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[CaliforniaVolunteers.CA.GOV](https://californiavolunteers.ca.gov)

2023 California Climate Action Corps Expansion Funding Opportunity



**CALIFORNIA CLIMATE
ACTION CORPS**



AmeriCorps

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications due May 17, 2023

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO APPLICANTS: The following documents are necessary to complete a 2023-24 operating grant application for funding to support the California Climate Action Corps. All can be found on the California Volunteers website, <https://californiavolunteers.ca.gov/grants/americorps/>.

- (1) 2023 California Climate Action Corps Expansion Request for Applications (RFA)
- (2) 2023 California Climate Action Corps Expansion Application Forms

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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

Please submit questions related to this RFA to funding@cv.ca.gov.

OVERVIEW

State Entity Name:	California Volunteers
Funding Opportunity Title:	2023 California Climate Action Corps Expansion Funding Opportunity
Announcement Type:	Initial Announcement
CFDA Number:	94.006

Disclosure: Publication of this Announcement of AmeriCorps State Grant Funding Opportunity (RFA) does not obligate California Volunteers (CV) to award any specific number of grants or to obligate any particular amount of funding. The actual level and timing of grant funding will be subject to the availability of State General Funds and federal appropriations. 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.

Important Dates:

- **Deadline:** The **Complete Application** is due to CV by **5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Wednesday, May 17, 2023**.
- **Application Notification:** Applicants will be notified of their status and final funding decisions will be made no later than June 2023.

Our Purpose:

California Volunteers is the State Service Commission responsible for engaging Californians in service, volunteering, and civic action to tackle our State's most pressing challenges and lift up all communities. California Volunteers has engaged local communities through innovative and impactful grant making and program development at both the state and local levels for nearly 30 years. By supporting more than 4,500 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.

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 are limited meaningful and accessible pathways 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 2022, California Volunteers deployed more than 400 AmeriCorps fellows to support community engagement in local climate action projects in front-line and low-income communities across the state. All Fellows received a living allowance and were eligible for an education award upon completion of their term.

The *2023 California Climate Action Corps Expansion Funding Opportunity* provides state and federal funds for an intermediary organization to continue and expand the existing Governor's Initiative California Climate Action Corps. The selected intermediary organization will collaborate with California Volunteers to develop and deliver an expansion of the California Climate Action Corps: an annual deployment of 345.87 Member Service Years (MSYs) of AmeriCorps members.

This *2023 California Climate Action Corps Expansion Funding Opportunity* should be read together with the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR Sections 2520-2550. The following documents are necessary to complete the application for funding to support program implementation in 2023-2024: 1) 2023 California Climate Action Corps Expansion Funding Opportunity Request for Applications (RFA) and 2) 2023 California Climate Action Corps Expansion Funding Opportunity Grant Application Forms

APPLICATION TIMELINE

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

May 17, 2023	Applications due to CV in eGrants by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time*
May 18-19, 2023	Application Review Period
May 22, 2023	Applications Selected for Funding or Release Notified
May 22-26, 2023	Application Clarification and Strengthening Period**
May 26, 2023	Applications entered into eGrants
May 29-31, 2023	Electronic Application Review/Final Edits
May 31, 2023	California Volunteers Deadline to Submit to AmeriCorps
June - October 2023	Contracting and Program Launch

* Applicants should give themselves ample time ahead of the deadline to submit their application in eGrants.

** Applicants and their partnership representatives must be available during this timeframe to respond to CVs' clarification requests and feedback to strengthen their application.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Funding Program Description

California Volunteers

As the State Service Commission for California, California Volunteers (CV) is tasked with engaging Californians in service, volunteering, and civic action to tackle our State's most pressing challenges while lifting up all communities. Josh Fryday, State of California Chief Service Officer, leads the agency in consultation with a 25-member Commission appointed by the Governor. The Commission develops and adopts policies that guide the State's AmeriCorps grantmaking process.

California Volunteers receives federal funds to support service programs in California from AmeriCorps, the federal agency that brings people to tackle the country's most pressing challenges, through national service and volunteering. AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serve with organizations dedicated to the improvement of communities. Learn more at AmeriCorps.gov.

Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

AmeriCorps is a national service program that provides opportunities for Americans each year to serve their country as AmeriCorps members by engaging in intensive results-driven service that addresses community problems. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. AmeriCorps members are recruited, trained, supervised, and managed by the funded organization, and may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of a full-time (1700-hour) term of service, AmeriCorps members are eligible to receive up to \$10,000 in education award funds from California Volunteers and the National Service Trust that they can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

To be eligible to serve in an AmeriCorps program, an individual must be:

- U.S. Citizen;
- U.S. National or Lawful Permanent Resident of the United States;
- At least 17 years of age (no upper age limit); and
- High school graduate or GED recipients (or working towards this goal).

Additionally, selected candidates must meet National Service Criminal History Check requirements (see Award Administration Information Section).

AmeriCorps grants are awarded on a competitive basis to eligible organizations proposing to engage members in *evidence-based or evidence-informed* interventions to strengthen communities (see *Mandatory Supplemental Guidance*). Grants are solely for program expenses and cannot be used for general organizational operating expenses. AmeriCorps members or grant funds can help meet unmet needs or can expand an organization's ability to better address community needs, but cannot be used to duplicate, displace or supplant resources that already exist in a community.

California 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 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)¹.

¹ 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 or http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/20180723-Vulnerable_Communities.pdf

At present, there are limited meaningful and accessible pathways to engage all Californians. To unlock this potential and accelerate California's climate leadership, we must build organizing capacity on the ground. By supporting direct 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 organizations such as nonprofits, educational institutions, tribes, 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, 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 2022, California Volunteers deployed more than 400 AmeriCorps Members (called Fellows) to support community engagement in local climate action projects in primarily frontline and low-income communities across the state. All Fellows received a living allowance and were eligible for an education award upon completion of their term.

The *2023 California Climate Action Corps Expansion Funding Opportunity* provides state and federal funds for an intermediary organization to collaborate with California Volunteers to design, launch, and manage an expansion of the program for AmeriCorps members to serve with Host Partners as "climate organizers", facilitating community engagement and implementing climate projects through a range of service activities – volunteer recruitment, climate action, and climate education. The intermediary organization may work with one or more *Regional Partners* to help recruit host partners and members, coordinate placements within their own organizations and other organizations, and support and manage both host partners and members throughout the term.

B. Targeted Program Initiative

Funding will support a grant to one intermediary organization who will collaborate with California Volunteers to develop and deliver the expansion of the California Climate Action Corps.

The California Climate Action Corps is a unique and strategic program for California Volunteers because it is 1) central to the mission, 2) leveraging significant additional state investments, and 3) serving as a model and catalyst for broader movements in the climate service field. For all these reasons, California Volunteers will play a more engaged role in implementation than in traditional programs.

This is a unique intermediary role, as the selected organization will act on behalf of a Governor's initiative to implement an expansion of an existing innovative statewide program delivered through a network of partners. As such, the desired organization should be capable of playing a strategic administrative role in delivering a cohesive program infrastructure (e.g., recruitment and onboarding, payroll, partner and member training, etc.); coordinating contracts, activities, and outcomes from partners; building and coordinating statewide programming consistent with existing design; serving as a bridge to other California Volunteers climate programming; and helping to capture and convey the collective impact of this program.

The successful applicant for the California Climate Action Corps program will work with California Volunteers staff on program design and implementation. Implementation may include an additional 63.94 member service years (MSY) to start in fall 2023 concurrent with existing programming or split between full-time fall 2023, three-quarter time winter 2023-24, and minimum-time summer 2024. In addition, this intermediary will support greater integration and cohesion for climate service by helping to bridge and connect the California Climate Action Corps program with the #CaliforniansForAll College Corps and Youth Jobs Corps, in addition to other climate-related service programs as needed. The intermediary will coordinate with selected campuses, cities, and other program grantees on service opportunity

identification and general relationship development to foster efficiency, cohesion, and future expansion opportunities for the California Climate Action Corps.

If the selected intermediary utilizes Regional Partners to coordinate and support service placements for cohorts of AmeriCorps members within their own organizations and/or other Host Partners, California Volunteers may collaborate on the recruitment of those partners. The priority for identification and selection of Regional Partners will be state agencies, local jurisdictions, or organizations with a track record of successful implementation of similarly sized programs. Regional Partners may be allocated financial support based on cohort size through the program budget to support staffing and expenses related to implementation. The selected intermediary will work with Regional Partners to recruit, place, and support Host Partners and AmeriCorps members throughout the term. These members will be placed in roles where they mobilize Californians through climate volunteer engagement and implement a range of climate projects in the core focus areas (e.g., urban greening, organic waste and edible food recovery, and wildfire resiliency) through climate action, education, and assessment. A majority of placements should be focused on frontline communities and/or located within community-based organizations serving frontline issues in their communities.

The selected intermediary will also host and manage approximately 10-15 full-time members who will serve as team leaders to help train, coordinate, and support regional cohorts of members to engage their communities in climate volunteer projects throughout the state, including travel as needed to provide onsite support for member or other statewide volunteer projects, and serve as program ambassadors to support communications and outreach needs.

If the selected intermediary utilizes the minimum-time summer placements, the selected intermediary will collaborate with California Volunteers to coordinate two-month service placements throughout the state. The selected intermediary may work with Regional Partners to recruit, place, and support AmeriCorps members serving 300 hours each. Regional Partners will be allocated financial support based on cohort size as part of the budget for staffing and expenses related to implementation. Members will be placed in roles where they mobilize Californians through climate volunteer engagement and implement a range of climate projects in the core focus areas (e.g., urban greening, organic waste and edible food recovery, and wildfire resiliency) through climate action and education. A majority of projects should occur in and/or serve frontline community climate needs.

Service activities for AmeriCorps members will be defined through collaboration with California Volunteers, but all service activities should include or combine the following elements:

- Volunteer Engagement: A strong volunteer coordination and engagement component to foster service activities as a means for greater community engagement. All members are expected to participate in substantial volunteer engagement (i.e., approximately 100 volunteers or more per full-time member).
- Climate Action: Defined and measurable climate pollution reduction mitigation, adaptation, or resiliency activities. Service activities will continue to prioritize the existing core focus areas (see below). However, as local jurisdictions, NGOs, geographic, or climate needs/demand changes, variation in focus areas may be considered if the service is trackable within the defined performance measure activities.
 - Urban greening initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate the effects of extreme heat, and provide additional benefits such as decreased pollution and energy consumption in low-income communities.
 - Organic waste and edible food recovery initiatives that support the reduction and recycling of organic waste, as well as collection and redistribution of edible food that would otherwise be disposed from producers, restaurants, grocery stores and households to people in need.
 - Wildfire resiliency initiatives that support defensible space, home hardening, and fuel reduction programs to protect high-risk communities while also reducing toxic wildfire-related air pollution, as well as reforestation programs post-fire.

- Climate Education: Structured delivery of climate-related content or curriculum focused on building awareness and engagement with climate issues among community members.

Other key program elements for the California Climate Action Corps Fellowship include:

- Collaborate with California Volunteers on program design including member role, partnership expectations, project definition, reporting procedures, member experience, and training plan.
- Ensure at least one full-time program manager at 100% time is dedicated to managing the program.
- Identify and establish formal partnership agreements with sufficient Regional and Host Partners who will supervise the day-to-day service of the members in their communities.
- Manage the recruitment, placement, training, and support of an estimated 345.87 MSY (primarily full-time members serving 1700 service hours, with partial MSY dedicated to three-quarter time members serving 1200 service hours or minimum-time summer members serving 300 service hours if desired).
- Train and support AmeriCorps members to effectively engage volunteers and implement climate action and education projects.
- Work to align and integrate California Climate Action Corps Fellowship volunteer engagement with broader California Climate Action Corps and California Volunteers regional engagement strategies.
- Support broader coordination with other key California Volunteers climate initiatives, particularly the #CaliforniaForAll College Corps and Youth Jobs Corps programs.
- 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 progress towards outcome and performance measurement targets on a monthly and as needed basis.
- Respond to communications requests by providing necessary information and facilitating partner and member engagement in site visits, events, and responses to media inquiries.
- Respond to data requests by providing necessary information on an as needed basis.

C. Estimated Funds Available

California Volunteers anticipates making two-year grant awards to continue and expand the California Climate Action Corps program. This opportunity includes up to \$8,869,036 of federal funding and \$4,421,132 in state local assistance funding to support the 2023-2024 year of program implementation for up to 345.87 Member Service Years (or full-time equivalent positions). Funding for subsequent years is contingent upon availability of state and federal appropriations and satisfactory performance. Expansion funds awarded through this RFA will supplement or be in addition to the original grant award issued by CV for the selected eligible applicant.

California Volunteers recognizes that the minimum living allowance requirement for each slot type established for this RFA is substantially higher than the levels included in the previous RFA issued by CV. Therefore, in order to provide equity in living allowance amounts for AmeriCorps member slots of similar positions in the applicant's current program who will serve during the same timeframe as those funded as part of this RFA, applicants may request up to \$540,000 in additional state funding to supplement the living allowance for existing slots. This supplemental state funding is only available to successful applicants who are also currently operating a California Climate Action program funded by California Volunteers. Applicants wishing to request for additional state supplemental funds to augment living allowance for existing members must include an updated 2022 Budget that reflects the living allowance increase for members serving in the 2023-24 program year.

D. Performance Measurement Requirements

Consistent with AmeriCorps guidelines, all applications must include a set of performance measures using the California Performance Measurement Worksheets (PMWs) that address requirements described below. Applicant will need to include the following two PMWs with their application:

- Primary Needs and Service Performance Measurement Worksheet—Applicants must report aligned primary performance measures (output paired with outcome) that correspond to the primary program needs and service activity.
- Member Development Worksheet—Applicants must describe the training and other professional development that members will gain through the program.

California Climate Action Corps Primary Needs and Service Performance Measures

The California Climate Action Corps program design has suggested primary needs and service performance measures. The below metrics are guidelines for the applicant to build their performance metrics in collaboration with and approved by California Volunteers. Performance measures must include:

- **Climate Volunteer Engagement.** The metrics will report the number of volunteers, projects, and partners are included; how volunteers' participation impacts their commitment to continue climate volunteerism in their community; and how projects completed increased the organizations' ability to deliver services and/or increase climate activity in their community.
- **Climate Action.** The metrics will report the number of climate action projects undertaken.

Applicants should also add a performance measure for Climate Education and can add a performance measure for Climate Assessment if desired. General guidance principles and suggested approaches are below. Note the specific language below does not need to be followed explicitly for the optional Climate Assessment performance measure. As long as applicants propose a performance measure addressing the intent, they may suggest alternative tracking approaches based on their experience and program design.

These performance measures are presented in order of importance to the program goals (volunteer engagement, action, education, assessment) and as such, California Volunteers would expect targets, MSY allocations, and outcomes to reflect that prioritization.

Required Primary Measure Target #1: Climate Volunteer Engagement (Applicant Determined)

Community members who want to be engaged in helping their community combat the impacts of climate change.

CCAC (output)	<p>Number of community climate volunteers recruited.</p> <p>Number of community climate action volunteer projects undertaken with number of host partners.</p>
CCAC (outcome)	<p>Number of volunteers engaged in climate action who will report an increased commitment to continue climate volunteerism in their community.</p> <p>Number of host partner organizations that will report that community climate action volunteer projects completed throughout the term of service increased the organization's ability to deliver services and/or increased climate activity in their community.</p>
How to Measure/ Collect Data	Tracking mechanisms that ensure an unduplicated count of community climate volunteers participating in climate service projects, impact of participation on volunteers' continued climate volunteerism, and impact of projects on host partners' ability to deliver service and/or increased climate activity.

Required Primary Measure Target #2: Climate Action (Applicant Determined)

Defined, measurable activities (e.g., trees planted, homes hardened, organic waste diverted) that directly address and seek to mitigate climate change, or otherwise contribute to climate resilience and recovery.

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, pounds of organic 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. Projects may or may not include volunteers.</p> <p>Undertaken: climate action projects that receive a minimum number of hours of service</p>
How to Measure/Collect Data	Tracking mechanism that ensures an unduplicated count of climate action projects receiving services.

Required Measure: Climate Education (National Environmental Stewardship Performance Measure)

Structured delivery of climate-related content focused on building awareness and engagement with climate issues among community members.

EN3 (output)	Number of individuals receiving education or training in climate action practices
Definition of Key Terms	<p>Climate Action Practices: Organized efforts to teach about individual behavior and choices people can make to address climate change in their lives and communities.</p> <p>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.</p>
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 intention 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.

Optional Measure: Climate Assessment (Applicant Determined)

Assessments, inventories, or audits, focused on compiling discrete information that enables direct action, such as neighborhood tree cover or residential home wildfire risks. Does not include comprehensive whole community assessments such as a greenhouse gas inventory or a long-term planning activity.

CCAC (output)	Number of community climate assessments undertaken
Definition of Key Terms	<p>Community climate assessment: discrete and defined assessments related to a specific climate need. For example, conducting assessments of residential wildfire risk by neighborhood or inventories of tree cover in urban neighborhoods. Assessments are defined by the unit of impact (homes, neighborhoods, structures) with a clearly documented climate benefit that can be realized by utilizing the assessment information (e.g., deploying defensible space programs or increasing tree canopy for urban heat island reductions), and for which actions are currently inhibited by lack of information.</p> <p>Undertaken: climate assessment 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 assessment projects receiving services.

CCAC (outcome)	Number of community climate assessments led to community action
Definition of Key Terms	<p>Community climate assessment: discrete and defined assessments related to a specific climate need. For example, conducting assessments of residential wildfire risk by neighborhood or inventories of tree cover in urban neighborhoods. Assessments are defined by the unit of impact (homes, neighborhoods, structures) with a clearly documented climate benefit that can be realized by utilizing the assessment information (e.g., deploying defensible space programs or increasing tree canopy for urban heat island reductions), and for which actions are currently inhibited by lack of information.</p>
How to Measure/ Collect Data	Tracking mechanism that ensures an unduplicated count of assessments completed (e.g., homes assessed for fire risk, tree canopy maps completed)

E. Additional Reporting Requirements

In addition to the required Performance Measures, applicants are expected to measure the following data points, but are not required to provide a target at the time of application:

- Number of community climate volunteers recruited for one-time activities.
- Number of community climate volunteers recruited for ongoing activities.
- Number of volunteer hours completed for one-time activities.
- Number of volunteer hours for ongoing activities.
- Number of trees planted
- Number of trees maintained
- Number of trees donated
- Number of pounds of edible food diverted from landfills
- Number of pounds of other organic waste diverted from landfills
- Number of pounds of recovered food distributed to people in need
- Number of homes/structures protected from wildfire
- Number of acres of land treated for wildfire resiliency

F. Authority

These funds are available under authority of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1990, as amended, (NCSA) (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.). State funds are available through 0650-043-BCP-2021-MR General Fund.

II. ELIGIBILITY

A. Eligible Applicants

To be eligible to apply, the applicant must be a current grantee of California Volunteers that is operating a California Climate Action Corps program in 2022-23.

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 community engagement, environmental education, 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 expand staff support (directly or through subcontracting) as needed

C. Community Partnerships Requirement

In order to maximize alignment with the California Climate Action Corps goals, the selected intermediary will collaborate with California Volunteers to develop selection processes for Regional Partners and Host Partners that ensure all member service sites meet program responsibilities for:

- Operating and sustaining the program (e.g., member supervision and support, training resources, etc.)
- Defining and implementing appropriate service projects
- Focusing a majority of member service in frontline communities; and
- Committing to California Climate Action Corps reporting and tracking requirements.

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

All applicants **must** register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/> and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If an applicant is awarded a grant, it must maintain an active SAM registration throughout the life of the award. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at:

https://sam.gov/SAM/transcript/Quick_Guide_for_Grants_Registrations.pdf.

SAM registration must be renewed annually. CV suggests that applicants finalize a new registration or renew an existing one at least three 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.**

AmeriCorps will not make awards to entities that do not have a valid SAM registration and DUNS or Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the time AmeriCorps is ready to make a Federal award, AmeriCorps may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

Applicants must include an Employer Identification Number.

Applicants can obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at the [DUNS Request Service](#). AmeriCorps recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date if applicants do not yet have their UEI.

The Federal government is implementing Unique Entity Identifiers (UEI) as part of the SAM registration process to eventually replace DUNS numbers. AmeriCorps may ask applicants to add the UEI to their

application as part of the clarification or pre-award process. AmeriCorps is adding a field to capture the UEI in eGrants. If you already have a UEI and the UEI field is available in eGrants, you can enter it at the time you submit your application.

III. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

A. Project and Award Period

The grant award covers a two-year project period (2023-2024 and 2024-2025). Applications must include proposed activities and a detailed proposed budget for the first year of operation. California Volunteers expects that programmatic activities for the second year of operation will build upon and be similar in scope to those of the first year. Continuation funding for subsequent years is not guaranteed and shall be dependent upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance. California Volunteers reserves the right to adjust the amount of a grant award for subsequent years or elect to discontinue funding for subsequent years.

Grants awarded through this funding opportunity will support program startup activities as soon as May 2023, and programming beginning as early as September 2023. Successful applicants must ensure all member slots awarded for the first year of implementation are recruited and enrolled in the My AmeriCorps Portal no later than September 18, 2023 and allow up to 12 months for members to complete a term of service. Additionally, the program may not start member service activities prior to the execution of the program's federal grant contract with California Volunteers. As such, AmeriCorps members may not begin service, earn any service hours, or accrue costs on the federal grant prior to the conclusion of the contracting process. More information on the contracting process will be provided at funding notification.

B. Cost per Member Service Year (MSY) - Funding Request Maximums

Funding requests are in proportion to the number of full-time equivalent service positions referred to as Member Service Years (MSYs) supported by the California Climate Action Corps program. This is known as the *cost per MSY*. It is the 'cost' to the state and federal government, in support of the AmeriCorps program. The grant *cost per MSY* is determined by dividing the total state/federal share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested.

The total number of MSYs available for this opportunity is 345.87 per year (primarily full-time members serving 1700 service hours, with partial MSY dedicated to three-quarter time members serving 1200 hours or minimum-time summer members serving 300 service hours if desired). The cost per MSY for the entire program budget for the state and federal shares are as follows:

Table 1: Maximum Cost per MSY

Cost Share	# MSYs	Maximum Cost Per MSY Limit	Maximum Funding Request
Federal Share (CNCS/AmeriCorps Dollars)	345.87	\$25,643	\$8,869,036
State Share (FY22 State General Funds)		\$26,428	\$1,420,679
State Share (FY23 State General Funds)			\$3,000,453
State Share (FY22 CCAC BCP Funds)*			\$859,547*
State Share (FY23 CCAC BCP Funds)*			\$3,860,000*

Note: the funds denoted with an asterisk (*) are not included in this funding opportunity. Those funds are to be identified in the budget, but the availability of those funds will be contingent upon selection in a separate Request for Proposals.

C. Type of Grant

This AmeriCorps grant will be awarded on a Cost Reimbursement basis. The chart below provides a summary of the Cost Reimbursement grant type available through this RFA:

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement
Available Subtypes	Traditional
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	All slot types
Budget Submission Required at time of Application	Yes

Availability of Funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSYs	No
Special Requirements	N/A
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes
Available to new Applicants	Yes

D. Cost Sharing or Matching

As a result of legislative investment, the full match costs for this program will be provided through allocation from state general funds. Applicants are not required to secure external funds for match.

E. Indirect Costs

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants will either use a federally-approved indirect cost rate, a 10 percent *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly as outlined in [2 CFR § 200.413](#). States, local governments, and Indian Tribes may use previously-approved indirect cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across federal awards. Applicants that have a federal negotiated indirect cost rate or that will be using the 10% *de minimis* rate must include the agreement in the application. However, under section 121(d) of the NCSA and AmeriCorps'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.

F. Minimum Program Size

The minimum program size available in this expansion funding opportunity is 345.87 MSY (full-time equivalent positions). California Volunteers will only award one grant for 345.87 MSY and the federal share to a single applicant. A separate award for the state share will be made to the same applicant.

G. Minimum Number of Members per Service Site

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

H. Member Living Allowance

A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. The proposed budget must include a living allowance for CCAC members in accordance with the guidelines below (see Table 3).

As a result of state investment in the California Climate Action Corps, this program is able to provide a full-time living allowance of \$33,000 for all existing and expansion members. If at any point alternative slot types are utilized (e.g., through a slot conversion for unfilled slots), living allowances will be proportional to the \$33,000 Full-time amount and must comply with the guidelines in the table below. The amount must be included in the proposed budget as either federal or grantee share.

Table 3: Defined Living Allowance

Term of Service	MSY Equivalence	Minimum # of Hours	Living Allowance
Full-Time Team Leader	1.00	1,700	\$35,200
Full Time	1.00	1,700	\$33,000
Three-Quarter Time	.700	1,200	\$23,294
Half Time	.500	900	\$17,470
Minimum Time	.21164022	300	\$5,823

I. AmeriCorps Education Awards

AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will be eligible for a Segal Education Award paid outside of the grant from the National Service Trust. The amount of the Education Award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant. A member has up to seven years after his or her term of service to use the Education Award. CV will provide the updated Education Award amounts at the time of grant award.

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

J. Enrollment Requirements

Enrollment rates ultimately affect the total number of AmeriCorps slots 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 MSY.

K. Retention Requirements

Retention is determined by enrolled members who complete their service term. Members who quit the program effect your retention rate. These are an indicator of the grantee's ability to properly design and manage an AmeriCorps program that results in achieving the outcomes proposed. Though some attrition is normal, we expect grantees to pursue a strong member experience leading to at least the AmeriCorps desired minimum of 85% retention. Low retention rates will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and recompetes processes. Successful applicants that do not retain members are likely to receive a decrease in funding in subsequent years.

IV. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. California Volunteers Review and Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed and selected for funding using a multi-stage process that includes CV Staff Review, Clarification and Feedback, and Chief Service Officer approval. The review and selection process is intended to produce a balanced set of high-quality programs that represent the priorities and strategic considerations described in this RFA. 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 address any compliance issues within 24 hours will advance to Staff Review. See Sections II. Eligibility, III. Funding Restrictions, and V. 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 total raw score.

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 this RFA. Staff will review applications in teams and come to a consensus score for each criterion.

Clarification Period

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 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 the removal of its application from consideration.

Selection

The primary consideration in the selection of AmeriCorps programs is merit. Applicants must meet a minimum score threshold **and** satisfactorily address all clarification issues in order to be considered for funding.

Applications selected by the Chief Service Officer will be presented to the California Volunteers Commission for final approval. Funding decisions are final—there is no appeal process.

California Volunteers reserves the right to award applications in an amount other than at the requested level of funding and will document the rationale for doing so.

California Volunteers 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

The Expansion Application Form will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Applicant clearly identifies the amount of their expansion request in terms of CNCS Share, State Share, MSY, and Slots.
2. Applicant describes how the requested expansion will be managed, including how the organization plans to support the additional members, preserve program quality, and ensure overall grant compliance.
3. Applicant clearly identifies the changes to the program's Budget resulting from the proposed expansion.
4. Applicant clearly identifies the changes to the program's Performance Measurement Worksheets resulting from the proposed expansion.
5. Applicant clearly identifies the locations where the requested additional members will serve. Applicant must specify if these locations are confirmed or proposed at the time of application.

C. Threshold Issues

Applications should reflect that they meet the following threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying.

- All applicants should request no more than 345.87 MSY and no less than 345 MSY. Applicants requesting any other amount will be deemed noncompliant and will not be reviewed.

D. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information

Prior to making any award that exceeds \$150,000, AmeriCorps 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;

AmeriCorps 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.

V. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Application Content

Applicants must provide the following application documents:

- Expansion Application Form
- Updated 2023 Program Design Documents that reflect the proposed expansion:
 - Program Narrative
 - Performance Measurement Worksheets
- 2023 California Climate Action Corps Expansion Budget
- 2022 Budget that reflects the living allowance increase for members serving in the 2023-24 program year

Applicants must submit all required application documents via email to funding@cv.ca.gov.

B. Application Submission Deadline

Applications must be received no later than **Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time** in order 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 extended deadline will be posted on the funding opportunity website.

Late Applications

All applications received after the submission deadline published in this RFA are presumed to be non-compliant. CV may, at its discretion, consider an application received after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay, including the timing and specific cause(s) of the delay and any evidence that substantiates the claimed extenuating circumstance(s) via email to funding@cv.ca.gov. The written explanation and evidence must be received no later than one business day after the application deadline stated in the RFA. CV determines whether or not to accept a late application for review on a case-by-case basis.

Communication with CV staff, including program officer of a current grantee, 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.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Governing Documents

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

B. AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this RFA will be subject to the 2023 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, and the 2023 Specific Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the AmeriCorps General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at <https://americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/directs-territories-tribes>.

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 data reported is complete
- The grantee collects data in a consistent manner
- The grantee takes steps to correct data errors
- The grantee actively reviews data for accuracy prior to submission

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

E. National Service Criminal History Check Requirement

All AmeriCorps members and staff charging time (including match) to an AmeriCorps cost-reimbursement grant must have completed National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC) prior to start. In California, these are conducted by two approved vendors - Truescreen and Fieldprint. All required check components must be conducted and results considered according to AmeriCorps, CV and the program's own policy, with the individual cleared prior to the start of service and/or time on the grant. No one convicted of murder (as defined in 18 USC 1111) and/or registered or required to be registered on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; nor who refuses to undergo the checks or who provides a false statement with regards to the checks process, may be deemed eligible. The program must set its own selection criteria that include at least these minimum disqualifiers while being mindful of state and federal Civil Rights & nondiscrimination laws, including Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Required Criminal History Check Components are defined as follows:

1. Nationwide name-based National Sex Offender Public Registry Check via **Truescreen***;

2. Statewide Criminal History Registry Check(s) in the State of residence (out-of-state applicants)^[1] in the State where the individual will serve / work (California)* using **Truescreen**
3. FBI National Fingerprint-based Check using **Fieldprint** or using the **California Dept of Justice (CA DOJ)** via CV's [waiver](#)

Refer to the [CV National Service Criminal History Checks Policy](#) for detailed requirements and the [CV NSCHC Guide](#) for details on how to properly conduct the checks using the approved vendors.

F. Requests for Improper Payment Information

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

G. Use of Material

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

H. Re-Focusing of Funding

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