

CALIFORNIA VOLUNTEERS

Office of the Governor

FY 2023 Neighbor to Neighbor Planning Funding Opportunity



AmeriCorps

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications due December 8, 2023

California Volunteers

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

CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov

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CONTACT INFORMATION

This Planning Grant Application Guidance and required application forms are available on the California Volunteers (CV) [AmeriCorps funding webpage](#).

Please submit questions regarding this funding opportunity to funding@cv.ca.gov.

OVERVIEW

Administering State Entity Name: California Volunteers
Funding Opportunity Title: Neighbor to Neighbor Corps State Planning Grant
CFDA Number: 94.006

Funding Opportunity:

California Volunteers (CV), 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. 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 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 Covid-19 pandemic reinforced the impact and value of strong, local networks in uplifting community resilience and protecting our most vulnerable populations from the impacts of crisis. Cut off from brick-and-mortar institutions and the services they provided during this time, individuals and families relied more heavily on their local networks, especially neighbors. Research from past disasters and emergencies show that neighborhoods with strong ties can overcome these challenges more effectively. Due to the importance of these ties – in both addressing current challenges and preparing communities for future adversity – California Volunteers launched a Neighbor-to-Neighbor pilot program that reinforced the importance of building Neighbor-to-Neighbor connections. These local initiatives not only strengthened our most vulnerable communities but showcased what can be accomplished when we work collectively towards a common goal.

Catapaulted by the success of the Neighbor-to-Neighbor pilot, California Volunteers has strengthened and expanded its commitment to supporting local neighborhood initiatives that promote resilience and reinforce social ties. The expansion has two objectives: 1) creating a statewide training and resource center to support leaders and neighbors across the state; and 2) supporting and growing neighborhood action in under-resourced neighborhoods with high disaster and climate risk. California Volunteers has partnered with local government and non-profit partners throughout the state to support this important work and focus on the following priorities:

- Mediating community isolation and perceptions of loneliness.
- Increasing volunteer participation, both at the local and community level.
- Improving social bonds and interactions.
- Creating a shared understanding of the importance of critical climate action and disaster mitigation priorities.

As a further resource for local governments and non-profit partners, California Volunteers is interested in building a Neighbor-to-Neighbor AmeriCorps program that will cultivate local neighborhood leaders, strengthen neighborhood networks, and support further action on climate and disaster priorities. More specifically, this new program will promote neighborhood resiliency by:

- Providing support and/or facilitating access to services and resources that contribute to the improved resiliency of under-resourced, historically underrepresented communities, particularly those on the frontline of the climate crisis.
- Expanding opportunities for neighborhood leadership in the form of localized trainings, curriculum access, train-the-trainer programs, community engagement, and effective outreach.

- Strengthening pre-existing neighborhood networks through effective collaboration with local and regional networks (government, regional and local agencies, educational institutions, etc.) and expanded outreach and marketing efforts
- Facilitating volunteer opportunities that prioritize climate action and disaster mitigation strategies utilizing a variety of volunteer management tools and practices.
- Devising pathways for individual participants to support larger scale climate and disaster activities through networking opportunities and curriculum sharing.
- Prioritizing metrics that showcase program success, including, but not limited to, volunteer recruited, volunteer hours, neighbors engaged, event, community capacity, and impact on local resiliency.

To aid in this pilot program, California Volunteers is seeking a collaborative partner with the capacity and institutional knowledge to develop and establish the first N2N Service Corps. This planning partner will be instrumental in developing the infrastructure of the program, including, but not limited to, the priorities of the member's experience, a list of potential host organizations, a clearly defined set of metrics tailored to the needs of each community of focus, and recommendations on how to build a sustainable program that will effectively implement the core components of the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program. California Volunteer's will work closely with the chosen organization to build this framework, but it will ultimately be the responsibility of the organization to build, stand up, and deliver an effective program that complements California Volunteer's other pre-existing service initiatives: #CaliforniansForAll College Corps, AmeriCorps California, #CaliforniansForAll Youth Jobs Corps, and California Climate Action Corps

Application Submission Deadline:

Applicants must submit their grant applications to California Volunteers via email to Funding@cv.ca.gov by **December 8, 2023 at 5:00 P.M. Pacific Time.**

Please see pages 11-18 for the application instructions and submission information.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Funding Program Description

California Volunteers

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. 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.

AmeriCorps

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 their service, AmeriCorps members are eligible to receive up to \$10,000 in scholarship 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).

Purpose of AmeriCorps Planning Grants

An AmeriCorps Planning Grant provides support to grant recipients to develop an AmeriCorps program that will engage AmeriCorps members in implementing evidence-based interventions to solve community problems. The grant recipient is awarded up to \$200,000 for a 6-12 month planning period and are encouraged to compete for an AmeriCorps implementation grant in the following grant cycle. A planning grant may not be used to support AmeriCorps members. Grant recipients receive technical assistance from CV during the planning period to strengthen program design and create implementation plans and systems for managing a compliant AmeriCorps program.

Funding Priority

This funding opportunity provides planning grant funds to support one intermediary organization interested in engaging Californians as AmeriCorps members to help reinforce localized resiliency efforts and greater neighborhood engagement around climate and disaster priorities. The selected applicant must develop an AmeriCorps program that:

- Provides support and/or facilitates access to services and resources that contribute to the improved resiliency of under-resourced, historically underrepresented communities, particularly those on the frontline of the climate crisis.
- Expands opportunities for neighborhood leadership in the form of localized trainings, curriculum access, train-the-trainer programs, community engagement, and effective outreach.

- Strengthens pre-existing neighborhood networks through effective collaboration with local and regional networks (government, regional and local agencies, educational institutions, etc.) and expanded outreach and marketing efforts
- Facilitates volunteer opportunities that prioritize climate action and disaster mitigation strategies utilizing a variety of volunteer management tools and practices.
- Devises pathways for individual participants to support larger scale climate and disaster activities through networking opportunities and curriculum sharing.
- Prioritizes metrics that showcase program success, including, but not limited to, volunteer recruited, volunteer hours, neighbors engaged, event, community capacity, and impact on local resiliency.

Allowable Grant Activities

Grant funds support activities that are directly tied to AmeriCorps program planning and development. The grant shall only be used to cover costs that directly support the development of planning grant deliverables described in the *Reporting Requirements section*. Allowable grant activities include, but are not limited to:

- Staff or consultant(s) to facilitate project planning and provide training and technical assistance aimed at improving the Grantee's ability to implement an AmeriCorps program effectively;
- Assessing and analyzing community needs-related information to identify specific gaps or needs that can be addressed through AmeriCorps;
- Researching appropriate evidence-based interventions to inform service activities to be performed by AmeriCorps members;
- Developing a program theory of change and logic model;
- Outreach and establishment of community partnerships to support the planning and implementation of the AmeriCorps program;
- Partnership planning meetings;
- Meeting or office space;
- Developing plans for member recruitment, selection, placement, training, and supervision;
- Developing plans for managing and supporting program site partners;
- Developing plans and systems for ensuring grant compliance and accountability
- Attending training and technical assistance sessions provided by CV

Applicants must obtain prior written approval from CV for out of state travel costs or planning activities that occur outside of California.

Grant Award Amount

The total funds availability for this opportunity is \$200,000. The grant amount that can be requested through this opportunity is up to \$200,000.

Matching Requirement

The grantee is required to provide an in-kind match to support at least 24% of the project's total cost. Match may be cash and/or in-kind.

Section 121(e)(5) of NCSA (42 USC 12571(e)) requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to California Volunteers on an AmeriCorps Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout.

Award Period

The project period for this grant is 6-12 months within the period of January 2024 through December 2024. The selected applicant must complete required planning grant deliverables by September 2024 and be

ready to launch the operating program by October 2024. **The project start date may not occur prior to a grantee's contract execution date with CV.**

Program Authority

Awards under this Notice are authorized by the [National and Community Service Act of 1990](#), as amended, ([42 U.S.C. §12501 et seq.](#)).

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.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

To be considered for this Planning Grant funding, an applicant must meet all criteria under the *Eligibility* section:

1. Current CaliforniaVolunteers-funded grantee with experience operating a statewide AmeriCorps program.
2. Applications must have a DUNS number **and** an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: [DUNS Request Service](#). California Volunteers recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date.
3. Applicants **must** register with the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete and, if a grant is awarded, throughout the life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. CV suggests finalizing a new registration or renewing an existing one at least two 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 to CV.

Applicants that do not comply with these requirements may become ineligible to receive an award. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at https://sam.gov/sam/transcript/Quick_Guide_for_Grants_Registrations.pdf

4. The following non-federal entities (as defined in [2 CFR §200.69](#)) who have DUNS numbers and are registered in System for Award Management (SAM) are eligible to apply:
 - Nonprofit organizations ([2 CFR §200.70](#))
 - Local government/public agencies ([2 CFR §200.64](#))
5. Applicants must be familiar with the following:
 - AmeriCorps California program requirements
 - Community service initiatives
 - Partnership Development techniques
 - Program Evaluation best practices

Other Requirements

Under section 132A(b) of the National & Community Service Act, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this RFA.

Note that under section 745 of Title VII, Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, if CNCS is aware that any corporation has any unpaid Federal tax liability which—

- 1) Has been assessed,
- 2) For which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and
- 3) That is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, that corporation is not eligible for an award under this RFA. A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this RFA.

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, any organization described in Section 501 (c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501 (c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply for funding.

APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Review Criteria

Reviewers will evaluate each applicant's response to each section of the Project Narrative and the Budget Narrative. The quality of an application will be an important factor in determining whether an organization will receive funding.

Categories	Score Percentage
Executive Summary	0
Rationale and Approach	50%
Organizational Capacity	30%
Project Budget	20%

Application 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 California Chief Service Officer approval.

The stages of the review and selection process follow:

Compliance and Eligibility Review

California Volunteers will conduct a Compliance Review to determine if an application meets the compliance requirements published in this RFA and advances to the next stage of the review process.

An application is compliant if the applicant:

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

Reviewing for eligibility is intended to ensure that only those applications that are eligible for award are further reviewed. However, determinations of eligibility can take place at any point during the application review and selection process. Applicants that are determined to be ineligible will not receive an award.

Application Review

In Staff Review, reviewers will evaluate the quality of each application's response to the Project Narrative and Budget criteria outlined in this RFA.

Applicant Clarification

California Volunteers may ask an applicant for clarifying information. California Volunteers staff will use this information to make funding recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee an award. Applicants may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked for clarifying information. 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.

Risk Assessment Evaluation

CV staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds and the applicant's past performance (if applicable.) This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding and the

quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If CV determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. In evaluating risks, CV may consider the following, but not limited to:

- Response to the Organizational Self-Assessment
- Financial capability and capacity to manage Federal funds
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant's record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
 - Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements,
 - If applicable, meeting matching requirements, and
 - If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- Information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as—
 - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS),
 - U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
 - Dun and Bradstreet, or
 - "Do Not Pay"
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance (formerly OMB Circular A-133) and findings of any other available audits
- IRS Tax Form 990
- An applicant organization's annual report
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website
- Any other information listed in 45 CFR § 2522.140
- The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.
- Past Performance

Additionally, CV may use the results of the review of the risk assessment evaluation in determining which applications to fund. If CV concludes that the reasons for applicants having poor risk assessment evaluations are not likely to be mitigated, those applications may not be selected for funding.

Selection

The primary consideration in the selection of AmeriCorps programs is merit. Applicants must satisfactorily address all clarification issues in order to be considered for funding. Final decisions are approved by the California Chief Service Officer—there's no appeal process.

Feedback to Applicants

At the conclusion of the grant review process applicants may request their review results and feedback on their application by email funding@cv.ca.gov.

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.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants must submit their grant applications to California Volunteers via email to Funding@cv.ca.gov by **December 8, 2023 at 5:00 P.M. Pacific Time.**

Application Components

A “complete” AmeriCorps planning grant application has seven components, items #1-7, as stated below:

1. AmeriCorps Planning Grant Title Page
2. Project Narrative <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ no more than 10 double-spaced pages in portrait format○ 12 point Times New Roman font○ One-inch margins○ Use CV narrative headings in the order provided
3. Budget Narrative & Budget Form (use <i>CV Excel Template</i>)

The following section provides instructions for completing each required application component.

1. AmeriCorps Program Title Page

Complete all fields on the Title Page, including information on the Legal Applicant representative, the primary contact information, and the specifics of the grant request.

2. Project Narrative

The Project Narrative criteria includes: Executive Summary, Rationale and Approach, and Organizational Capacity.

The total page limit for the Project Narrative is a maximum of **10 double-spaced, single-sided pages** in portrait format.

The following provides instructions for addressing the Project Narrative criteria:

a. Executive Summary

Provide a one-paragraph executive summary of your proposed planning project. You may fill in the following template to complete your executive summary.

This planning grant will be used to develop an AmeriCorps program which will engage AmeriCorps members (members) to *[anticipated AmeriCorps member activities]* in *[geographic locations where member activities will take place]*. Members will address the needs of *[beneficiaries to be served]*. Program activities will primarily be in the areas of *[identify relevant National Service Focus Areas]*.

b. Rationale and Approach

1) Describe why you are applying for a planning grant and what you hope to achieve during the planning period, including but not limited to:

a) How this planning grant will be used to address the following deliverables:

- Developing and administering a community needs assessment to identify specific gaps to be addressed by your AmeriCorps program or reassessing community needs to better understand gaps or persistent community problems that disproportionately affect communities of color;
- Developing a theory of change and logic model for your AmeriCorps program
- Developing or strengthening culturally appropriate and effective service activities that AmeriCorps members can perform focusing on building neighborhood resiliency and cohesion.

- Developing an inclusive and equitable member recruitment and selection plan to ensure AmeriCorps members recruited will reflect the communities served;
 - Developing a plan to foster a meaningful service experience for your AmeriCorps members
 - Identifying and developing partnering organizations to support and host your AmeriCorps members while they tackle the shared identified community problem
 - Developing an oversight and technical assistance plan to support your partners and service locations
 - Developing an AmeriCorps member support, supervision, and management plan that reduce barriers for participation from diverse communities, especially people of color living in poverty
 - Developing an AmeriCorps member training plan that will equip members with the knowledge, cultural competency, and skills needed to effectively deliver the program intervention
 - Developing a staffing and program management plan
 - Developing an oversight and technical assistance plan to address compliance and accountability, including preventing, detecting, and enforcing compliance with AmeriCorps policies, rules, and regulation
 - Developing a data collection plan to assess your program's performance measures
 - Developing a match fundraising plan to secure the funds needed to support your AmeriCorps program beyond the initial 3-year grant cycle.
- b) Describe a clear and logical planning process, including a detailed description of the planning process for each planning grant deliverable.

c. Organizational Capacity

- 1) Identify the lead staff person that will be responsible for managing the planning grant process and overseeing planning activities, including a brief description of his/her qualifications and relevant experience.
- 2) Describe other key roles staff, board of directors, administrators, and/or partners will play in the planning process.
- 3) Identify the primary program and primary fiscal contacts for the grant application. Include secondary contacts if applicable.

3. Budget Narrative and Budget Form

All applicants are required to submit a detailed budget using the CV AmeriCorps Budget Template in Excel format available on the CV website at <http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org/index.php/Grants/ameriCorps/>.

Note: The Budget Form is included as a tab within the CV AmeriCorps Budget Template and will automatically populate as information is entered on the Budget Narrative tab. Be sure to include a copy of both the completed Budget Form and Budget Narrative as part of your application.

The standard Budget Narrative and Budget Form includes four sections and the following cost categories:

Section I: Program Operating Costs

- a. Personnel Expenses,
- b. Personnel Fringe Benefits
- c. Staff Travel and Member Travel (Not Applicable)
- d. Equipment (Not Applicable)
- e. Supplies
- f. Contractual and Consultant Services
- g. Staff and Member Training (Not Applicable)
- h. Evaluation (Not Applicable)
- i. Other Operating Costs

Section II: Member Costs (Not Applicable)

Section III: Administrative/Indirect Costs

Section IV. Type and Sources of Match

Preparing Your Budget

Use the CV Excel *Budget Narrative* tab to create your program budget. Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your narrative. To prepare your budget, follow the detailed budget instructions below.

As you prepare your budget:

- All the amounts you request must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.
- Itemize each cost and present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.
- Do not include unallowable expenses, e.g., entertainment costs (which include food and beverage costs) unless they are justified as an essential component of an activity.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).

Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and Omni Circular. Please refer to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2CFR Part 200) for allowable, allocable, and reasonable cost information, as well as, audit requirements, including the need to provide audits to the Clearinghouse if expending over \$750,000 in federal funds as required in the OmniCircular. The OMB OmniCircular can be found online at www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars.

Budget Narrative Instructions

These instructions apply to all applicants. Please note that it may be requested that you include description/calculation breakdowns for costs that are covered by funds outside of the grant.

Section I. Program Operating Costs

A. Personnel Expenses

Under "Position/Title Description," list each staff position separately and provide position description, salary, and percentage of effort devoted to this award. Each staff person's role listed in the budget must be described in the application narrative and each staff person mentioned in the narrative must be listed in the budget as either CNCS or Grantee Share. For Column 2, under "% of FTE Time Spent on Program", please include the percentage of time for a full-time equivalent (FTE) employee. For example, if a part-time staff member who works 20 hours a week spends 100% of their time working on the AmeriCorps program, Column 2 should reflect 50%. This section should contain costs associated only with those staff performing direct program services. Those providing general administrative or management functions should be budgeted under Section III.

All time spent on the grant must be tracked using functional timesheets that allow for time allocation. No time can be charged to the grant unless National Service Criminal History Checks have been completed. Verification of timesheets and background check status must occur before any expenses can be incurred.

B. Personnel Fringe Benefits

Under "Purpose/Description," identify the types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position. Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Worker's Compensation, Retirement, SUTA, Health and Life Insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If a fringe benefit amount is over 30%, please list separately. Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item. Uncommon or exceptionally high-cost benefits should be itemized and justified.

C. 1. Staff Travel

Describe the purpose for which program staff member will travel. Provide a calculation to include itemized costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel-related expenses multiplied by the number of trips/staff. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage daily per diem, and similar supporting information. Reimbursement should not exceed the federal mileage rate unless a result of applicant policy and justified in the budget narrative. Only domestic travel is allowable. Only domestic travel is allowable. Any out of state travel requires advance approval from CV.

We expect all applicants to include funds in this line item for travel for program staff and site staff to attend CV-sponsored technical assistance meetings or trainings. There may be 1-2 such opportunities per year, including opportunities for fiscal training. At a minimum, all applicants are required to have at least two staff attend national service trainings sponsored by CV, AmeriCorps agency, and/or America's Service Commissions. This requirement should be considered when creating the budget.

For example: Two staff members will attend the California AmeriCorps Conference in Los Angeles.

California AmeriCorps conference: 2 staff X \$250 airfare + \$50 ground transportation + \$250 registration fee+ (2 days) X \$100 lodging + \$35 per diem = \$1,640

C. 2. Member Travel *(Do not enter costs in this line)*

D. Equipment *(Do not enter costs in this line)*

E. Supplies

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials, including program promotional materials and equipment that does not fit the definition above. You must individually list any single item costing \$1,000 or more.

F. Contractual and Consultant Services

Include costs for consultants related to the project's operations, except training or evaluation consultants, who will be listed in Sections G. or H., below.

G. 1. Staff Training

Include the costs associated with training staff on project requirements and training to enhance the skills staff need for effective project implementation, i.e., project or financial management, team building, etc. Please include any training/conference registration in this line item.

G. 2. Member Training (*Do not enter costs in this line*)

H. Evaluation (*Do not enter costs in this line*)

I. Other Program Operating Costs

Allowable costs in this budget category should include when applicable:

- National Sex Offender Public Registry Check, State Criminal Registry, and FBI Criminal history background checks for all employees or other individuals who receive a salary, education award, living allowance, or stipend or similar payment from the grant (federal or non-federal share). If your program covers the cost for background checks outside of grant funds, these items should still be included in "Other" with zero costs and explain how your program will be covering the cost in the budget narrative.
- Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
- Utilities, telephone, Internet and similar expenses that are specifically used for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps project staff, and are not part of the organizations indirect cost/admin cost allocation pool. If such expenses are budgeted and shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.

Section II. Member Costs (*Do not enter costs in this line*)

Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs

Definitions

Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives CNCS funds and do not include particular project costs. These costs may include administrative staff positions. For organizations that have an established indirect cost rate for federal awards, administrative costs mean those costs that are included in the organization's indirect cost rate agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the organization's overall operation and are further described in Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-21 (2CFR 220), A-87 (2 CFR 225), and A-122 (2 CFR 230).

Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs (choose either A, B, or C)

Applicants can choose to use one of two methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a CNCS fixed percentage method or a federally approved indirect cost rate method. Regardless of the option chosen, CNCS's share of administrative costs is limited to 5% of the total CNCS funds **actually expended** under this grant.

A. CNCS Fixed Percentage Method

1. Five Percent Fixed Administrative Costs Option

CNCS fixed rate allows you to charge administrative costs up to a cap without a federally approved indirect cost rate and without documentation supporting the allocation. If you choose CNCS Fixed Percentage Method (Section IIIA in eGrants), you may charge, for administrative costs, a fixed 5% of the total of CNCS funds expended. In order to charge

this fixed 5%, the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10% of all direct cost expenditures.

- a) To determine CNCS share for Section III: Multiply the sum of CNCS funding shares of Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can request as CNCS share. The 5% maximum is calculated by multiplying the sum of CNCS's share of Section I and Section II by the factor 0.0526. The factor 0.0526 is used to calculate the maximum amount of federal funds that may be budgeted for administrative (indirect) costs, rather than 0.0500, as a way to mathematically compensate for determining Section III costs when the total budget (Sections I + II + III) is not yet established. (If 0.0500 was used, the resulting Section III costs would be less than the maximum 5% of total costs that are permitted under CNCS's regulations.)
- b) To determine the maximum Grantee share for Section III: Multiply the total (both CNCS and grantee share) of Sections I and II by 10% (0.10) and enter this amount as the grantee share for Section III A.
- c) Enter the sum of CNCS and grantee shares under Total Amount.

B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate Method

If you have a Federally Approved Indirect Cost (IDC) rate and choose to use it, the IDC rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs including the 5% maximum payable by CNCS. Specify the Cost Type for which your organization has current documentation on file, i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost rate. Supply your approved IDC rate (percentage) and the base upon which this rate is calculated (direct salaries, salaries and fringe benefits, etc.). It is at your discretion whether or not to claim your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate in the Rate Claimed field.

- a) Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both CNCS and Grantee's shares, as prescribed by your established rate agreement (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other). Then multiply the appropriate direct costs by the rate being claimed. This will determine the total amount of indirect costs allowable under the grant.
- b) To determine CNCS share: Multiply the sum of CNCS funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as CNCS share of indirect costs.
- c) To determine the maximum Grantee share: Subtract the amount calculated in step 2 (CNCS administrative share) from the amount calculated in step 1 (the Indirect Cost total). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for administrative costs.

C. De Minimis Rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs

Organizations who have **never**, at any point in time, held a federally negotiated indirect cost rate (except for those non-Federal entities described in Appendix VII to Part 200—States and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, paragraph (d)(1)(B)) and who receive less than \$35 million in direct federal funding, may indefinitely use a de minimus rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Additional information regarding what is included in MTDC and use of this option can be found at 2 CFR 200.414(f) and 200.68. If this option is elected, it must be used consistently across all federal awards.

Source of Match

In the "Source and Types of Match Contributions" table that appears at the bottom of the *Budget Narrative*, enter the specific source of match (i.e. The Star Foundation, Franklin Unified School District, etc.), the match type [State/Local, Federal, or Private], the amount of cash and the dollar amount of in-kind, and a brief description of the intended purpose of the match (e.g. personnel expenses, travel, etc.). Define any acronyms the first time they are used. In the brief description, indicate whether the match is "proposed" or "secured."

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Submission to California Volunteers

A complete application must be submitted electronically to Funding@cv.ca.gov by **December 8, 2023 at 5:00 PM P.T.**

Application Components

A “complete” AmeriCorps planning grant application has seven components, items #1-7, as stated below:

1. AmeriCorps Planning Grant Title Page
2. Project Narrative <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 10 double-spaced pages maximum in portrait format○ 12-point Times New Roman font○ One-inch margins○ Use CV narrative headings in the order provided
3. Budget Narrative & Budget Form (use <i>CV Excel Template</i>)

Late Applications

CV may, at its discretion, consider an application received after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter to funding@cv.ca.gov explaining the extenuating circumstance that caused the delay. Communication with CV staff, including program officer of a current grantee, is not a substitution for the above protocol. The letter must be received no later than one business day after the application deadline. CV determines whether or not to accept a late application for review on a case-by-case basis.

Post-Review Process

California Volunteers staff may contact applicants to seek clarification on aspects of the application and request revised budgets as part of the grant review process. Failure to respond to requests for information in a timely manner may result in the removal of applications from consideration.

Submission to CNCS

Once selected for AmeriCorps funding, applicants will be required to submit their applications electronically into CNCS's web-based management system. Please ensure staff availability to enter the application into the system as well as respond to CVs' requests for clarification. California Volunteers will provide instructions for submitting applications into CNCS's web-based management system at a later date.

AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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), CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions, and California Volunteers Policies and Requirements.

CNCS Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this *Guidance* will be subject to the CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and the CNCS Specific Terms and Conditions for the fiscal year in which the grant award is tied to. These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnsc-grants>.

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) **and** 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 National Service Criminal History Checks Guide](#) for details on how to properly conduct the checks using the approved vendors. The cost of checks must be included in the budget. Consider allocating some to the match share, as this is a common pre-launch expense. See the budget worksheet for more detail.

Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants will be required to complete and submit a variety of deliverables related to AmeriCorps program design and operation readiness. These deliverables are due to CV at specific times throughout the project period. Some deliverables may be waived by CV if an applicant can demonstrate that those components are already in place. All deliverables must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time. California Volunteers may withhold payment of invoices if required deliverables are incomplete or are of poor quality.

The following provides a brief description of each planning grant deliverable to be completed by the selected applicant during the planning project period. Detailed instructions regarding each item will be provided during the planning period.

Planning Grant Deliverables

- 1) **Community Problem:** Submit a summary of the community problem, including:

- The role current or historical inequities faced by underserved communities may play in contributing to the problem.
 - The community need as it relates to the [CDC's Social Vulnerability index](#) and to communicate the severity and prevalence of the problem.
- 2) Logic Model:** Submit a program logic model using the Logic Model Worksheet provided by CV. A logic model is a graphical representation of program activities and their intended outcomes as depicted in the theory of change. The logic model shall depict the following:
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
 - Locations or sites in which members will provide services
 - Context in which the intervention is delivered (e.g., the setting where the intervention is delivered)
 - Number of AmeriCorps members who will deliver the intervention
 - Characteristics of AmeriCorps members, including specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required to implement the intervention
 - The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
 - Duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention)
 - Dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)
 - Target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level)
 - The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e., number of beneficiaries served, types and number of activities conducted, equity gaps closed). If applicable, identify which [National Performance Measures](#) will be used as output indicators.
 - Outcomes that demonstrate meaningful changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur as a result of the intervention. If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators.
- 3) Evidence Base for Intervention:** Submit a summary of relevant evidence, including past performance measure data, evaluation reports, and/or cited research studies, to inform their proposed program intervention. The described evidence should be relatively recent, preferably within the last six years. The evidence should also indicate a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest. The description must include specific citations of studies and/or publicly available evaluation and research reports.
- 4) Member Experience:** Submit a summary of how members will gain skills as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed. Explain how the program will make efforts to recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate and will foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds talents, and capabilities are welcome and leveraged for learning and effective service delivery.
- 5) Performance Measurement Worksheets (PMW):** Submit a set of performance measures using the PMW template provided by CV (include primary service activities as well as Community Strengthening and Member Development worksheets). Performance measures are quantifiable goals developed by programs to determine the impact of AmeriCorps on communities and participants.
- 6) Service Site Locations:** Submit a list proposed organizations where members will serve if the application is funded, including details such as site name, address, county, and proposed number of members to be placed at each location.

- 7) **Program Budget:** Submit a completed program budget using the template provided by CV. In addition, grantees will create a plan for securing the match necessary to support program implementation beyond the first three-year grant period.
- 8) **Program Staffing and Management Structure:** Submit a summary of each staff person's roles, responsibilities, and overall structure of the staff that will be implementing the AmeriCorps program as well as providing oversight and monitoring of the program.
- 9) **Partnership Development and Management:** Community partnerships are critical to AmeriCorps program success. To help ensure that AmeriCorps programs are sustainable and reflective of the communities in which they serve, California Volunteers requires that each program be supported by a public and private partnership. Partners should be identified through the planning period and include a ***minimum of three independent organizations*** that include ***at least one public and one private partner*** (nonprofit or for-profit entity). 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations are considered private entities. The primary members of the partnership must each have a significant role in planning, operating, and sustaining the program. The partner plans must describe the AmeriCorps program's major partners and each partner's contribution to the program in supporting the implementation, oversight, and sustainability of the program.
- 10) **Member Support and Management:** Submit a summary of how AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their daily supervisors to provide effective service. Include plans for how supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations as well as program plans for onboarding, training, support and supervision.
- 11) **Compliance and Accountability Plan:** Submit summary of the monitoring and oversight plan to prevent and detect non-compliance and enforce compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities and criminal history checks at the grantee, subgrantee (if applicable), and service site locations. Include plans for how the program will address non-compliance.
- 12) **Data Collection Plan:** Submit a summary of the data collection system and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data during the first three years of the grant. If a data collection system has not yet been developed, describe the plan and timeline for developing a high quality system. Describe how the program will use performance data (including proposed performance measures and other process and outcome measures if applicable) to improve its program in the first three years of funding.