90
Member Benefits	§2522.240-2522.250
Calculating Cost Per Member Service Year (MSY)	§2522.485
Performance Measures	§2522.500-2522.650
Evaluation	§2522.500-2522.540 and §2522.700-2522.740
Selection Criteria and Selection Process	§2522.400-2522.475



## V. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

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### A. Submission to California Volunteers

Applicants must submit a two-part application to California Volunteers by the application deadline.

**Part 1:** The following required documents must be submitted by email to [Funding@CV.CA.GOV](mailto:Funding@CV.CA.GOV) by the application deadline:

1. Continuation Application Form
2. Expansion Application (if applicable)
3. Proposed Service Locations Worksheet
4. Program Narrative
5. Logic Model
6. Performance Measurement Worksheets
7. Budget (Excel)

Please review the Application Instructions for more information on completing these items.

**Part 2:** Electronic submission in eGrants. Applicants that have not already received a federal award for the 2020 program year will be required to submit the following application components into eGrants, the federal web-based management system:

1. Program Narrative
2. Performance Measures
3. Logic Model
4. Budget

Please review the eGrants Instructions for more information on submitting an application in eGrants.

### B. Application Submission Deadline

Applications must be received at [Funding@CV.CA.GOV](mailto:Funding@CV.CA.GOV) by **March 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time.**



## VI. 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), AmeriCorps General and Specific Terms and Conditions, and California Volunteers Policies and Requirements.

### B. AMERICORPS (THE AGENCY) Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this *RFA* will be subject to the 2020 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, and the 2020 AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the AmeriCorps General and Specific Terms and Conditions are available at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-AmeriCorps> (the agency)-grants..

### C. Uniform Guidance

All awards under this RFA are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), now consolidated in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 2205.

### D. Reporting Requirements

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

Once the grant is awarded, grantees will be expected to have data collection and data management policies and practices that provide reasonable assurance that they are providing CV with high quality performance measure data. At a minimum, grantees should have policies and practices which address the following areas of data quality:

- The data measures what it intends to measure;
- The grantee collects data in a consistent manner;
- The grantee takes steps to correct data errors;
- The grantee ensures that the data reported is complete; and
- The grantee actively reviews data prior to submission.

In addition to reporting of progress toward the grant's approved performance measure outputs and outcomes, additional demographic and narrative data must be reported annually (as applicable), including the number of applicants for AmeriCorps positions and the number of volunteers recruited and/or supported by members.

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

### E. 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. Applicants are required to 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' National Service Criminal History Check policy is that all "Covered Positions"<sup>1</sup> (staff and AmeriCorps applicants) listed on the awarded and/or contracted program budget, whether grant or match funded, must have all required Criminal History Check Components conducted and any results considered according to Program, CNCS and CV policy, with the individual cleared prior to the start of service and/or time on the grant. **Required Criminal History Check Components** are defined as follows:

1. Nationwide name-based National Sex Offender Public Registry Check using *True Screen*\*; **and**
2. Statewide Criminal History Registry Check in the State of residence<sup>2</sup> **and** in the State where the individual will serve or work (California)\* using *True Screen AND*
3. FBI National Fingerprint-based Check using *Fieldprint*

In addition, California Volunteers requires that the legal applicant:

1. Follow all CNCS requirements outlined in 45 CFR §§ 2540.200 – 2540.207 and CNCS' most recent *NSCHC and COVID 19 FAQs*; and
2. Follow CVs' stricter requirement that all covered staff and potential AmeriCorps members must complete the **State, FBI and NSOPW** checks; and
3. Ensure all required checks are completed as outlined above, prior to becoming an AmeriCorps member eligible to earn hours and/or a staff person beginning work on an AmeriCorps grant; and as of January 1, 2020 use the two approved CNCS vendors, True Screen and Fieldprint to conduct the checks.
4. Appropriately document the checks process using the *CV National Service Criminal History Check Verification Form* and retain printouts from True Screen and Fieldprint in each staff/member file;
5. Has a written policy and procedures in place, which at a minimum addresses requirements 1-5; and
6. Ensure one staff member be trained annually in National Service Criminal History Checks using CNCS' training module and maintain the resultant training certificate (per AC Terms and Conditions).

**\*Note:** True Screen is not able to obtain a California check. However, conducting the required Criminal History Check Components as outlined above assures that the legal applicant meets the federal requirements required by CNCS. If your program requires additional checks through the Cal DOJ to meet selection criteria, you may perform them and charge the grant, but do not have to report results to CV.

## F. Prohibited Activities

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or CV/AmeriCorps, staff and members may not engage in the following activities (see 45 CFR § 2520.65):

1. Attempting to influence legislation;
2. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
3. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
4. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;

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<sup>1</sup> A "covered position" is a position in which an individual serving or employed receives a living allowance, stipend, national service education award, or salary through a program receiving a grant under the national service laws. **Coverage is not dependent on the type of service the individual is performing, the individual's access to vulnerable populations, or whether the grantee or sub-grantee programs are using federal share or grantee matching share funds to pay the individual, including salary or stipends which may be counted as matching contributions [as defined by CNCS in most recent FAQs]. If they are included in your budget, they must have all checks done.** See 45 CFR § 2540.201 [[http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/fedregister\\_final\\_rule\\_oct\\_5\\_2012.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/fedregister_final_rule_oct_5_2012.pdf)].

<sup>2</sup> The State where a candidate "resides" is the location where the individual has made a home which he/she considers to be his/her place of residence at the moment in time that he/she applied to serve or work. College students must be handled differently. An individual applying to serve or work who is an enrolled full-time college student is deemed to be residing in the state where he/she lives for the purpose of attending the school without regards to whether or not that home is on- or off-campus, and whether or not that home is in the same state as the college is located. Programs may not opt to use any other basis for identifying the student's residence state, e.g., such as the student's family home. The state to check does not change because a student is on semester or summer breaks temporarily residing elsewhere, and there is no test needed to measure duration of residence while attending school [as defined by CNCS in most recent NSCHC FAQs].





5. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
6. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
7. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
8. Providing a direct benefit to— a. a business organized for profit; b. a labor union; c. a partisan political organization; d. a nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and e. an organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph C. 7. above, unless AmeriCorps assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using AmeriCorps funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
11. Such other activities as AmeriCorps may prohibit.

Members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-AmeriCorps funds.

## G. Unallowable Activities

In addition to the Prohibited Activities, the following restrictions also apply to the service of AmeriCorps members:

1. Non-duplication.
2. Corporation assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless there is non-displacement, Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides.
3. Non-displacement.
  - i. An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
  - ii. An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
  - iii. A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
  - iv. A participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
4. A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that—
  - i. Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
  - ii. Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
5. A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any—
  - i. Presently employed worker;
  - ii. Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
  - iii. Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;



- iv. Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
- v. Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

#### **H. Requests for Improper Payment Information**

At the request of AmeriCorps, CV may, from time to time, request documentation from grantees in order to monitor the award or to comply with other legal requirements, such as the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002, as amended. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on temporary manual hold, reimbursement only, or other remedies as appropriate. In addition, CV/AmeriCorps may, in appropriate circumstances, consider in its funding decisions any previous failures to make timely responses.

#### **I. Use of Material**

To ensure that materials generated with AmeriCorps funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, CV and AmeriCorps reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so ([2 CFR §200.315 \(b\)](#)).

#### **J. Reallocation of Funding**

California Volunteers reserves the right to re-focus program dollars in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.



## **California Climate Action Corps**

### **Meeting the Moment**

“California has invested more in wildfire prevention than any time in our history. Enacted bold climate policies. But it’s not enough. We must do more. We need action at EVERY level. California cannot do this alone.” -- Governor Newsom

As a part of California’s comprehensive strategy to address the climate crisis, California Volunteers is creating the country’s first statewide Climate Action Corps: to empower all Californians to take meaningful action to safeguard the climate.

#### **Problem Statement**

In order to realize our state climate goals and protect and preserve California’s vitality far more Californians need to engage with climate change in work, home, and community. This is particularly true among our frontline communities, who are often at greatest risk from climate change, already bear the brunt of environmental injustice, and have been historically left out of community development efforts.

At present, there is not a meaningful and accessible pathway to engage for all Californians. To unlock this potential and accelerate California’s climate leadership we must build organizing capacity on the ground. By supporting service opportunities, volunteer connections, and broad engagement campaigns with a focus on frontline communities, we can add capacity both within resource-strapped government agencies, and within more flexible organizations, such a non-profits, universities, businesses, and other leadership centers in civil society. Such support will catalyze greater engagement across California by facilitating new initiatives, fostering new partnerships, and motivating local action.

#### **Overall Objectives**

The overall objectives for the California Climate Action Corps are to

- Increase individual climate actions across California with an emphasis on frontline communities.
- Increase service and volunteerism around climate action across California with an emphasis on frontline communities.
- Foster other climate action initiatives across other levels of the pyramid that both increase action and volunteerism and create a more supportive overall context for Californians to take action on climate (e.g. workforce, educational and corporate engagement)

#### **Program Elements**

Designed by California Volunteers, California Climate Action Corps will deploy a “Service Pyramid” model to create opportunities for all Californians to engage in meaningful climate action.



The California Climate Action Corps will work to build opportunities that will:

- Serve
  - Increase pathways into and participation in the climate workforce by fostering professional development opportunities for Corps members.

- Catalyze community climate action and opportunity by supporting full-time service positions and summer service opportunities focused on organizing climate projects and creating volunteer opportunities in communities around the state.
- Catalyze student engagement in climate action for community impact, by supporting in school climate action service programming through university and schools partnerships.
- Volunteer
  - Expand private sector climate action opportunities by facilitating corporate “days of service” and employee climate action programs.
  - Foster deeper and broader engagement in and support for local climate action by creating a statewide hub to match organizations and projects with individuals who want to take climate action in their communities.
- Take Action
  - Create momentum and widespread engagement with climate action as an everyday individual activity by creating a broad promotional campaign around top climate actions every individual can take, tracking uptake, and celebrating outcomes.

