

Request for Applications

2022 California Volunteers Place-Based Initiative State Funding Opportunity

A. Overview

Application Timeline

January 4, 2023	RFA Posted
January 18, 2023	Application Deadline
January 19-20, 2023	Application Review Period
January 23-27, 2023	Successful Applicant Notification and Clarification Period
January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023	Project Period*

* Project Period start date is dependent upon the date that the grant contract is executed

B. Program Description

B.1. Funding Purpose

The California Volunteers' Place-Based Initiative Funding supports a coalition of AmeriCorps State programs established to improve educational outcomes for underserved students in the City of Stockton and the Central Valley. The coalition works alongside a convening organization to achieve deeper community impact through three key criteria: (1) Leveraging co-investment partnerships in AmeriCorps grant resources and evidence-based service solutions, (2) Engaging local community citizens as service members and agents of change, and (3) Coordinating multiple national service interventions to provide comprehensive wraparound educational support for economically disadvantaged students.

This funding opportunity emphasizes measuring the impact of service with a focus on the issue area of Education. To carry out California Volunteers intent of these resources, and to maximize the impact of the investment of bringing national service members to Stockton and the broader Central Valley region, resources will be focused on supporting these specific issue areas within the Education focus area:

- Early Childhood Education: Supporting early childhood education interventions and ensuring that students are entering Kindergarten ready to learn.
- K-12 Success: Improving educational and behavioral outcomes for underserved students in elementary, middle, and high schools; and increasing youth engagement and civic empowerment through service learning.
- Post-Secondary Success and Completion: Improving the preparedness of underserved students for success in post-secondary educational institutions.

By delivering support to students through a coordinated approach, California Volunteers expects that program partners will achieve deeper community impacts and create a powerful service experience that strengthens connection across differences and instills in members a lasting commitment to their community and civic participation.

B.2. Coalition Partnership Requirement

AmeriCorps grants funded as part of the California Volunteers Place-Based Initiative are required to develop and maintain written partnership agreements as part of the coalition supported by this funding opportunity. The agreements will articulate the alignment between individual program design with the broader Place-Based Initiative framework and education plans of

participating schools, as well as the parties' plan for ongoing collaboration throughout the grant period. The agreements must be made available to CV upon request.

The partnership agreements must be consistent with the awarded application plans, and articulate how the key entities responsible for program implementation will work together along the following elements of high-quality partnerships between participating schools, Reinvent Stockton Foundation, and community-based organizations:

- *Managing collaboratively:* Jointly establishing program direction and priorities, planning, budgeting, training and aligning program staff, communicating across the partnership, and continuously improving program services.
- *Sharing data and evaluation:* Sharing information, data, performance measures, and evaluation strategies that guide project management, resource allocation, and service delivery while maintaining data privacy requirements.
- *Sharing resources:* Jointly using resources such as staff, funding, administrative systems, school facilities, curricula, and instructional materials.
- *Clarifying and communicating roles and responsibilities:* Clearly articulating roles and responsibilities for each partner organization to help optimize program services and limited resources.

In addition, partnership agreements must also address the following strategies, when applicable:

- *Aligning in-school and out-of-school.* Coordinating to ensure that out-of-school academic and enrichment efforts complement in-school instruction and programming.
- *Coordinating on safety, health, and student supports.* Coordinating to promote school and community safety, reinforce health and wellness programming, and provide necessary student supports.
- *Cooperating on family engagement.* Coordinating interactions with families to strengthen positive family engagement that reinforces learning in multiple settings.
- *Coordinating among CBOS.* Coordinating and establishing agreements between multiple community-based organizations (CBOs) when working with the same schools and students.

To promote a strong AmeriCorps identity and connection to a critical common mission among members, all program partners will engage AmeriCorps members in group trainings and service days such as but not limited to:

- AmeriCorps Consortium Quarterly Leadership Development Training: professional skill development (i.e. mock interviews, resume review, professional networking, etc.)
- Community Orientation/Introduction Training: history and vision of Stockton, including the role of National Service moving forward
- Data/Continuous Improvement Training: how to review and assess data for progress monitoring of students and school performance.
- Quarterly Service Days (e.g. Martin Luther King Day, Global Youth Service Day, Make A Difference Day, LOVE Stockton Day)

B.3. Evaluation Requirement

AmeriCorps grants funded as part of the California Volunteers Place-Based Initiative are required to complete an evaluation. Grantees receiving a combined state and federal grant below \$500,000 must conduct an internal evaluation of their program, while grantees receiving \$500,000 or more must arrange for an independent evaluation of their program. The evaluation reports will be due to California Volunteers upon completion of the three-year grant term.

C. Award Information

C.1. Estimated Available Funds

This California Volunteers Place-Based Initiative opportunity provides state supplemental funding to continue funding for the second three-year grant period of the Stockton Placed-Based Initiative as well as support the scaling of interventions by participating programs into other communities in the Central Valley. In alignment with the AmeriCorps federal three-year grant period, the total funds available through this funding opportunity is approximately up to \$2 million in state funds each year for up to three years (2022-2023, 2023-2024, 2024-2025).

Continuation funding for year 2 and 3 of the funding period is not guaranteed and may be dependent upon:

- Satisfactory performance that signals the grantee is on track to achieve its proposed performance measures at the end of the grant
- Demonstrated capacity to manage the grant
- Compliance with grant requirements, including terms and conditions, criminal history checks, reporting and match requirements
- Availability of Congressional appropriations and/or state funding

C.2. Estimated Award Amount

Award amounts are based on the number of Member Service Years (MSYs). Awards are calculated based on the cost per MSY and cannot exceed \$12,712 per MSY.

Requested funds generally should not exceed the amount of state support identified in the applicant's awarded federal AmeriCorps State budget. However, additional state funds may be requested up to \$12,712 per MSY if those funds are utilized to augment living allowance to meet CV's minimum requirement and/or support capacity building to benefit member recruitment, retention, and/or the member experience.

C.3. Period of Performance

Successful applicants will be issued grant contracts in January 2023 to support operation through December 31, 2023.

C.4. Type of Award

AmeriCorps grants in this Funding Opportunity are awarded on a Cost Reimbursement basis.

D. Eligibility Information

D.1. Eligible Applicants

Currently funded 2022 California Volunteers Place-Based Initiative grantees are eligible to apply for funding through this opportunity:

- Reading and Math, Inc.
- Improve Your Tomorrow
- Changeist
- Stockton Service Corps

E. Application and Submission Information

E.1. Content and Form of Application Submission

E.1.a. Application Content

- Printout of the following awarded 2022 AmeriCorps State grant components:
 - Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet, Narratives, and Performance Measures printed from eGrants
 - California Performance Measurement Worksheets

- State Funding Application Narrative
- State Share Budget

E.1b. Other Documents

- Evaluation Plan

E.1.c. Page Limits

The State Funding Application Narrative must not exceed 4 double-spaced pages. This limit does not include the State Share Budget or other application components.

E.2. Application Submission Deadline

Applications must be received no later than Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 5:00pm Pacific Time to be considered.

CV will not consider applications received after the deadline, except when noted below. CV reserves the right to extend the submission deadline and any notice of such will be posted on the funding opportunity website.

E.3. Late Applications

All applications received after the submission deadline published in the RFA are presumed to be non-compliant. CV may, at its discretion, consider an application received after the deadline if the applicant submits a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay and any substantiating evidence. The written explanation and evidence must be received no later than one business day after the application deadline. CV determines whether to accept a late application for review on a case-by-case basis.

Communication with CV staff is not a substitution for the above protocol. Applicants that do not submit a justification or any other evidence to overcome the presumption of non-compliance within the required timeframe will not be reviewed or selected for award.

Please note: CV will not consider an advance request to submit a late application. Applicants are encouraged to continue working on their application until it is submitted. If you are experiencing technical difficulties, please carefully review and follow the guidance above, and submit your application as soon as possible.

E.4. Application Submission

Applications must be submitted electronically via email to funding@californiavolunteers.ca.gov by the deadline. All required documents must be submitted as separate files in the following formats:

1. Printout of awarded grant documents from eGrants – PDF (.pdf)
2. State Funding Application Narrative – PDF (.pdf) or Word (.docx)
3. State Share Budget – Excel (.xlsx)
4. Evaluation Plan – PDF (.pdf) or Word (.docx)

F. Application Review Information

F.1. Selection Criteria

Applications will be assessed based on the quality of the response to the criteria outlined below. Reviewers will score each application component based on the weights identified.

F.1.a. State Funding Application Narrative (75 percent)

All applicants must submit a Narrative that addresses the following criteria:

- Applicant clearly describes how the supplemental state funding will be utilized in their existing 2022 program.
- Applicant clearly justifies the need for supplemental state funding, including the impact of not receiving the supplemental state funding.
- Applicant describes their role in the collaborative efforts of the California Volunteers Place-Based Initiative, including how their contributions add value to the coalition and support achieving the desired collective impacts.
- Applicant describes their efforts to date and future plans for ensuring their program will be fully enrolled and all members will be retained for their term of service.
- Applicant describes plan and infrastructure for program sustainability beyond the current three-year investment of state funding.

F.1.b. State Share Budget (25 percent)

- 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 budgeted match (State Share + Grantee Share) is equal to or more than the percentage in the applicant's current budget.
- The state share cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum cost per MSY.
- The MSY is equal to the number in the applicant's current award.
- The federal share is equal to the amount in the applicant's current award.

F.1.c. Evaluation Plan (0 percent)

Applicants should use the evaluation plan template to craft their evaluation plans. The template document provides detailed information about the AmeriCorps evaluation requirements and specifies the information that must be provided for the evaluation plan to be approved by California Volunteers. The evaluation plan will not be scored.

F.2. Review and Selection Process

F.2.a. 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 that address any compliance issues within 24 hours will advance to Staff Review. See section E. Application and Submission Information to ensure submission of a compliant grant application. Applications that have noncompliant issues identified may be disqualified or have points deducted from the application's final score.

F.2.b. Staff Review

California Volunteers staff will evaluate each application against the assessment criteria described in this RFA. Staff will review applications in teams of at least two and come to a consensus score for each criterion. Applications that do not meet a minimum score threshold will be released from consideration.

F.2.c. Clarification Period

The application review process for this grant competition will include a Clarification Period, during which time applicants may be asked for clarifying information regarding issues of significance in the application and budget. This information is used by CV in making final funding recommendations. Not all applications are clarified. A request for clarification does not guarantee an award. Applications may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked clarification questions. An applicant's failure to respond to a request for clarification adequately and in a timely manner may result in their removal from consideration.

F.2.d. Selection

Applicants must meet a minimum score threshold and satisfactorily address all clarification issues to be recommended for funding. Funding recommendations will be presented to the Chief Service Officer for final approval. Final selection is subject to approval or receipt of federal funding from AmeriCorps.

G. Award Administration Information

G.1. Grant Contract

California Volunteers will notify applicants selected for funding and begin the contracting process. Grant contracts must be executed by both California Volunteers and the applicant organization before any expenses can be incurred on the state share of the budget.

G.2. Administrative and Policy Requirements

G.2.a. Uniform Guidance

All awards made under this Request for Applications are considered matching funds to the applicant's federal AmeriCorps State grant, and as such are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 2205.

G.2.b. Request for Monitoring or Payment Integrity Information

California Volunteers or AmeriCorps will request documentation from award recipients in order to monitor the grantee and award to ensure compliance with legal requirements, including the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on manual hold, reimbursement only status, or other remedies as appropriate.

G.2.c. AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions

The state funds awarded under this Request for Applications are considered matching funds to the applicant's federal AmeriCorps State grant and subject to the FY 2022 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, and the FY 2022 Program-Specific Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the AmeriCorps General and Program-Specific Terms and Conditions for each program is available on the [AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant webpage](#).

G.3. Use of Material

To ensure that materials generated with AmeriCorps funding are available to the public and readily accessible to recipients and non-recipients, 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).

G.4. Reporting

All awards under this RFA are considered matching funds for existing 2022 AmeriCorps State grants and as such all activities and expenditures associated with this award should be incorporated into the reports submitted for that award.