2023-24
Bridging Differences
Community of Practice

Grant Funding Opportunity

CALIFORNIA
ALL

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications due June 5, 2023

Table of Contents

CONTACT INFORMATION

Point of Contact: Funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov

OVERVIEW

State Entity Name: California Volunteers
Funding Opportunity Title: Bridging Differences: Community of Practice
State Funds: General Fund: 0650-102-001

Important Dates:

- Applicants are asked to submit a notice of intent to apply by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on **Friday, May 12, 2023.**

- Applications are due to California Volunteers by **5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Monday, June 5, 2023**.

- Applicants will be notified of selection decisions **by Monday June 19, 2023**.

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Program Description

California Volunteers, Office of the Governor, 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 grant making and program development at both the state and local levels for nearly 30 years. By supporting thousands of service members each year, 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.

Healthy democracies rely on civic engagement, which in turn requires bringing people together around shared goals, shared challenges, and shared accomplishments. California Volunteers is currently investing in the **Connecting Californians through Service** Initiative, which is creating tools and resources to help large service programs build connection across service members from different backgrounds, as well as learning skills to bridge divides within the communities where they serve.

Now it is time to focus on thoughtfully integrating these new tools and resources within one of the largest new service programs in the nation: the #CaliforniansForAll College Corps (College Corps), which is mobilizing more than 3,000 full-time college students each year. College Corps is a Governor's initiative administered by California Volunteers in partnership with more than 40 California colleges and universities with a strong commitment to community engagement. The purpose of this initiative is to build the next generation of civic leaders by engaging college students from all backgrounds in meaningful community service while earning money to help pay for college. College Corps Fellows complete 10-15 hours a week of community service in one of three Focus Areas: K-12 Education, Climate Action, or Food Insecurity. In exchange they earn up to $10,000 and gain valuable job skills for the future.

Throughout the year, College Corps partner campuses offer both curricular and co-curricular courses for their Fellows, supporting their leadership and professional development. In parallel, California Volunteers offers statewide programming to ensure that College Corps Fellows across the state feel connected to each other and to the larger statewide initiative. Moving forward, California Volunteer aims to ensure that the statewide cohort experience for College Corps has a particular focus on strengthening Fellows' ability to solve complex challenges through bridging and collaboration.

B. Scope of Work

Through this new funding opportunity, California Volunteers will support a higher education institution with a $750,000 state grant to begin applying the latest advances in 'bridging differences' tools and resources to carry out the following scope of work:

1) Advise the College Corps team on statewide cohort experience for College Corps Fellows. This may include:
    - Develop and present recommendations on the design of statewide programming to College Corps staff and CV leadership
    - Provide input on agendas and talking points for statewide programming, including:
        o Statewide Swearing-in Ceremony
        o Virtual Speaker Series
        o End-of-Year Celebration
        o Other events as needed

2) Design curriculum and facilitate trainings for the College Corps Fellow Ambassador Program.
    - Identify appropriate training modules on 'bridging differences' to be incorporated in year-long training program for ~90 College Corps Fellow Ambassadors
    - Design and facilitate in-person, 1 ½ day kick-off workshop for Fellow Ambassadors

- Support facilitation of [3-4] 90-minute training sessions for Fellow Ambassadors throughout the academic year

3) Provide content and facilitation expertise for College Corps Mid-Year Leadership Workshops.
   - Identify training modules on 'bridging differences' to be incorporated in [8] Regional Mid-Year Leadership Workshops for College Corps Fellows
   - Design [2-3] interactive, 1-hour workshop sessions based on this content
   - Recruit and train ~100 facilitators from College Corps partner campuses to lead these workshop sessions
   - Provide ongoing training and support to host campuses and facilitators as needed to ensure high-quality implementation and Fellow experience
   - Provide input on post-workshop survey questions focused on bridging skills

4) Build a 'Bridging Differences' community of practice of College Corps staff at our partner colleges and universities. These will be staff who lead Fellow engagement and cohort-building for College Corps Fellows on their campus.
   - Conduct initial focus group(s) with College Corps partner campus staff to solicit input on community of practice objectives, format and activities
   - Building on an initial train-the-trainer session scheduled for June 2023, convene College Corps 'bridging differences' community of practice approximately every 8 weeks for ongoing peer learning and professional development
   - Encourage members of the community of practice to serve as facilitators and help recruit additional facilitators for the Mid-Year Leadership Workshops (see above)
   - Identify at least one opportunity for members of the community of practice to present at academic and/or national service conferences; support the team that is presenting

5) Building on this experience, pilot a 'Bridging Differences' community of practice for staff of other AmeriCorps programs supported by California Volunteers.
   - Identify potential participants and conduct an initial train-the-trainer session for AmeriCorps program staff who will lead on cohort-building for their members.
   - Solicit input on format and design of community of practice and launch an initial pilot.

6) Conduct assessment of the grant activities outlined above.
   - Assess results, with a particular focus on increase in 'bridging differences' skills and behaviors for:
     - College Corps Fellow Ambassadors
     - College Corps Fellows who attend Mid-Year Workshops
     - College Corps partner staff who participate in the Bridging Differences Community of Practice
   - Prepare a summative report that shows evaluation data – both quantitative and qualitative – that identifies effective and ineffective program models and trainings

C. Minimum Grant Deliverables
In collaboration with California Volunteers and a subset of AmeriCorps programs, the successful grant applicant will be responsible for completion of the following deliverables:
1) Strategy Recommendations for Statewide Cohort Experience
   - Deck with strategic recommendations on the design of statewide programming
   - Bi-weekly check-in calls to provide input on statewide programming

2) College Corps Fellow Ambassador Program

- Curriculum for the Fellow Ambassador Program
- Facilitation for the Fellow Ambassador Program
- 1 ½ day kick-off workshop for Fellow Ambassadors

3) Mid-Year Leadership Workshops
- Curriculum and facilitation guides for [2-3] interactive, 1-hour workshop sessions focused on building connection, bridging differences, and storytelling
- Provide content and facilitation for 3-5 train-the-trainer sessions for workshop facilitators
- Participate in up to 8 workshops; support facilitators as needed
- Draft questions for post-workshop survey

4) 'Bridging Differences' community of practice for College Corps staff
- 1-2 focus groups of partner campus staff
- Content and facilitation for 3-4 community of practice [virtual] convenings
- Support at least one conference presentation

5) 'Bridging Differences' community of practice for other AmeriCorps programs
- 1 focus groups of AmeriCorps program staff to solicit input
- Content and facilitation for kick-off train-the-trainer session to launch community of practice

6) Assessment of grant activities
- Brief report summarizing assessment data and recommendations for College Corps Cohort 3.

D. Available Funds

This opportunity will award up to $750,000 in one-time state general funding appropriated through the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 to one higher education institution in California to deliver the stated scope of work and grant deliverables.

E. Type of Award

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.

F. Project Period

California Volunteers expects to issue the grant award by June 2023. All grant activities must be completed during the project period of June 20, 2023 through September 30, 2024. The project period start date may be adjusted to align with the grant contract execution date.

Please note project costs cannot be charged to the grant prior to the contract execution date.

G. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants must be a higher education institution in California. For-profit private higher education institutions are not eligible for this opportunity.

APPLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE (*timeline subject to change*)

Application Timeline

Milestone	Date
RFA Released	May 5, 2023
Notice of Intent to apply	May 12, 2023
Application Deadline for RFA	June 5, 2023
Application Review & Clarification Period	June 6-9, 2023
Award to Notice of Recommended Awards	June 12, 2023
Funding Notification	June 19, 2023
Contract Executed	June 20 – 30, 2023

Implementation Timeline

Milestone	Timeline
Present Recommendations on Statewide Programming for College Corps Cohort 2	August 2023
Curriculum developed for Fellow Ambassador Program	September 2023
Launch Community of Practice for College Corps Partner Campus staff	September 2023
1 ½ day launch workshop for Fellow Ambassadors	November 2023
Workshop content developed for Mid-Year Leadership Workshops; test with campuses	November 2023
Facilitators for Mid-Year Leadership Workshops recruited	December 2023
Ongoing support for Virtual Speaker Series and Fellow Ambassador Program	Fall 2023 – Spring 2024
Train facilitators for Mid-Year Leadership Workshops	December 2023 – January 2024
Finalize post-workshop survey for Fellows	January 2024
Participate in / support Mid-Year Leadership Workshops	February – March 2024
Assess workshop learnings and results	April 2024
Launch Community of Practice for AmeriCorps programs	TBD April 2024

II. APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Intent to Apply

Any institution that plans to submit an application is asked to indicate their intent by submitting the Notice of Intent to Apply Form to California Volunteers via email at funding@cv.ca.gov no later than **Friday, May 12, 2023.** The form requests for the name of your institution and contact information for the individual responsible for completing and submitting your application. This notice is non-binding; we recognize that some institutions may subsequently opt out of the process. In addition, institutions that do *not* submit this Intent to Apply form may still submit an application prior to the final application due date.

B. Application Instructions

Each application must clearly describe the applicant's plans to use grant funding to achieve the stated project scope and grant deliverables. 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.

A complete application must include the following components:
- Connecting Californians through Service Title Page
- Narrative
    - No longer than eight (8) double-spaced pages using size 12 font
    - Title Page and Narrative(s) should be submitted as a single PDF named INSTITUTION NAME-Bridging Differences-2023.pdf
- Budget
    - Excel document using provided Template named INSTITUTION NAME-Bridging Differences Budget-2023.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.

C. Application Deadline

Applications should be submitted via email to funding@cv.ca.gov **no later than 5:00 PM PDT June 5, 2023.**

Any application or part of an application submitted after the deadline shall not be considered for this solicitation.

Any application received past the deadline will not be reviewed.

D. Review Criteria

1. NARRATIVE (40 pts)

    Narrative responses should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages using size 12 font (for each funding request). Applicants are asked to provide a narrative that address the following criteria:

a. A detailed plan on the approach to achieving the stated project goals and grant deliverables for this opportunity, including a project plan, a communication plan with CV and program participants, and timeline for completing all grant deliverables. (25 pts)

b. The institution has a track record in curriculum development and research and evaluation related to building social cohesion and connection.

c. Adequate and appropriately experienced staffing are in place to successfully carry out this program, or the organization must demonstrate the ability and commitment to contract with paid and/or pro bono staffing to do so. This includes program development and implementation staff, in addition to administrative and support staff. (10 pt)

d. A list of key personnel and partner(s), including any potential subcontractors who will be working on the project including their titles and job descriptions must be included in the narrative. (5 pts)

2. BUDGET (20 points)

a. Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
b. Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
c. Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
d. Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.

E. 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.

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.

III. POST AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. Reporting Requirements

The grant recipient will be required to submit the reports/deliverable below to California Volunteers.

Due by December 2023:

- A summary of activities and report on progress towards the grant deliverables.

Due by December 2024:

- A Final Report summarizing all grant deliverables, assessment data, and recommendations for College Corps Cohort 3.

B. Contract Execution

California Volunteers expects to enter into a fully executed contract with the awardee by June 30, 2023.

Please note that any failure to comply with any post-award requirements may result in cancellation of the award. As such, California Volunteers reserves the right to award the contract to the next ranking applicant.