



1400 10th Street, Second Floor ■ Sacramento, CA 95814 ■ (916) 323-7646 phone ■ (916) 445-8317 fax

CaliforniaVolunteers.CA.GOV

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

AMERICORPS CALIFORNIA STUDENT SUCCESS COACH GRANT PROGRAM

Applications due March 31, 2022

Table of Contents

CONTACT INFORMATION.....	2
BACKGROUND.....	3
OVERVIEW.....	5
APPLICATION DETAILS AND TIMELINE.....	7

CONTACT INFORMATION

This Request for Applications (RFA) is available on the California Volunteers (CV) AmeriCorps funding webpage at californiavolunteers.ca.gov/grants/americorps.

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

Please submit questions about this funding opportunity to Funding@cv.ca.gov. Responses will be included in a list of **Frequently Asked Questions** (FAQs) that we will update periodically on the CV AmeriCorps funding webpage. Applicants are encouraged to submit their questions well in advance of the application deadline as CV is not obligated to respond to questions that are received 48 hours prior to the application due date.

BACKGROUND

State Entity Name:	California Volunteers
Funding Opportunity Title:	AmeriCorps California Student Success Coach Program
Announcement Type:	Initial Announcement
State Funds:	State General Fund

In February 2020, Assembly Bill 2533 (AB 2533), introduced by Assembly Member Gipson, co-authored by Assembly Members Kalra and Santiago and Senator Bradford, sought to establish the California Student Success Coach Grant Program to support and expand the presence of student success coaches in high-need schools throughout the state. Within AB 2533, a “student success coach” is defined as

an AmeriCorps member who serves full time with a team of other AmeriCorps members and collaborates with teachers to provide students with evidence-based academic, social, and emotional supports that prepare students for postsecondary and workforce success. A student success coach shall provide students with near-peer support, helping to establish positive developmental relationships and providing integrated social, emotional, and academic supports. A student success coach shall also provide supplemental classroom support to educators, allowing increased personalized learning and individualized support for students’ social, emotional, and academic development.¹

The introduction of AB 2533 informs key considerations for the Office of the Governor and the establishment of an investment of \$15M in the 2021-22 California State Budget for the AmeriCorps California Student Success Coach Grant Program (CA SSC Grant). This investment establishes a one-time general fund allocation to create the CA SSC Grant to “establish student success coaches in communities to nurture relationships with K-12 students and collaborate with teachers to help prepare students with skills and mindsets to achieve their goals.”²

As a result of California Gov. Gavin Newsom’s vision and investment, the CA SSC Grant Program will provide competitive grants to supplement AmeriCorps programs delivering the defined attributes and services of student success coaches in high-need schools throughout the state. The CA SSC Grant Program will be administered by California Volunteers (CV). A “high-needs school” is defined by the state of California as

A school of a school district or county office of education maintaining kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, with 30 percent or more of students from families with incomes below the federal poverty line.³

¹ California Student Success Coach Grant Program, AB2533, California State Assembly (2020).

² California Department of Finance, Budget Change Proposal (2021), Accessed by: https://esd.dof.ca.gov/Documents/bcp/2122/FY2122_ORG0650_BCP4826.pdf.

³ California Student Success Coach Grant Program, AB2533, California State Assembly (2020).

CV has received a one-time \$15 million investment to develop the CA Student Success Coach Grant program. This grant program will support, expand, and establish efforts that advance student success coaches in existing AmeriCorps programs. This funding will not be used to supplant AmeriCorps funding or resources. Funding will be used to develop and deliver learning and development for approximately 500 AmeriCorps members serving as student success coaches, in districts across California to support schools and students as they recover from the negative impacts of COVID-19, providing critical academic support and supports in SEL.

Through this grant program, CV is investing in the impact and learning of existing AmeriCorps education programs by securing Student Success Coach (SSC) programmatic training and technical assistance. This programmatic training and technical assistance will advance the six key drivers of the student success coach, as defined in the RFA, while also creating communities of practice and learning networks throughout California. The SSC TTA provider will be a leading expert in the student success coach work and will seek to: promote leadership development and programmatic quality across student success coach programs; share research and best practices to inform and evolve the impact of the student success coach; and advance awareness and engagement among participating Network partners and beyond.

OVERVIEW

The California Student Success Coach Grant Program is an initiative administered by California Volunteers (CV) in partnership with AmeriCorps programs that offer leadership and maintain a strong track record in evidence-based practices in the delivery of student success coaching. As the State Service Commission for California, CV is responsible for engaging Californians in service, volunteering, and civic action to tackle our State's most pressing challenges and lift-up all communities. By supporting more than 4,000 AmeriCorps State members annually, California Volunteers aims to inspire the next generation of civic leaders, create a pathway to debt-free college, and build a culture of service and civic engagement in California. Through the Student Success Coach Grant Program investment, CV will administer grants to existing AmeriCorps education and youth development programs dedicated enhancing the impact of student success coaches serving in California. Eligibility for these grants is defined by the following three pathways:

- (1) **Existing Student Success Coach AmeriCorps Program Support:** Direct investment to support implementation and operating efforts of existing AmeriCorps student success coach programs, who deliver a coaching model with great fidelity, as defined;
- (2) **Aspiring Student Success Coach AmeriCorps Planning Support:** Direct investments to support planning efforts of existing AmeriCorps education and youth development programs who currently deliver at least three of the drivers defining aspects of the student success coach model with great fidelity, yet desire to incorporate additional drivers of the model. This pathway also includes direct investments to existing SSC AmeriCorps programs who are exploring expansion of their service, including: increasing the number of student success coaches through recruitment, hiring, and onboarding practices; investing in additional training and development of existing AmeriCorps student success coaches to serve in new sites; and/or exploring and enhancing partnerships with districts/schools to secure placement of additional student success coaches.
- (3) **Student Success Coach Programmatic Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Engagement Support*:** Direct investment for one existing AmeriCorps student success coach program to develop and provide state-wide programmatic training and technical assistance—including the design and execution of curriculum, framework for implementation, and a learning network and communities of practice—to advance the awareness, support, expansion, and establishment of impact and success metrics of the California Student Success Coach Grant program, as defined.

SSC Programmatic TTA is intended only for the advancement of critical drivers identified as essential to the implementation of a student success coach program, as defined. The selected

provider will display demonstrable impact in this work, focusing on facilitating a learning network and communities of practice for all grantees. The selected TTA provider will support Planning recipients in their programmatic implementation over the course of two years. This TTA is limited to this scope of work only. All training and technical assistance pertaining to AmeriCorps grant applications, compliance, grant management, financial obligations, among other topics for the administration of an AmeriCorps grant remains an offering solely of California Volunteers staff, and not a function of the SSC Programmatic TTA investment area.

All grant recipients that intend to expand and establish Student Success Coach programs are expected to fully participate in the learning network and appropriate community of practice experiences permitting a continuous improvement experience that will aid in the replication of student success coach programs throughout the state, and critical lessons and early proof points for the nation.

APPLICATION DETAILS AND TIMELINE

Description of Funding Opportunities

California Volunteers, the administrator of the California Student Success Coach Grant Program, defines three funding opportunities to advance the vision and potential impact of student success coaches throughout California. The following table articulates three funding opportunities.

Funding Priority Area	Priority Eligibility and Considerations	Funding Amount* (Total Estimates)
Existing SSC AmeriCorps Programmatic Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing AmeriCorps programs implementing all six drivers defining the student success coach framework, as defined by Intentional Futures (pg. 11); Pursuing investments to advance and enhance the presence of SSCs, including as match for allowable program costs for an awarded AmeriCorps federal grant; Requiring participation in the Student Success Coach Learning Network and community of practice opportunities 	\$10,000,000 over two years
Aspiring SSC AmeriCorps Planning Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing AmeriCorps programs implementing at least three of the drivers defining the student success coach framework, as defined by Intentional Futures (pg. 11); Pursuing investments to create conditions and foster alignment to and growth of SSCs, including, but not limited to: development and implementation of additional framework elements into program design; partnership and/or strategic planning; recruitment, selection, placement, and training activities; and managing program site partners and expansion of service for further SSC implementation; Requiring participation in the Student Success Coach Learning Network and community of practice opportunities 	\$2,400,000 (Up to \$150,000 per program over two years)
SSC Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Engagement Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing AmeriCorps programs implementing all six drivers defining the student success coach framework, as defined by Intentional Futures (pg. 11); Pursuing investments to create conditions and advance efforts to support impact, growth, and expansion of student success coaches, including, but not limited to: professional development; program impact and evaluation/research efforts; awareness and recruitment campaigns; data-driven practices, strategic planning and programmatic implementation supports; Designing and facilitating the Student Success Coach Learning Network and community of practice opportunities for grantees within the California Student Success Coach Grant Program; Providing technical and SSC program development support to selected Student Success Coach planning grantees over the two-year planning period to ensure successful implementation of the framework Reporting impact, describing opportunities for expansion and sustainability across California 	\$1,850,000 per program over two years
Administrative and Personnel Costs	California Volunteers will set aside roughly 5 percent of the investment to effectively implement the grant program.	750,000
Total		15,000,000

Disclosure: Publication of this Announcement of Funding Opportunity (RFA) does not obligate California Volunteers (CV) to award any specific number of grants or to obligate any particular amount of funding. CV reserves the right to adjust funding amounts based on number of funding requests and available funds.

APPLICATION DETAILS AND TIMELINE

Eligibility

The California Student Success Coach Grant Program is open to currently-operating AmeriCorps programs in California with strong track records in the implementation of the student success coach model, as defined, and/or existing AmeriCorps programs implementing at least three drivers associated with the student success coach framework, as defined by Intentional Futures (iF) in the Target Product Profile (TPP). The iF authors published a working hypothesis for the student success coach framework that includes the voices of those most proximate to the work, as well as thought-leaders in youth development and holistic student support. In its entirety, the TPP provides an evidence-based resource that informs measures of fidelity and program effectiveness and communicates critical functions and facets of the work in support of the establishment and/or expansion efforts for new program implementation.

To be eligible for any of the above grant opportunities, applicants must have a currently-operating AmeriCorps in California that:

- Have a program model and focus on youth development/mentoring/coaching that implements at least three of the key drivers
- Be an AmeriCorps program in year one or two of the grant period
- If in year three of the AmeriCorps grant period, will receive funding from CV and/or AmeriCorps to operate in 2022-23. Awards for successful applicants in this category will be conditioned upon their ability to implement an AmeriCorps program in 2022-2023.

Applicants for the **Existing SSC AmeriCorps Programmatic Support** and **SSC Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Engagement Support** grant program must include, in their narrative, direct connection and measures of impact as associated with all six drivers of the TPP student success coach framework.

Applicants for the **Aspiring SSC AmeriCorps Planning Support** grant program must include, in their narrative, direct connection and measures of impact as associated with at least three drivers of the TPP student success coach framework.

The following table showcases the six drivers the TPP hypothesizes as imperative for the implementation of effective, sustainable SSC programs.

Student Success Coach Target Program Profile: The Six Drivers

Driver: Authentic coach/student relationship

Driver: Data-informed programming

As near-peers, SSCs develop an authentic relationship with each of their students, which grounds their work and motivates the coach to complete their year of service as well. Key markers of this developmental relationship are trust, genuine care, and belonging. SSCs promote more equitable outcomes for their students by involving them in decision-making and elevating student voice to teachers and other school staff.

SSCs and site-based staff⁴ leverage quantitative and qualitative data to identify students for services, monitor progress for interventions, and improve programming.

Driver: Diverse group of skilled coaches

A thoughtful, data-informed recruitment process is employed by program staff to attract a diverse cohort of SSCs who are adaptable, diligent, reflective, and committed to students. Once accepted to serve, program staff ensures that proper supports — including asset-based framing of service expectations and benefits to support SSCs in acclimating to the school community and city — are in place for SSCs to begin their service year.

Driver: Ongoing learning and development

SSCs begin their year with pre-service training and continue through a year-long scope and sequence of professional learning. This learning and development is designed to be a recursive experience that supports intentional sense-making of their evolving identity as a practitioner as they continually improve their skill attainment through feedback and reflection loops. In this way, the SSC is experiencing a learning process, similar to the one they are delivering to students, that enables them to improve their practice and acquire skills that prepare them to be changemakers who can work across lines of difference.

Driver: Supportive program structure

The program is grounded in an understanding of positive youth development, which informs how program staff support SSCs as well as how SSCs support students. SSCs are full-time AmeriCorps members who serve in schools in teams. Full-time, site-based staff develop district partnerships, support SSCs, and secure sustainable funding sources. The program maintains certain elements, such as providing research-based, integrated academic, social-emotional, and attendance supports, while adapting to priorities and vision of the individual school community.

Driver: Intentional school integration and holistic supports

Teachers collaborate closely with SSCs, who integrate with school staff by attending meetings and aligning their efforts with school-wide programs and curricula. This integration is driven by a site-based staff member, who works with the broader school staff to ensure an effective synergy between the SSCs and the school community. SSCs have frequent and consistent student contact, both in the classroom and across the school environment, and promote a positive school climate. The program focuses on the whole child, with SSCs integrating social, emotional, and academic supports, leading to improved outcomes.

APPLICATION DETAILS AND TIMELINE

Application Instructions

⁴ Site-based staff includes individuals who are staff members and located at the central office or embedded in the school community

Each application must clearly describe the applicant’s plans to use grant funding in one or more of the funding areas outlined above. We urge all applicants to submit a high-quality application which carefully follows the guidance in the RFA. Applications will be assessed based on the quality of the response to criteria described below.

Applications should be submitted via email to funding@cv.ca.gov no later than **5:00 PM PST March 31, 2022**.

If an applicant is requesting funds for multiple categories, the applicant must submit a single application that includes separate narrative documents and budgets for each funding category.

Applications must include:

- Student Success Coach Grant Title Page
- Narrative (one Narrative for each funding category)
 - No longer than eight (8) double-spaced pages using size 12 font (for each funding category)
 - Title Page and Narrative(s) should be submitted as a single PDF named PROGRAM-NAME-SSC-2022.pdf
- Budget
 - Excel document using Template named PROGRAM-NAME-SSCBUDGET-2022.xls
 - Note: Indirect costs are limited to 10% of modified total direct costs unless the applicant has a federally approved indirect cost rate.

Please submit Title Page and Narrative documents as a single PDF. Please submit the Budget document as an Excel spreadsheet.

NARRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Please respond to the narrative prompt for the funding area for which you are requesting funds. Narrative responses should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages using size 12 font (for each funding request).

Existing SSC AmeriCorps Programmatic Support:

1. Describe how your existing program operationalizes the student success coach model in California, including: number of Corps members, number of school districts and school sites served, number of students engaged annually, and recent outcome data.
2. Briefly describe how your program operationalizes all six of the student success coach drivers outlined in this RFA.
3. Explain specifically how the grant funding will be used to enhance existing efforts, including the number of additional coaches, students, and sites that these funds will support that would otherwise not be possible.

4. Outline targets for the following (over two years): Target number of Corps members, target number of youth engaged, target number of school districts and school sites.
5. Describe the staffing structure that will support this grant and ensure successful implementation.

Aspiring SSC AmeriCorps Planning Support

1. Describe how your program operationalizes the student success coach model in California, including: number of Corps members, number of partners/sites, number of youth engaged annually, and recent outcome data.
2. Briefly describe which of the six student success coach drivers your program currently implements and how.
3. Briefly describe your program's plans to expand programming to include at least one additional student success coach driver.
4. Explain how, if applicable, your program intends to use these funds to support: partnership and/or strategic planning; recruitment, selection, placement, and training activities; and managing program site partners and expansion of service for further SSC implementation.
5. Outline a timeline (over two years) for the plans delineated in Questions 3 and 4.

SSC Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Engagement Support

1. Describe the program's qualifications to serve as a student success coach TTA provider for AmeriCorps programs in California.
2. Describe specific implementation plans for TTA over the course of two program years.
3. Outline how the program will effectively support SSC Planning grant recipients in implementing their respective planning goals over the course of two years.
4. Describe how the program will measure success as the TTA provider.
5. Explain specifically how the grant funding will be used, with particular attention to the staffing structure that will support the grant and ensure successful implementation.

APPLICATION DETAILS AND TIMELINE

Review Process

Applications will be reviewed and selected for funding using a multi-stage process that includes Compliance Review, CV Staff Review, and Clarification/Feedback as described below.

Compliance Review

California Volunteers staff will review all applications to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completion requirements.

An application is compliant if the applicant:

- is an eligible organization
- submitted an application by the submission deadline
- includes all required application components

Staff Review

In Staff Review, reviewers will evaluate each application against assessment criteria outlined in advance.

Clarification

The application review process for this grant competition will include a Clarification Period. During the Clarification Period, applicants may be asked for clarifying information regarding issues of significance and may be asked for corrections or changes to elements of the application and budget. This information is used by CV in making final funding recommendations. Applications may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked clarification questions. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to a request for clarification adequately and in a timely manner may result in the removal of its application from consideration.

Selection

The primary consideration in the selection of AmeriCorps programs is merit. Eligible applicants that satisfactorily address the clarification request will be considered for funding in rank order based on the application's total score by each priority area.

Results of the grant review process are presented to Chief Service Officer, who makes final approval of funding decisions. Funding decisions are final—there is no appeal process.

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.

Award Administration Information

California Volunteers will award State General Funds for this opportunity. As such, grants awarded will be issued on a cost-reimbursement basis. Grantees will send invoices no less frequently than quarterly and may invoice monthly.

Successful applicants for ***Existing SSC AmeriCorps Programmatic Support*** should have the flexibility to use these funds as a match source for their AmeriCorps cost-reimbursement grant as direct program costs.

Reporting Requirements

Recipients are expected to submit at least three progress reports which are due at specific times during the life cycle of the award. All reports must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time. Depending on the funding area, grantees will be required to submit a narrative assessment of progress toward goals and/or an assessment of programmatic changes implemented as part of this funding opportunity.

Grantees are required to provide a final close out report.