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

# 2024 AmeriCorps Education Supplemental State Funding Opportunity



**AmeriCorps**

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

### Applications due November 30, 2023

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## Overview

### Disclosure

Publication of this Request for Applications 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 annual federal and state appropriations.

### Important Dates

Application Deadline: Complete applications are due to CV by 5:00 p.m. PT on November 30, 2023.

Application Notification: Applicants will be notified of their status by December 5, 2023.

### Funding Description

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. California Volunteers has engaged local communities through innovative and impactful grantmaking and program development at both the state and local levels for nearly 30 years. By supporting more than 7,000 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.

The 2024 AmeriCorps Education Supplemental State Funding Opportunity seeks to expand the AmeriCorps California program by making service a viable option for Californians of all backgrounds. To this end, this funding opportunity supports a two-year pilot to increase participation in AmeriCorps by augmenting member living allowance for current California Volunteers-funded programs focused on improving educational outcomes for pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. In addition to representing 53% of total service opportunities awarded in the AmeriCorps California program, member enrollment data from the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 program years show that education service programs in particular are struggling to recruit individuals to serve in their communities. This funding opportunity will award up to two years of supplemental state funding to augment member living allowance for current AmeriCorps programs in year 1 or 2 of the funding cycle serving pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students that has persistent challenges in filling slots awarded and is currently providing a living allowance that is below the FY 2024 minimum member living allowance required by California Volunteers. The funds requested may be used as match funding to the applicant's federal AmeriCorps grant administered by California Volunteers.

### Application Timeline

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

November 14, 2023	Informational Webinar – 2:00 p.m. PT – <a href="#">Register Here</a>
November 30, 2023	Applications due by 5:00 p.m. PT*
December 1-5, 2023	Application Review Period
December 6, 2023	Applicants Notified of Funding Recommendation
December 6-15, 2023	Competitive eGrants Budget Update Period*
May 2024	Final Federal Funding Decisions Announced
June 2024	Contracting Process

\* - Competitive continuation applicants must be available during this period to update their eGrants application to include the supplemental funding as match. Formula continuation applicants will update their budget as part of the formula continuation process.



## **A. Program Description**

### **A.1. Granting Agency**

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. By supporting more than 5,000 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. 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 funds to support service programs in California from AmeriCorps, a 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.

### **A.2. Funding Purpose**

The *2024 AmeriCorps Education Supplemental State Funding Opportunity* seeks to expand the AmeriCorps California program by making service a viable option for Californians of all backgrounds. To this end, this funding opportunity supports a two-year pilot to increase participation in AmeriCorps by augmenting member living allowance for current California Volunteers-funded programs focused on improving educational outcomes for pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. In addition to representing 53% of total service opportunities awarded in the AmeriCorps California program to tackle a state priority focus area, member enrollment data from the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 program years show that education service programs in particular are struggling to recruit individuals to serve in their communities. This funding opportunity will award up to two years of state supplemental funding to augment member living allowance for current AmeriCorps programs in year 1 or 2 of the funding cycle serving pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students that has persistent challenges in filling slots awarded and is providing a living allowance that is below the FY 2024 minimum member living allowance required by California Volunteers. The funds requested may be used as match funding to the applicant's federal AmeriCorps grant administered by California Volunteers.

Funds available under this opportunity are awarded on a competitive basis to eligible organizations that adequately address the selection criteria identified in this Request for Applications. Funds are solely to supplement the member living allowance and cannot be used for other expenses.

Selected applicants will work closely with California Volunteers to design and implement robust recruitment efforts, including setting individual and collective member participation goals, developing and promoting effective branding and messaging, tracking and sharing recruitment data with California Volunteers on a regular basis, and participating in peer exchanges on best practices. California Volunteers is also interested in partnering with selected applicants to explore other ways to provide additional benefits to AmeriCorps members aimed at enhancing member experience and bolstering member recruitment and retention, including creating professional development networks and workforce pathways into careers in education and other public service. AmeriCorps members serving in education service programs will be identified as being part of a broader state service corps committed to promoting student success and reducing education disparity.

## B. Award Information

### B.1. Estimated Funds Available

This funding opportunity will award state general funds to support increased member living allowance costs for currently-funded AmeriCorps state programs. Funds are limited; this funding opportunity is only available to current AmeriCorps programs in year 1 or 2 of the funding cycle serving pre-K to 12th grade students.

### B.2. Funding Awards

Grants awarded under this funding opportunity are contingent upon receipt of a federal 2024 AmeriCorps State grant. The awarded amount will not exceed the difference between the FY 2024 minimum living allowance and the applicant's 2023 awarded living allowance amount for all slots. The final award will be within the range identified in the Supplemental Living Allowance Request Workbook.

The grant award under consideration in this funding opportunity is a State General Fund cost-reimbursement grant. California Volunteers anticipates issuing grant contracts to selected applicants effective July 1, 2024, for year 1. California Volunteers will amend the contract in June 2025 to include year 2 funding to support programming through December 31, 2026.

### B.3. Period of Performance

Awards under this funding opportunity will support member living allowance for up to two years of operation depending on each selected applicant's currently approved three-year federal grant award period. Funding for the first year will support members beginning in the 2024-25 grant year. The period of performance for year one funding will align with the applicant's awarded federal grant within the period of August 1, 2024, through December 31, 2025. Supplemental awards for each successful applicant's remaining three-year grant period is subject to funding availability and satisfactory performance.

### B.4. Living Allowance Requirement

Applicants must provide a living allowance of at least \$30,000 for Full-Time members serving a 1700-hour term of service and a prorated amount for all other slot types.

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1,700	\$30,000	\$37,400
Three Quarter-time	1,200	\$21,176	\$26,180
Half-time	900	\$15,882	\$18,700
Reduced Half-time	675	\$11,912	\$14,212
Quarter-time	450	\$7,941	\$9,724
Minimum-time	300	\$5,294	\$7,854
Abbreviated-time	100	\$1,765	\$2,244

The supplemental funding available in this opportunity can only be used to increase member living allowance. Applicants must cover any subsequent increases in related member costs such as health care coverage, worker's compensation, indirect administrative costs, etc.

## C. Eligibility Information

### C.1. Eligible Applicants

Organizations that meet the following criteria are eligible to apply for this opportunity:

- Current recipient of an AmeriCorps State grant awarded under prime grant 21ACICA001, 21FXICA001, 23AFICA001, or 23ESICA001.
- In year 1 or 2 of the 3-year grant cycle in the 2023-24 program year.
- Operating an AmeriCorps State program in the Education focus area where the target population is pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

## **D. Application Review Information**

### **D.1. California Volunteers Review and Selection Process**

Applications will be reviewed and selected for funding using a multi-stage process that includes Compliance Check, Staff Review, Clarification and Feedback, and CV Commission 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 will advance to Staff Review.

An application is compliant if the applicant:

- is an eligible organization
- submitted an application by the submission deadline
- includes are 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 of at least two and come to a consensus score for each criterion. Applications that do not meet the minimum score threshold will be released from consideration.

#### **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**

Applicants must meet a minimum score threshold of 70 points **and** satisfactorily address all clarification issues to be considered for funding. Applicants will be presented to the Chief Service Officer for selection. 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.

## **D.2. Assessment Criteria**

Applications will be assessed based on their response to the following criteria:

- Applicant describes the specific challenges they have faced in recruiting AmeriCorps members to serve, including a summary of actions taken or will be taken to improve recruitment. (20 points)
- Applicant describes the circumstances that prevent them from raising the match necessary to meet the minimum living allowance requirement. (20 points)
- Applicant describes how the temporary supplemental resource will help make it easier to raise the match necessary to sustain member living allowance increase beyond the current grant period. (20 points)
- Applicant describes their plans to raise the match necessary to meet the minimum living allowance requirement by their next re-compete application. (20 points)
- Applicant understands that the supplemental funds can only be used to increase member living allowance, and applicant is able to cover any subsequent increases to other areas of the budget as a result of raising member living allowance. (20 points)

## **E. Application and Submission Information**

### **E.1. Submission to California Volunteers**

Applicants must submit their application electronically via email to [Funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.CA.GOV](mailto:Funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.CA.GOV).

### **E.2. Application Content**

Complete applications must include the following completed documents:

- Application Form – complete all fields on the form. Narrative responses to the questions must adequately address all selection criteria identified above.
- Supplemental Living Allowance Request Workbook – enter the 2023 Awarded Living Allowance, the 2024 Requested Living Allowance, and the Total Slots for all slot types in the program. The minimum and maximum request amount will calculate based on the difference between the Living Allowance amounts and the Minimum Living Allowance.
- California Civil Rights Laws Certification – complete all Certification fields and electronically sign.
- Bidder Declaration – review the instructions and complete the form solely for the supplemental state funds. Signature should be completed electronically.

### **E.4. Application Submission Deadline**

Applications must be received no later than **November 30, 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.

### **E.5. Late Applications**

All applications received after the submission deadline published in this RFA are presumed to be non-compliant. To overcome this presumption, the applicant must:



- Submit a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay, including:
  - Timing and specific cause(s) of the delay
  - Other documentation or evidence that supports the justification
- Ensure that California Volunteers receives the written explanation or justification and any other evidence that substantiates the claimed extenuating circumstance(s), via email to [funding@californiavolunteers.ca.gov](mailto:funding@californiavolunteers.ca.gov). The written explanation and evidence must be received no later than 24 hours after the application deadline stated in the RFA.

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.

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.

## **F. Economic Sanctions**

On March 4, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-6-22 (the EO) regarding Economic Sanctions against Russia and Russian entities and individuals. "Economic Sanctions" refers to sanctions imposed by the U.S. government in response to Russia's actions in Ukraine, as well as any sanctions imposed under state law.

All prime Applicants and Subcontractors agree by submitting an application in response to this solicitation, they have reviewed Executive Order N-6-22 and shall find they are in compliance with it. OPR, during the Administration Evaluation, will check the Office of Foreign Assets and Controls Sanctions List. Any prime Applicant or Subcontractor found not being in compliance with Executive Order N-6-22 shall have their application automatically disqualified.

By submitting a bid or application, Applicant represents that the Applicant nor any of its Subcontractors are not a target of Economic Sanctions. Should the State determine the Applicant or any of its Subcontractors are a target of Economic Sanctions or is conducting prohibited transactions with sanctioned individuals or entities, that shall be grounds for rejection of the Applicant's bid/application any time prior to agreement execution, or, if determined after agreement execution, shall be grounds for termination by the State. See more at the following hyperlink to the online directory: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/3.4.22-Russia-Ukraine-Executive-Order.pdf>