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

# California Climate Action Corps Summer Fellowship Funding Opportunity



**AmeriCorps**

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

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**Applications due February 10, 2021**

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**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) California Climate Action Corps Summer Funding Opportunity Request for Applications (RFA)
- (2) California Climate Action Corps Summer Funding Opportunity Application Instructions
- (3) California Climate Action Corps Summer Funding Opportunity Application Forms

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## OVERVIEW

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**State Entity Name:** California Volunteers  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** California Climate Action Corps Summer  
**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 Wednesday, February 10, 2021.

Final approved proposals will be submitted electronically in the federal eGrants system by March 5, 2020

### 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 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. 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. In September 2020, California Volunteers launched the [California Climate Action Corps](#), the country's first statewide corps of its kind with the mission of empowering Californians to take meaningful action to protect their homes, health and communities against the harshest impacts of climate change. As a foundational element of this new initiative, through 2021, California Volunteers is planning to deploy more than 250 AmeriCorps fellows to support local climate action projects in front-line and low-income communities across the state.

This funding will support grants to one or more implementing partner who will collaborate with California Volunteers to design and then manage the deployment of up to 236 part time AmeriCorps members for a Climate Action "Summer of Service."

The *Climate Action Corps Summer Fellowship Program Funding Opportunity* provides state and federal funds for intermediary organization to design, launch, and manage a program for AmeriCorps members to work with community partners in low-income communities to act as "Climate Organizers" facilitating climate action project implementation (especially through volunteer activities) and community education around one or more climate action focus areas.

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) California Climate Action Corps Summer Funding Opportunity Request for Applications
- (2) California Climate Action Corps Summer Funding Opportunity Application Instructions
- (3) California Climate Action Corps Summer Funding Opportunity Application Forms
- (4) 2020 National Performance Measures Instructions



## APPLICATION TIMELINE

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

February 10, 2021	Continuation Applications due to CV
February 16, 2021	Successful Applicants Notified
February 16-17, 2021	CV Review and Provide Feedback*
March 1-5, 2021	Applicants without 2020 Federal Award Enter Applications in Federal eGrants System**
March, 2021	AmeriCorps HQ Review and Award Federal Grants
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 Fellows. Grants are solely for program expenses and cannot be used for general organizational operating expenses. **AmeriCorps Fellows 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 Climate Action Corps

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 (those who are often at greatest risk from climate change, already bear



the brunt of environmental injustice, and/or have been historically left out of community development efforts)<sup>1</sup>.

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 as 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.

In September 2020, California Volunteers launched the [California Climate Action Corps](#), the country's first statewide corps of its kind with the mission of empowering Californians to take meaningful action to protect their homes and their health and communities against the harshest impacts of climate change. This initiative will engage people through a variety of levels and activities, from those who have an hour to commit at home, to those who can commit a year of service, and everything in between.

As a foundational element of this new initiative, through 2021, California Volunteers is planning to deploy more than 250 AmeriCorps fellows to support local climate action projects in front-line and low-income communities across the state. Fellows will receive a living stipend and, after completing a term of service, will be eligible for an education award.

This funding will support grants to one or more implementing partner who will collaborate with California Volunteers to design and then manage the deployment of up to 250 part time AmeriCorps members for a Climate Action "Summer of Service."

The *California Climate Action Corps Summer Fellowship Program Funding Opportunity* provides state and federal funds for intermediary organization to design, launch, and manage a program for AmeriCorps members to work with community partners in low-income communities to act as "Climate Organizers" facilitating climate action project implementation (especially through volunteer activities) and community education around one or more climate action focus.

- Urban tree planting initiatives that reduce greenhouse gasses, while lowering home energy bills in low-income communities and also protecting against extreme heat.
- Food rescue programs that conduct outreach to recover edible food that would otherwise be disposed from producers, restaurants, grocery stores and households.
- Home hardening and defensible space support programs that protect high-risk neighborhoods while also reducing toxic wildfire-related air pollution.

## **B. Targeted Program Initiatives**

California Volunteers is seeking one or more qualified implementing partners that can advance the goals of the California Climate Action Corps through implementation of a Climate Action Corps Summer Fellowship Program.

### **California Climate Action Corps Summer Fellowship Program**

California Volunteers is seeking for an applicant to collaborate with California Volunteers on program design and then implement a program that will deploy up to 250 300-hour AmeriCorps Members in frontline communities across California where they will support climate action project implementation and/or community climate action education.

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<sup>1</sup> There is no absolute or universal definition of "frontline communities." However, there are a range of definitions and indicators utilized in state programming and investment (many of which use the terms "disadvantaged" or "vulnerable" rather than frontline). See here for two approaches: [http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20200706-GPG\\_Chapter\\_4\\_EJ.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20200706-GPG_Chapter_4_EJ.pdf) or [http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/20180723-Vulnerable\\_Communities.pdf](http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/20180723-Vulnerable_Communities.pdf)



The successful applicant(s) for the California Climate Action Corps Summer of Service program will both work with California Volunteers staff on program design and recruit, train, and deploy up to 236 300-hour AmeriCorps members who will serve as summer Fellows. These Fellows will be placed with community partners who will utilize the members to implement a range of community climate action projects focused on one or more of the three focus areas above and/or should provide community education focused on mobilizing climate action among everyday Californians. Where possible and appropriate to the project activities, members should further support volunteer engagement as a feature of project implementation.

As this is a new initiative for an emerging program area, California Volunteers is looking for applicants who can collaborate closely with California Volunteers on the program design development versus applicants who will propose a fully defined program.

Required program elements for the **California Climate Action Corps Summer Fellowship Program** include:

- Work with California Volunteers on program design including member role, partnership expectations, project definition, and reporting procedures.
- If more than one grant recipient is selected, collaborate with other California Climate Action Corps Summer Fellowship grant recipients on program design, recruitment, and program delivery to ensure maximum reach and impact.
- Ensure one full-time program manager at 100% time is dedicated to managing the program.
- Identify and establish formal partnership agreements with sufficient Host Partners who will supervise the day-to-day work of the members in their communities.
- Manage the recruitment, selection, training, and support of up to 250 members serving a minimum of 300 service hours.
- Train and support AmeriCorps members to effectively support climate action project implementation and/or to deliver community climate education training; and
- Complete and ensure all staff and members in the budget have cleared all required criminal history checks (NSPOW, State DOJ & FBI checks) prior to service.
- Track and report on progress towards performance measurement targets

### **C. Available Funds**

This opportunity includes approximately \$1,396,000 million in both state and federal dollars that have been appropriated for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021. The available funds support up to 50 full-time equivalent or 236 300-hour ( ) service positions. These funds must be matched by at least 15% in other funding (in-kind and/or cash) to be awarded separately to selected applicants through the California Volunteers Fund Foundation. Funds awarded through this opportunity are only available to support one year of program implementation. Funding for subsequent years is contingent upon state and federal appropriations and may be subject to a higher level of match requirements consistent with AmeriCorps federal grants.

### **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

Typically, 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](#))

### B. Priority Initiative Specific Requirements

In addition to the above general eligibility requirements, applicants must meet specific requirements to qualify for each of the priority initiatives.

- Experience with AmeriCorps program implementation as a statewide intermediary.
- Experience working in the environmental field, preferably with a mix of environmental education, community engagement, and direct environmental project implementation experience.
- Experience working with and for frontline communities and/or on environmental justice issues.
- Strong history of recruitment and retention as an AmeriCorps program implementer
- Capacity to staff up as needed for a limited term program.

### C. Community Partnerships Requirement

In order to maximize alignment with the Climate Action Corps goals, Applicants will need to develop (in collaboration with California Volunteers) a Host Partner application and selection process that ensures selected Host Partners meet program responsibilities for

- Operating and sustaining the program (e.g. match contribution, training resources, member supervision and support, etc.);
- Defining and implementing appropriate projects (e.g. with defined climate action activities and/or community climate education);
- Focusing member service in frontline communities; and
- Committing to Climate Action Corps reporting and tracking requirements.

### D. 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)



### III. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

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#### A. Project Period

Grants awarded through this funding opportunity will support programming beginning in early summer of 2021. Successful applicants must start member service activities no later than June 1, 2021 and allow up to 3 months for members to complete a term of service.

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.

Additionally, the program may not start prior to the execution of the program's contract with CV, which means AmeriCorps members may not begin service, certify any member hours, or accrue costs on the CNCS share of the budget prior to the conclusion of the contracting process. More information on the contracting process will be provided prior to grant award.

#### B. Cost per Service Year (MSY)

Applicants request for the number of AmeriCorps Fellow positions that are needed to address the community need stated in their application. A full-time (1700-hour) AmeriCorps Fellow 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.

The cost per Service Year limits for this opportunity are as follows:

**Table 1: AmeriCorps Cost per MSY Limit**

<b>Cost Share</b>	<b>Maximum Limit</b>
Federal (CNCS Dollars)	\$7,920
State (CV Dollars)	\$20,000

**Table 2: Available Service Position Type and Service Year Conversion**

<b>Position Type</b>	<b>Minimum Hours</b>	<b>MSY Equivalence</b>
Minimum Time	300	.21164022

#### C. Award Amount

Grant awards have two components: operating funds and AmeriCorps Fellow 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 service positions requested. It does not include childcare or the value of the education award a Fellow may earn, which is covered directly by the awarding 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 Fellow positions requested multiplied by the amount of federal/state funds being requested (not to exceed the maximum limit). See Table 2 Fellow Service Year Conversion above.

Example 1: Applicant is requesting for 118 Minimum-Time service positions (24.97 MSYs) and seeking the maximum federal and state cost per MSY:

$(\$20,000 \text{ state dollars per MSY} \times 24.97 \text{ MSYs}) + (\$7,920 \text{ federal dollars per MSY} \times 24.97 \text{ MSYs}) =$   
**\$697,162 in total requested funds** [\$499,400 in state funds and \$197,762 in federal funds]

Example 2: Applicant is requesting for 236 Minimum-Time Fellow positions, for a total of 49.95 MSYs at the maximum cost per MSY:

$(\$20,000 \text{ state dollars per MSY} \times 49.95 \text{ MSYs}) + (\$7,920 \text{ federal dollars per MSY} \times 49.95 \text{ MSYs}) =$   
**\$1,394,604 in total requested funds** [\$999,000 in state funds and \$395,604 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

These funds must be matched by at least 15% in other funding (in-kind and/or cash) to be awarded separately to selected applicants through the California Volunteers Fund Foundation, which California Volunteers will connect successful applicants to upon selection.

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 CNCS's 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

Upon selection as an implementing partner, applicants will be required to work with California Volunteers to develop a set of performance measures using the California Performance Measurement Worksheets (PMWs). Only a summary of anticipated primary outputs and outcomes is required at the time of



application (see *Application Instructions* for more information). The full required performance measurement worksheets, accounting for all service hours are titled as follows: t:

- **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 Fellow service hours in service activities that are significant to the program’s theory of change and intended outcomes.
- **Common Fellow/Member Development Worksheet**—Applicants must have an aligned output and outcome that reflects the knowledge and skills Fellows 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.

Both PMWs combined should account for all Fellow 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.

### California Climate Action Corps Program Specific Primary Outputs and Outcomes

For the final program design applicants will be required to report on one or more of the following aligned measures. Working with California Volunteers in the program design stage, successful applicants will refine these measures (or define alternate ones) that align with the program goals and member roles.

### National Environmental Stewardship Performance Measures

EN3 (output)	Number of individuals receiving education or training in climate action practices
Definition of Key Terms	Climate Action Practices: Organized efforts to teach about individual behavior and choices people can make to address climate change in their lives and communities.  Education or training: substantive engagement of individuals with a specific education goal in mind. Cannot consist solely of mass dissemination of information such as email blasts, social media posts, or distributing pamphlets.
How to Measure/ Collect Data	How to Measure/ Collect Data Tracking mechanism that ensures an unduplicated count of individuals that have received services

EN3.1 (outcome)	Number of individuals with increased knowledge of climate change practices
Definition of Key Terms	Individuals: those reported in EN3
How to Measure/ Collect Data	Survey, interview, or other instrument capable of measuring changes in behavior at the individual beneficiary level. When possible, pre-post assessments should be utilized.

EN3.2 (outcome)	Number of individuals reporting a change in behavior or the intent to change behavior to address climate change.
Definition of Key Terms	Individuals: those reported in EN3



How to Measure/ Collect Data	Survey, interview, or other instrument capable of measuring changes in behavior at the individual beneficiary level. When possible, pre-post assessments should be utilized.
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### National Capacity-Building Performance Measures

G3-3.4 (outcome)	Number of organizations that received climate action capacity building services
Definition of Key Terms	<p>Organization: nonprofit or state/local/tribal government entity.</p> <p>Capacity building services: a set of activities that expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness of programs and organizations to address climate change in or for their communities including by leveraging resources (e.g., funding, volunteers, in-kind support, or partnerships) for programs and/or organizations, as demonstrated by reporting at least one of three project-specific capacity-building goals (Climate Activities, Community Engagement, Volunteer Support) were met as a result of services provided by AmeriCorps-supported organizations or national service participants.</p> <p>Capacity building activities must (1) be intended to support or enhance the program delivery model, (2) respond to the organization's goal of increasing, expanding or enhancing services in order to address pressing community needs, and (3) enable the organization to provide a sustained level of more or better direct services after the national service participant's term of service has ended.</p>
How to Measure/ Collect Data	Tracking mechanism that ensures an unduplicated count of organizations who have received services

### Applicant Determined – Community Climate Action

CCAC (output)	Number of community climate action projects undertaken
Definition of Key Terms	<p>Community climate action: measurable activities (e.g. trees planted, homes hardened, food waste diverted) that directly address and seek to mitigate climate change, or otherwise contribute to climate resilience and recovery while providing climate action engagement opportunities for everyday Californians through individual or volunteer activities.</p> <p>Undertaken: climate action projects that receive a minimum number of hours of service</p>
How to Measure/ Collect Data	How to Measure/ Collect Data Tracking mechanism that ensures an unduplicated count of climate action projects receiving services.

CCAC (outcome)	Number of community climate actions completed
Definition of Key Terms	Community climate action: measurable activities (e.g. trees planted, homes hardened, food waste diverted) that directly address and seek to mitigate climate change, or otherwise contribute to climate resilience and recovery while providing



	climate action engagement opportunities for everyday Californians through individual or volunteer activities.
How to Measure/ Collect Data	How to Measure/ Collect Data Tracking mechanism that ensures an unduplicated count of actions completed (e.g. trees planted, homes hardened, etc.)

**H. Minimum Program Size**

The minimum program size available in this funding opportunity is 25 MSY (full-time equivalent positions) for a total of 118 Minimum-Time (300-hour) service positions. Applicants may request either 25 MSY or 50 MSY. California Volunteers will only award one grant for 50 MSY to a single applicant or two grants for 25 MSY to two applicants.

**I. Minimum Number of Fellows per Service Site**

To ensure strong program design and to provide Fellows with at least a minimal mutual support network, applicants must place a minimum of two AmeriCorps Fellows 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 of \$X for Fellows. A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. Programs are prohibited from comparing the Fellow living allowance to an “hourly wage” in any recruitment materials, Fellow 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
Minimum Time	300	n/a	\$4,000

**K. AmeriCorps Education Awards**

AmeriCorps Fellows 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 Fellow 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 Fellows 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 Fellows funded through this opportunity.

**Table 4: AmeriCorps Education Awards**

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	Federal Education Award	State Education Award
Minimum Time	300	\$1,289.95	n/a

**L. Enrollment Requirements**

Enrollment rates ultimately affect the total number of AmeriCorps Fellows 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 Fellow 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 Fellow 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 recompetete processes. Applicants that do not retain Fellows 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 CNCS 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 application into eGrants, the federal system for online awards management.

***CV reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, in the event that 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**

See the *Application Instructions* for detailed guidance on responding to the following selection criteria in the Program Narrative:

### **Program Design**

- The applicant describes a program design addressing all relevant application instructions.

### **Organizational Capacity**

- The applicant describes their organizational capacity addressing all relevant application instructions.

### **Cost Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy**

- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.
- The cost per MSY must not exceed \$7,920 for the federal share and \$20,000 for the state share. The overall grantee share is at least 15 percent of the total proposed budget.

## **C. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information**

Prior to making any award that exceeds \$150,000, CV/CNCS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).

Any applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

CV/CNCS will consider any comments by any applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing its review of risk posed by the applicant under this section.

## **D. 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](#), 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**

<b>Requirements and Selection</b>	<b>Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations</b>
Fellow Service Activities	§2520.20 - §2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§2520.65
Tutoring Programs	§2522.900-2522.950
Matching Funds	§2521.35-2521.90
Fellow Benefits	§2522.240-2522.250
Calculating Cost Per Fellow 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 an application package with all required documents by email to [Funding@CV.CA.GOV](mailto:Funding@CV.CA.GOV) by the application deadline. A complete application package must include the following documents:

1. Application Summary Form
2. Preliminary Logic Model
3. Program Narrative
4. Performance Measurement Summary Form
5. Budget
6. Organizational Self-Assessment
7. Assurance and Certification
8. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Agreement (if applicable)

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

#### Page Limits

The Program Narrative may not exceed 10 double spaced, single-sided, pages in portrait orientation. The Logic Model may not exceed 3 pages.

### B. Application Submission Deadline

Applications must be received at [Funding@CV.CA.GOV](mailto:Funding@CV.CA.GOV) by **February 10, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time**.

### C. 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.



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

### B. CNCS Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this RFA will be subject to the 2020 CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and the 2020 Specific Terms and Conditions for the particular program (when applicable.) These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnsc-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 Fellows.

Failure to submit accurate, complete, and timely required reports may affect the grantee's ability to secure future AmeriCorps funding. For further guidance and training resources see – [CNCS Performance Measure Resources](#).

### 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>2</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>3</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

**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/CNCS, staff and Fellows may not engage in the following activities (see 45 CFR § 2520.65):

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<sup>2</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>3</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].



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;
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 CNCS assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
11. Such other activities as CNCS may prohibit.

Fellows 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-CNCS funds.

## G. Unallowable Activities

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

### Non-duplication.

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.

### Non-displacement.

- (1) 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.
- (2) An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- (3) A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
- (4) 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.
- (5) 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.
- (6) 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 CNCS, 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/CNCS 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 CNCS funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, CV and CNCS reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so ([2 CFR §200.315 \(b\)](#)).

#### **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.

