



AmeriCorps
New Jersey

*AmeriCorps Formula
Notice of Funding Opportunity*

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New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service For

Program Year 2021/2022

Application Due Date: April 15, 2021

**NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND
COMMUNITY SERVICE**

**P.O. Box 456
Trenton, NJ 08625
908-303-0471**

Funding provided by the Corporation on National and
Community Service

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1:	NJ COMMISSION GRANT INFORMATION AND TIMELINE	PAGE
	Description of the Grant Program	3
	NOFO Timetable	4
	Award Information	5
	Eligibility to Apply	5
	Statutory/Regulatory Source and Funding	5
	Technical Assistance	5
	Application Submission	6
	Additional Program Requirements or Benefits	7
	NJ Commission Training and Events	8
	Evaluation of New and Re-competing Applications	9
SECTION II:	CORPORATION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE NOFO	
	Program Description	10
	Federal Award Information	11
	Eligibility Information	13
	Application and Submission Information	15
	Application Review Information	21
	Federal Award Information	27
SECTION III:	MANDATORY SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE	32
SECTION IV:	CNCS APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS	32
SECTION V:	2021 PERFORMANCE MEASURES	32

SECTION 1: NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANT INFORMATION AND TIMELINE

DESCRIPTION OF THE GRANT PROGRAM

AmeriCorps is a national service network that provides full- and part-time opportunities for participants, called members, to serve their communities and increase the reach and impact of organizations to meet local needs. The New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service, New Jersey Department of State, seeks to fund local initiatives and utilize the AmeriCorps model to increase civic engagement and improve New Jersey's communities by deploying AmeriCorps members to provide services in the six focus areas identified in the Serve America Act. These **focus areas** are:

- **Disaster Services** such as: Assistance Provided in Disaster Preparation, Response, Recovery and/or Mitigation, or other applicant determined objective.
- **Economic Opportunity** such as: Financial Literacy, Housing, Employment, or other applicant determined objective.
- **Education** such as: School Readiness, K-12 Success, Post High School Education Support, Teacher Corps, or other Education applicant determined objective.
- **Environmental Stewardship** such as: At-Risk Ecosystems. Energy Efficiency, Awareness and Stewardship, Green Jobs or other applicant determined objective.
- **Healthy Futures** such as: Aging in Place, Obesity and Food, Access to Care, or other applicant determined objective.
- **Veterans and Military Families** such as: Veterans and Families Served or other applicant determined objective.

Through this AmeriCorps Formula Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service (hereinafter, the Commission) invites submission of AmeriCorps applications. Applications should demonstrate engagement of AmeriCorps members in an evidence-informed and evidence-based approach to service interventions that will result in intended solutions to community problems (e.g., based on proposed program's performance and evaluation data or research demonstrating the effectiveness of a similar intervention). Applications receive points for providing evidence that proposed interventions will lead to the outcomes identified in the theory of change (logic model). Applicants shall provide evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the proposed population and community challenge.

The AmeriCorps Formula program is funded federally and requires a local combination of significant cash and in-kind match. National AmeriCorps has waived the statutory match requirement for the program year 2021/22 due to the COVID pandemic. However, applicants should be aware that the cost of running an AmeriCorps program will require some level of local investment and will be required to meet any budgeted match proposed in their budget.

A. Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions to strengthen communities. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members can receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust that members can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans. The Education Award can be used for a period of up to seven (7) years following successful completion of a term of service. Members over the age of 55 at the start of service may do a one-time transfer of an Education Award to a child, grandchild, step-child, or foster child which is held in trust for up to ten years.

Single state applicants from New Jersey will submit directly to the NJ Commission on National and Community Service on eGrants. The application will be reviewed and scored among other New Jersey applicants. Applications must score above 75 points in order to be considered for funding. Applications that were submitted for the Competitive NOFO process during the fall of 2020 will also be automatically submitted for consideration in the state-level Formula NOFO process in the spring of 2021.

In reading this Formula NOFO, applicants must follow the NJ Commission’s due dates first. Section I of this NOFO contains all of the NJ Commission specific requirements. Section II will contain all of the national AmeriCorps specific requirements.

The following sections should be read together in order to develop a complete application:

Section I: NJ Commission Grant Information and Timeline

Section II: CNCS Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Section III: Mandatory Supplemental Guidance

Section IV: CNCS Application Instructions

Section V: 2021 Performance Measures

B. Timeline:

Date	Activity
February 11	Dissemination of NOFO flyer announcing the 2021 AmeriCorps Formula competition. NOFO goes live on the NJ DOS website.
February 22	Application instructions for Continuation programs will be available.
March 3	NOFO Technical Assistance Session via ZOOM. Live at 10:00 am. Link to be sent upon registration. Session will be recorded and available at the NJ Department of State AmeriCorps grants website.
March 5	Technical Assistance Session on Theory of Change, Evidence, Logic Models and Performance Measures via ZOOM. 10:00 am. Link to be sent upon Registration at AmeriCorpsNJ@sos.nj.gov
April 1	Notice of Intent to Apply due to Commission at AmeriCorpsNJ@sos.nj.gov
April 15	Formula applications due to Commission on eGrants by 4:00 pm.
April 16	Commission sends applications to be reviewed by Center for Research and Evaluation in Education and Human Services (CREEHS)
April 16	Staff review of applications and budgets are begun
April 20	Technical Assistance session for readers via ZOOM. Independent reader review begins.
May 5	Reader Arena Session via ZOOM. Arena scores and final rankings.
May 6-7	Notification of applicants selected and revisions, if any, requested for applications recommended for funding
May 17	Revisions due back from applicants
May 18	Commission board vote on selected applicants
May 21	NJ Commission target date for submission of Formula package to national AmeriCorps.
June 7	National AmeriCorps deadline for Formula submissions from Commissions.

NOTE: Attendance at one of the NOFO Technical Assistance Sessions is required in order to submit an application. Please e-mail AmeriCorpsNJ@sos.nj.gov to register for a zoom link to the technical assistance sessions.

AWARD INFORMATION

The NJ Commission is offering the opportunity to compete for a three-year cycle of Formula AmeriCorps programs. **Awards from this Formula NOFO will implement the first year of the program which runs from September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2022.**

Types of Award

The NJ Commission will accept applications for Cost-Reimbursement Grants including Professional Corps. Professional Corps are not eligible to apply for Cost-Reimbursement. The NJ Commission will also accept Fixed Amount Grants for Full-time, or Professional Corps. Please refer to Section II CNCS NOFO for a fuller description of the Grant Types and Sub-Types.

Continuation Grants

Current programs in their first or second year of a three-year cycle will need to submit a continuation application. The NJ Commission will send separate instructions to current programs on how to apply for a continuation award. These instructions will be made available on February 22, 2021.

Funding Period

For New or Re-competing applications, this is Year 1 of 3 of a multi-year grant period covering the following funding periods:

Year 1 September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2022

Year 2 September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023

Year 3 September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024

ELIGIBILITY TO APPLY

Eligibility is open to public or private non-profit organizations, including community organizations and faith-based organizations; American Indian Tribal Communities; Local Education Agencies (LEAs) including charter schools; institutions of higher education; government entities within the state (e.g., cities/municipalities, counties, state departments); labor organizations; and partnerships or consortia consisting of the aforementioned. Organizations that have been convicted of a Federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in this NOFO. Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501 ©(4), that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

STATUTORY/REGULATORY SOURCE AND FUNDING

The applicant's project must be designed and implemented in conformance with all applicable state and federal regulations. In addition to the program requirements outlined in this NOFO, applicants should refer to the new AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520-2550

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

General Technical Assistance Workshops will be held as listed in the Timelines section. There will be one live session which will be recorded and posted on the NJ Department of State website under Grant Opportunities. <https://www.nj.gov/state/volunteer-grant-opportunities.shtml>

Only applications submitted by agencies that participate in the virtual General Technical Assistance and Theory of Change session listed in the timelines section will be accepted.

Pre-registration is requested via e-mail at AmeriCorpsNJ@sos.nj.gov. A zoom link will be sent. This is a one-time live session and there will be a recording available on the NJ Department of State website a few days after the live sessions. <https://www.nj.gov/state/volunteer-grant-opportunities.shtml>

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

1. Notice of Intent to Apply

Submission of a Notice of Intent to Apply is requested and is due **Thursday, April 1, 2021.**

Please send an e-mail with your Notice of Intent to AmeriCorpsNJ@sos.nj.gov. Include in the e-mail:

- Organization Name
- Address
- Contact Name
- E-mail address
- Phone Number
- Focus area your organization plans to address
- Applying as New, Recompeting or Continuation and Regular Cost Reimbursement or Fixed Amount.

The New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service, Department of State operates this grant program in strict conformance with procedures designed to ensure accountability and integrity in the use of public funds and, therefore, ***will not accept late applications***. The responsibility for a timely submission resides with the applicant.

Applications must be submitted electronically on eGrants

<https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp>

NO LATER THAN 4:00 PM ON Thursday, April 15, 2021.

Applications must be submitted to the corresponding NJ Commission Prime application on eGrants.

Submission of Additional Documents:

All documents that are requested in the AmeriCorps NOFO need to be sent to the NJ Commission and not to national AmeriCorps . The NJ Commission will forward additional documents to national AmeriCorps upon selection of the application at the NJ level. Please see the CNCS NOFO Section II for all of the required additional documents.

Additional Documents may be e-mailed to AmeriCorpsNJ@sos.nj.gov with the following subject line: [Legal Applicant Name]– [Application ID number]. Emails should include the following information:

- the legal applicant name and its point of contact information
- the application ID number
- a list of documents that should be attached to the email
- individually saved files that are clearly labeled
- files **MUST** include the legal applicant name and application ID number within the body of each document.

Do not submit other items not requested in this *Notice* or Application Instructions. The NJ Commission will not review or return them.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS OR BENEFITS

The NJ Commission highlights the following additional requirements and benefits of AmeriCorps.

Terms of Service

Programs may engage members full-time or less than full-time. Full-time members must serve at least 1700 hours during a period of not less than nine months and not more than one year. Reduced Full-time members must serve at least 1200 hours. Half-time members must serve at least 900 hours during a period of one year as indicated in the approved budget. Programs may propose at least 300 hours for minimum-time, at least 450 hours for quarter-time, and at least 675 hours for reduced half-time members based on the program design. Beginning this program year, AmeriCorps has also created a new 100 hour abbreviated term.

Living Allowance

The NJ Commission requires that all AmeriCorps members receive a living allowance or stipend regardless of the federal regulation which does not require a living allowance for less than full-time members. Full-time members must receive the minimum stipend amount listed in the chart. Recommended levels for less than full-time members are listed below:

Type of Member Position	Min. # of Hours	MSY	Min. Total Living Allowance	Max. Living Allowance
Full-time	1700	1.000	\$15,100	\$30,200
Three Quarter-time	1200	0.070	\$ 10,659	\$21,318
Half-time	900	0.500	\$ 7,994	\$15,988
Reduced HT	675	0.381	\$ 5,996	\$11,991
Quarter-time	450	0.265	\$ 3,997	\$ 7,994
Minimum-time	300	0.212	\$ 2,665	\$ 5,329
Abbreviated-time	100	0.056	\$ 888	\$ 1,776

A living allowance is not considered a wage. **In New Jersey, AmeriCorps members are not eligible for unemployment insurance, family leave or disability.**

Child Care

The Corporation (national AmeriCorps) directly funds child care for any full-time member who is eligible for and needs such assistance to participate in the program. They pay 100% of the allowance as defined by payment rates of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). They can provide technical assistance to a program and can help a grantee determine member eligibility, provider eligibility, and child care allowance. Direct payments will be made to the child care providers. Therefore, do not include child care assistance in your AmeriCorps budget. The Corporation bases member eligibility for child care on need. Members’ needs must be consistent with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990:

- total family income of members must be less than 75% of the state median income, as

defined by the state under CCDBG guidelines;

- members must reside with and be a parent or guardian of a child under the age of 13.

When a grantee accepts members in their program that are receiving and continue to receive child care assistance from other sources such as a parent or guardian, they are ineligible for child care from your program. On the other hand, if members become ineligible for assistance because of their enrollment in the grantee's program, or the member certifies that he or she needs child care to participate in the program, the grantee must provide child care or help them access childcare through the CNCS child care partnership.

Health Insurance

Grantees must provide full-time members with health insurance at the time of acceptance into the program if the member is not otherwise covered by a health insurance policy. If a member who previously had coverage loses it through no deliberate act of his or her own, such as parental or spousal job loss, the grantee must provide the member with basic health insurance that meets AmeriCorps requirements.

In general, AmeriCorps does not pay the costs of health benefits for half-time members unless they serve full-time for a sustained period of time. For example, members may receive benefits when they serve in a summer program for thirty-five hours per week with other members who receive health benefits.

Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities

Increasing the participation of individuals with disabilities in national and community service programs is a key interest of the Corporation. All AmeriCorps programs are required to actively reach out to people with disabilities for inclusion in AmeriCorps service.

Participation in National Days of Service

As part of the National Service Network, there are a number of opportunities for grantees to take part in national service days. National AmeriCorps and the Commission expect all national service programs, including AmeriCorps programs, to participate in one or more days of service, including the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday (third Monday of January) and AmeriCorps Week (typically second week of March). In addition, the Corporation and Commission expect programs with AmeriCorps members to participate in other national service activities such as common opening ceremonies (including the administration of an oath or affirmation), orientations, and training.

STATE COMMISSION TRAINING AND EVENTS

Program Manager Trainings and Meetings

All program managers must attend a three-day orientation known as Starting Strong held in the last week or so in July, 2021, and any other training (e.g., site supervisor training) developed for project directors during the contract period. Project directors are also required to participate in all monthly conference calls or meetings.

In constructing the budget, figure in the cost for transportation, meals, and possible overnight accommodations related to all Corporation or Commission training sessions.

Statewide AmeriCorps Member Trainings and Events

All Americorps members and project directors are required to attend the following

trainings/events:

- AmeriCorps Launch – Fall 2021
- End-of-the-Year Training – Spring 2022
- Other statewide training such as Career Day or Disaster Preparedness.

In constructing the budget, figure in the cost of transportation to all of the training sessions even though some or all may be conducted via ZOOM.

EVALUATION OF NEW AND RECOMPETING APPLICATIONS

State-level Review Process

All applications for AmeriCorps Formula grants will be reviewed, scored and ranked by a panel of three readers. The evaluation panel typically consists of one reader from the originating office, one from another office within the NJ Department of State, and one reader external to the NJ Department of State who is knowledgeable in the content area and or AmeriCorps. Readers of grant applications for the NJ Department of State certify that no conflict of interest exists that would create an undue advantage or disadvantage for any applicant in the application evaluation and scoring process.

Applications are evaluated on the basis of quality, comprehensiveness, completeness, accuracy and appropriateness of response to the guidelines and requirements of the governing NOFO. Applicants may request information about their evaluation scores by writing to the NJ Commission on National and Community Service. The Commission reserves the right to withdraw from consideration any application that does not include each and every component to be evaluated and scored in the evaluation process.

Applications must receive a score of at least 75 points out of 100 and include all required components to be eligible for funding. Eligible applications are ranked and funded in descending order, from highest to lowest score. In the event of a tied score at or above the NJ Department of State's cutoff score of 75, the reader panel will select the applicant with the highest combined score for the Program Design section.

All applicants to the Formula NOFO will automatically be submitted for the state- level Formula competition in the winter of 2021. Applicants whose submissions are selected in both the fall Competitive process and the Formula process will be required to accept the national Competitive award unless determined otherwise by the Commission.

SECTION II: CNCS NOTICE OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service
Funding Opportunity Title: 2021 AmeriCorps State and National Grants
Announcement Type: Initial Announcement
CFDA Number: 94.006

Disclosure: Publication of this Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (*Notice*) does not obligate the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to award any specific number of grants or to obligate any particular amount of funding. The 2021 President’s Budget proposed the elimination of CNCS. The actual level and timing of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations. **NOTE: The Corporation on National and Community Service is now called AmeriCorps.**

Important Dates

Please refer to the NJ Commission timelines in Section I for all relevant due dates for New Jersey single-state applicants.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.1. Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

The mission of CNCS, (national AmeriCorps) is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic participation through service and volunteering. Through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, CNCS has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations (see *Eligible Applicants* section) proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions/practices to strengthen communities. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust that members can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

A.2. Additional Funding Priorities

In addition to the traditional, six focus areas identified in Section I Description of the Grant Program (i.e. Education, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Opportunity, Healthy Futures, Veterans and Military Families, Disaster Preparedness), the Commission also seeks applications that address the following areas:

- **Efforts to help local communities recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.** Applicants may propose programming in any CNCS focus area to aid communities as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Programs that actively engage in removing structural racial inequities, advancing racial equality, and increasing opportunity in order to achieve sustainable change in communities.**
- **Economic Opportunity** –a program model that increases economic opportunities for communities by preparing people for the workforce.

- **Education programs replicating studies on the CNCS Evidence Exchange**
<https://americorps.gov/about/our-impact/evidence-exchange>
- **Healthy Futures** a program model that reduces and/or prevents prescription drug and opioid abuse.
- **Evidence-based interventions on the CNCS Evidence Exchange.**
<https://americorps.gov/about/our-impact/evidence-exchange>
- **Rural intermediaries** – organizations that demonstrate measureable impact and primarily serve rural communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.
- **Faith-based organizations.**

Applications will not earn additional points for selection of any one particular focus or priority area.

A.3. Performance Goals or Expected Outcomes

National Performance Measures

All applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (output and outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. This may be a National Performance Measure or an applicant-determined measure. Additional performance measures, including output-only National Performance Measures, may also be included if desired; however, all performance measures must be consistent with the program’s Theory of Change and represent significant program activities. The Commission does not expect applicants to select performance measures to correspond to each and every potential member activity or community impact. The Commission values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures.

The Commission expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance measurement strategy if the National Performance Measures are part of the applicant’s Theory of Change. Applicants should use both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work as well as make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals. For more information, please refer to the [2021 National Performance Measure Instructions](#), Section V of this NOFO.

A.4. Program Authority

National AmeriCorp’s legal authority to award these grants is found in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, (NCSA) (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.)

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1. Estimated Available Funds

The Commission expects a highly competitive AmeriCorps grant competition. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

B.2. Estimated Award Amount

Award amounts will vary, as determined by the scope of the projects.

B.3. Project and Award Period

The Commission anticipates making three-year grants. The Commission generally makes an initial award for the first year of operation, based on a one-year project period. Continuation awards for subsequent years are not guaranteed; they depend upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance.

The project start date may not occur prior to the date the Commission awards the grant. AmeriCorps members may not be enrolled prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.

B.4. Type of Award

AmeriCorps Operating Grants: The Commission may award a Cost Reimbursement or a Fixed Amount grant to any successful applicant, but the availability of a Full-Cost Fixed Amount grant is limited to certain applicants. Professional Corps are not eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement. See the *Eligible Applicants* section and the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for more information. The Commission will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year.

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement	Fixed Amount			
Available Subtypes	Traditional	Full-Cost	Education Award Program (EAP)	Professional Corps See Sec. D.6.a.2 for further requirements	No Cost Slots
Maximum Cost per MSY	\$16,300	\$16,300	\$800 or \$1,000*	\$1,000	\$0
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time, Abbreviated-Time	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time, Abbreviated-Time	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time, Abbreviated-Time	Full-time only	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time, Abbreviated-Time
Budget Submission Required	Yes	No		Yes, if requesting operating funds	No
Availability of Funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSYs	No	Yes			No
Special Requirements	N/A	N/A		Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries and benefits must be paid entirely by organization where member serves and not included in budget.	N/A
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes	No			

Available to new Applicants	Yes	No	Yes
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*Per 42 U.S.C. § 12581a, national AmeriCorps may provide the operational support under this section for a program in an amount that is not more than \$800 per individual enrolled in an approved national service position, or not more than \$1,000 per such individual if at least 50 percent of the persons enrolled in the program are disadvantaged youth.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1. Eligible Applicants

The following Non-Federal entities (all of which are defined in 2 CFR 200.1) are eligible to apply:

- Indian Tribes
- Institutions of higher education
- Local governments
- Nonprofit organizations
- States

Entities must have a valid SAM registration and DUNS and/or Unique Entity Identifier to receive an award. See Section D.3. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) for more information.

New Applicants

The Commission encourages organizations that have not received prior funding from CNCS to apply. The general practice is to award no more than 20 MSY’s (full-time equivalents) and no less than 8 MSY’s (full-time equivalents).

New applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants but are not eligible to apply for Full-Time Fixed Amount grants.

Threshold Issues

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

- Professional Corps applicants and/or applicants determined to be a Professional Corps by CNCS must demonstrate that the community in which it will place AmeriCorps members serving as professionals has an inadequate number of said professionals.
- If the proposed service activities require specialized member qualifications and/or training (for example, tutoring programs: 45 CFR §2522.910-.940), the applicant must describe how the program will meet these requirements.
- All applicants must propose program designs that are either evidence-based or evidence-informed. Applicants assessed as lower than the Preliminary evidence tier (i.e., Pre-Preliminary) must provide adequate responses to the Evidence Quality review criteria in order to be considered for funding.

C.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Fixed Amount Grants

There is no match requirement for Fixed Amount grants. The Commission does not provide all the funds necessary to operate the program, therefore organizations should raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.

Cost Reimbursement Grants

Applicants are required to match funds based on the chart below. The applicant's match can be federal or non-federal cash and/or in-kind contributions. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet the match requirement at the time of application submission. See Section D.6. *Funding Restrictions* for more information.

A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR §2521.60 and below.

AmeriCorps Funding Year	1, 2, 3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Grantee Share Requirements	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

Section 121(e)(5) of NCSA (42 U.S.C. 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 CNCS on a Federal Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout.

The living allowance or salary provided to AmeriCorps members in Professional Corps programs (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) does not count toward the matching requirement.

NOTE: National AmeriCorps has waived statutory match for program year 2021/22. Programs will be held to their budgetary match.

Alternative Match

Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at 45 CFR §2521.60(b). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined in the Application Instructions. Applicants who plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request at the time the application is submitted. Programs applying through State Service Commissions must submit requests for alternative match to the Commission, who will submit it to CNCS on their behalf.

C.3. Other Requirements

Under section 132A(b) of the NCSA, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this *Notice*.

Applications that propose to engage in activities that are prohibited under CNCS's statutes, regulations, or the terms and conditions of its awards are not eligible to receive CNCS funding.

Note that under appropriations provisions annually enacted by Congress, if CNCS is aware that any corporation has any unpaid federal tax liability—

- that has been assessed
- for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed
- 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 Notice. However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation which a federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has made a

determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the federal government.

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

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

This *Notice* should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550, the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, Application Instructions, and the National Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. These documents can be found at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities/2021/americorps-state-and-national-grants-fy-2021> The full Regulations are available online at www.ecfr.gov.

D.1. Content and Form of Application Submission

D.1.a. Application Content

In CNCS’s web-based management system, applicants will enter the following components of a complete application:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet: This is automatically generated when applicants complete the data elements in the system
- Narratives
 - Executive Summary
 - Program Design
 - Organizational Capability
 - Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
 - Evaluation Plan (if applicable)
- Logic Model
- Standard Form 424 Budget
- Performance Measures
- Authorization, Assurances, and Certification
(<https://egrants.cns.gov/cnsmisc/ECERTS.HTM>, and <https://egrants.cns.gov/cnsmisc/EASSUR.HTM>)

D.2. Page Limits

There are page limits for the Narrative, and Logic Model.

Narratives

Applications must not exceed 10 double-spaced pages for the Narratives or 12 pages for Rural Intermediaries as the pages print out from eGrants.

The application sections that count towards the page limit are the:

- SF 424 Face Sheet
- Executive Summary
- Program Design, Organizational Capacity, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy narratives.

The application page limit does not include the Budget, performance measures, or any required additional documents.

Logic Model

The Logic Model may not exceed three pages when printed with the application from the “Review” tab in

CNCS's web-based management system.

Please note that the length of the application as a word processing document may differ from the length of the document printed out from eGrants. The character limits in eGrants do not align with page limits set in the Notice. **CNCS strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the “Review and Submit” tab in eGrants prior to submission in order to confirm that the application does not exceed the page limit.**

CNCS will not consider the results of any alternative printing methods when determining if an application complies with the page limit. Reviewers will also not consider material that is over the page limit, even if eGrants allows applicants to enter and submit additional text.

D.3. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (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. A Commission is responsible for ensuring its state applicants have compliant registrations. CNCS 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 to CNCS.**

CNCS 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 CNCS is ready to make a Federal award, CNCS 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.

The Federal government is implementing Unique Entity Identifiers (UEI) as part of the SAM registration process to eventually replace DUNS numbers. CNCS may ask applicants to add the UEI to their application as part of the clarification or pre-award process. CNCS 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.

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](#). CNCS recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date, if applicants do not yet have their UEI.

D.4. Submission Dates and Times

D.4.a. Application Submission Deadline

[Please refer to Section I Timetable for submission due date to the NJ Commission.](#) The deadline applies to new and re-competing applicants.

D.4.b. Additional Documents Deadline

Any required additional documents are due on the application deadline. See *Submission of Additional Documents* section for other guidance.

D.4.c. Late Applications

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

- provide a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay, including:
 - the timing and specific cause(s) of the delay
 - the ticket number if a request for assistance was submitted to the National Service Hotline
 - any information provided to the applicant by the National Service Hotline
 - any other documentation or evidence that supports the justification
- ensure that the NJ Commission receives the justification and any other evidence that substantiates the claimed extenuating circumstance(s) via email to AmeriCorpsNJ@sos.nj.gov no later than one business day after the application deadline stated in the Notice.

Communication with the NJ Commission and/or CNCS staff, including an applicant's program officer/portfolio manager, is not a substitute for a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance that caused the delay as outlined above. Applicants are required to continue working in eGrants, CNCS's web-based application system and with the National Service Hotline to submit the application. The NJ Commission and CNCS will determine whether or not to accept a late application on a case-by-case basis.

Applicants that do not meet the application submission deadline, and do not submit a written explanation or justification or any other evidence to overcome the presumption of non-compliance within the published timeframe, will not be reviewed or selected for award.

Please note: The NJ Commission and CNCS will *not* consider an advance request to submit a late application. Please carefully review and follow the guidance in this section and submit your application as soon as possible.

D.5. Intergovernmental Review

This *Notice* is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

D.6. Funding Restrictions

D.6.a. Award Funding Requirements

1. Member Living Allowance

A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. For Cost Reimbursement grants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either CNCS or grantee share. Exceptions are noted below.

While Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance to members that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements.

Exceptions noted below. Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to indicate that amount in the application and should request those positions as "without living allowance" in the budget.

Please refer to the Living Allowance Chart in Section I for the Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance.

Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements

a. Professional Corps Grantees must provide members a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance set in the Living Allowance Table.

Professional Corps member salaries and benefits including child care are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget request to CNCS (federal or matching share.)

2. Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

The CNCS cost per MSY is determined by dividing the CNCS share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum amount an applicant may request from CNCS per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

New and re-competing Commission sub-grantees/applicants will be held to the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type.

Table: Maximum Cost per MSY

Grant Program	Maximum
Individual Formula State/Territory Program (cost reimbursement)	\$16,300*
Professional Corps Fixed Amount Applicants/Grantees	\$1,000**
Full-cost Fixed Amount Grant	\$16,300
State/Territory Commission Average (of all its subgrants)	\$16,300

*Cost reimbursement programs operating in rural communities (as defined in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) and cost reimbursement programs that recruit opportunity youth as AmeriCorps members may request up to \$16,800 cost per MSY for the AmeriCorps members who will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth.

3. Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will be eligible for an Education Award 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. CNCS will provide the updated Education Award amounts at the time of grant award.

4. Cost Sharing or Matching

a. Please see Section C. Eligibility Information 3. Cost Sharing or Matching earlier in the NOFO.

D.6.b. Indirect Costs

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants will either use a federally approved indirect cost rate, a 5/10 percent fixed option, a 10 percent *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly as outlined in 2 C.F.R. § 200.413. States, local governments and Indian Tribes may use 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 percent *de minimis* rate must enter that information in the Organization section in the CNCS’s web-based management system. However, under section 121(d) of the NCSA and CNCS’s regulations at 45 C.F.R. 2517.710, no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants.

The instructions for how to enter the organization’s indirect cost rate are located here: [eGrants Indirect Cost Rate User Instructions](#). Applicants should not submit documentation addressing the indirect cost rate agreement via email.

Please note: *To request a Federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, when CNCS is the applicable cognizant agency for an organization's indirect costs, the applicant must submit a request to IndirectCostRate@cns.gov. The applicant may also obtain instructions and additional information by contacting the email address above.*

D.6.c. Pre-Award Costs

Pre-award costs, where authorized, are allowed after receiving written approval from the NJ Commission.

7. Other Submission Requirements

a. Electronic Application Submission in eGrants

Applicants must submit applications electronically via [eGrants, CNCS's web-based application system](#). CNCS recommends that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a Word document, then copy and paste the text into the appropriate eGrants field no later than 10 days before the deadline.

The applicant's authorized representative must be the person who submits the application. The authorized representative must use his or her own eGrants account to sign and submit the application. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Applicants should contact the National Service Hotline at (800) 942-2677 or via [eGrants Questions](#) if they have a problem when they create an account, prepare, or submit the application. National Service Hotline hours are posted at <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/>

Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the competition to which the organization is applying. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, applicants must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants. Please contact the NJ Commission via e-mail at AmeriCorpsNJ@sos.nj.gov with copy of your ticket number and the reason for the technical problem.

D.7.b. Submission of Additional Documents

Applicants are required to submit the following additional documents by the application submission deadline:

All applicants

- Evaluation briefs, reports, studies. Please refer to the *Evidence Base* section for detailed instructions by evidence tier. If multiple evaluation briefs/reports/studies are submitted by the applicant, the most recent (as measured by the date of completion or publication) will be reviewed first, and any documents submitted beyond the allowable number will not be reviewed.
- Labor union concurrence (if applicable)

Recompeting applications

- Evaluation report, if required. Please submit in Word. The evaluation report should include a title page with the CNCS grant ID for the project that was evaluated, the name of the project, and the date of completion of the report. If any of this required information is missing, the applicant may not receive credit for meeting their evaluation requirements. Please see the *Evidence Tiers* definitions in the Mandatory Supplemental Information and Section E. Evaluation Plan for further information

Rural Intermediaries (New and recompeting)

- Letters of support from the consortium members

New and Recompeting applications

- All new and recompeting applicants regardless of funding level are required to submit an Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS) located at:
<https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/financial-management/financial-and-grants-management-select> Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey under the Pre-Award/Application Certification Forms Section. Please submit the OFMS as a Word document. Forms submitted as a PDF or any other document format may not be accepted. Organizations that have already submitted a recent OFMS as part of their fall submission to the national Competitive process do not need to submit this form again for the Formula competition.

Failure to submit the required additional documents by the deadline will have a negative effect on the assessment of your application and/or on the determination of the application's eligibility to advance for review.

Additional Documents must be emailed to AmeriCorpsNJ@sos.nj.gov with the labels outlined below. Emails should include the following information:

- Subject line: [Legal Applicant Name]– [Application ID number]
- Body of the email should identify:
 - The legal applicant name and its point of contact information
 - The application ID number
 - A list of documents that should be attached to the email
 - individually attached files that are clearly labeled, and that include the legal applicant name and application ID number within the heading of each document. To ensure that all required additional documents are received, please provide each document as an individual file. Please do not send all documents as one scanned file.
 - If the size of an applicant's files requires multiple emails, please also include an ordering system in the subject line, such as "(1 of 3)."

Do not submit other items not requested in this Notice or Application Instructions. The Commission will not review or return them.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

Each applicant must describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to solve a significant community problem. CNCS urges applicants to submit high quality applications that carefully follow the guidance in this *Notice* and in the Application Instructions. The quality of an application will be an important factor in determining whether an organization will receive funding.

Categories/Subcategories	Percentage
Executive Summary	0
Program Design	50
Theory of Change and Logic Model	24
Evidence Tier	8
Evidence Quality	8
Member Experience	10
Organizational Capacity	25
Organizational Background and Staffing	9
Compliance and Accountability	8
Culture That Values Learning	4
Member Supervision	4
Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	25

1.1. Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. Do not deviate from the template below.

The [Name of the organization] proposes to have [Number of] AmeriCorps members who will [service activities the members will be doing] in [the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage [number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable] who will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing.]

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)].* The CNCS investment of \$[amount of request] will be matched with \$[amount of projected match], \$[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and \$[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding.

Fixed-Amount grant applicants (Full-cost Fixed, No Cost Slots) should list their Other Revenue (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still raise significant additional resources to operate the program.

1.2. Program Design (50 percent)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

1. Theory of Change and Logic Model (24 points)

The Theory of Change shall address:

- The proposed intervention is responsive to the identified community problem.
- The applicant's proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, dosage, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) leveraged volunteers.
- The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's Theory of Change.
- The expected outcomes articulated in the application narrative and logic model represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem identified by the applicant.
- The rationale for utilizing AmeriCorps members to deliver the intervention(s) is reasonable.
- The service role of AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.

The Logic Model shall depict:

- A summary of the community problem.
- 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
 - Number of AmeriCorps members that will deliver the intervention
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
 - The duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention)
 - The dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)
 - The 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.) If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as output indicators
- Outcomes that demonstrate 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.

Note: The logic model is a visual representation of the applicant's theory of change. Programs should include short, medium or long-term outcomes in the logic model. Applicants are not required to measure all components of their theory of change. The applicant's performance measures should be consistent with the program's theory of change and should represent significant program activities.

In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets for their performance measures.

Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization's performance data (e.g., program data observed over time suggests targets are reasonable), relevant research (e.g. targets documents by organizations running similar programs with similar populations), or prior program evaluation findings.

Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention. Logic model content that exceeds three pages will not be reviewed.

2. Evidence Base (16 points)

The assessment of an applicant's evidence base has two parts. First, the applicant will be assigned to an evidence tier (see the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.) Second, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the degree to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

Evidence Tier (8 points):

An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of understanding the relative strength of each applicant's evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the logic model.

In 2020, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 26%, Moderate 18%, Preliminary 24%, and Pre-Preliminary 32%. As these figures indicate, CNCS values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. Thus, do not be deterred from applying for funding due to your current evidence level.

Applicants who have outcome or impact evaluation reports of the same intervention described in the application (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for a definition of "same intervention") may submit up to 2 of those reports, plus (if applicable) the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle, to qualify for the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tier. In order to qualify for consideration, the intervention evaluated in the submitted report(s) must match the intervention proposed by the applicant in

the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Program Design and Logic Model sections of the application:

- Characteristics of the beneficiary population
- Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention
- Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention, including all key components and activities
- The context in which the intervention is delivered
- Outcomes of the intervention

Submitted reports that do not sufficiently match the intervention proposed by the applicant in all of these areas will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points. Submission of additional documents that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements described in the *Notice* (e.g., advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives that are not research studies or program evaluations) will not be reviewed.

In the Evidence Tier section of the application narrative, applicants must (1) summarize the study design and key findings of any outcome or impact evaluation report(s) submitted and (2) describe any other evidence that supports their program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform their program design. Applicants who submit evaluation reports for consideration must also describe in the Evidence Base section of the application narrative how the intervention described in the submitted reports is the same as the intervention described in the application (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance).

Applicants should provide citations for the studies they describe, if applicable; however, reviewers will not review any documents external to the application other than evaluation report(s) submitted in accordance with the *Notice* instructions.

Applicants must meet all requirements of an evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier.

If the evaluation reports submitted by the applicant do not meet the definitions in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier.

Evidence Quality (8 points)

After the applicant's evidence tier has been assessed, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the extent to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tiers, reviewers will score the submitted evaluation reports using the following standards:

- The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.);
- The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years;
- The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier, reviewers will score the narrative provided in the Evidence Base section of the application using the following standards:

- The applicant uses relevant evidence, including past performance measure data and/or cited

- research studies, to inform their proposed program design;
- The described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years;
- The evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

Applicants assessed in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier who do not provide adequate responses to the Evidence Quality standards will not meet the threshold requirements for this *Notice* and will not be considered for funding.

All applicants, including new grantees, are required to provide additional information in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field of the application (See Section E. Evaluation Plan); however, information provided in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

3. Member Experience (10 points)

- AmeriCorps 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.
- The applicant provides a plan for orienting their members to AmeriCorps, their host agency and service site, their position descriptions, and prohibited activities.
- The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate.
- The applicant will also foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds, talents, and capabilities are welcomed and leveraged for learning and effective service delivery.

E.1.C. Organizational Capability (25 percent)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the following criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

1. Organizational Background and Staffing (9 points)

- The organization details the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing the AmeriCorps program as well as providing oversight and monitoring for the program.

2. Compliance and Accountability (8 points)

- The organization has a 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 for members and all staff listed on the budget at the grantee, subgrantee (if applicable), and service site locations.
- The AmeriCorps-required evaluation report meets AmeriCorps requirements (if applicable.)
- The AmeriCorps-required evaluation report is of satisfactory quality (if applicable.)

3. Culture that Values Learning (4 points)

- The applicant's board, management, and staff collect and use information, including performance data, for learning and decision making.

4. Member Supervision (4 points)

- AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service.
- AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations.

E1.D. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

Reviewers will assess the quality of the application's budget to the following criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

This criteria will be assessed based on the budget submitted. No narrative should be entered in the narrative box except for "See budget"

1. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 points)

- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.
- The budgeted match is equal to or more than the required match for the given program year.
- The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum cost per MSY.

Proposed budgets that contain MSY costs that exceed the maximum cost per MSY and/or less than required match will be considered unresponsive to the application criteria.

Applicants must complete the budget and ensure the following information is in the budget screens:

- Current indirect rate cost if used to claim indirect/administrative costs.
- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project, including for Fixed Amount applicants.
- Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash), the sources of these commitments, and if the commitments are proposed or secured.

1.3. Evaluation Plan (Required for recompeting grantees - 0 percent)

If the applicant is competing for the first time, please provide a data collection plan in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field that includes the following:

- A description of the applicant's data collection system and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data during the first three years of the grant. If the applicant does not yet have a data collection system, describe the plan and timeline for developing a high quality system.
- A description of how the applicant will use performance data (including CNCS performance measures and other process and outcome measures if applicable) to improve its program in the first three years of funding.

First-time applicants should be aware that CNCS may require submission of data collection instruments if a grant is approved for funding. For more information about how to develop a high-quality data collection plan, visit the CNCS Knowledge Network

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/ameriCorps/building-effective-data-collection-plans-presented-october-12-2017>

If the applicant is recompeting for AmeriCorps funds for the first time (see definition of "recompeting" below) the program must submit its evaluation plan in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" section of the Narratives field in CNCS's web-based management system. If the applicant is recompeting for a subsequent time, the program must submit its evaluation report and a learning memo as attachments (see the *Submission of Additional Documents* section for more information), and must also submit an evaluation plan for the next three-year period in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field in the system.

Evaluations plans submitted outside of the system will not be reviewed.

Evaluation plans must include as much information as possible for each of the following (see Frequently Asked Questions: Evaluation, available at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/cncs-evaluation-policies>):

- A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed resultsOutcome(s) of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation
- Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes
- Proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the design selected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components
- Description of the data sources, sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures that will be used in the evaluation
- Analysis plan that clearly describes the methodology/ies that will be used to analyze the collected data
- A timeline for the evaluation that describes how the evaluation will cover at least one year of CNCS-funded activity and will be completed within the three-year timeframe of the grant
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator
- The proposed budget

Information provided in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

For more information about evaluation plans visit the CNCS Knowledge Network's Evaluation Resources: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation>.

The evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of the grant, as described in 45 CFR §2522.700-710:

- If the applicant is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee (other than an Education Award Program grantee), and its average annual CNCS program grant is \$500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external impact evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for Formula funds as required in 45 CFR §2522.730.
- If the applicant is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee whose average annual CNCS program grant is less than \$500,000, or an Education Award Program Grantee, it must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for Formula funds as required in 45 CFR §2522.730.

For purposes of compliance with evaluation plan and report requirements, an application will be considered a re-competing application if it satisfies the CNCS definition of "same project" (*see* Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) and has been funded competitively for at least three years.

- If the applicant has received Competitive funding for at least three of the last five years, it will be required to submit an evaluation plan.
- If the project satisfied the definition of same project and the applicant has completed, including at least six years of Competitive funding for the sam project, the application will be required to submit an evaluation report as well as an evaluation plan for the upcoming 3 year grant. If the applicant does not satisfy the definition of re-competing, it will not be required to submit an evaluation plan or completed evaluation report.

The “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field of the Narrative does not count toward the page limit of the application; however, it does have a set character limit of 20,000 characters.

State/Territory subgrantees that are re-competing for funds may be eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. Grantees requesting approval of an alternative evaluation approach should submit a request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach along with their evaluation plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system. The request should clearly explain: (a) the evaluation constraints faced by the program, (b) why the proposed approach is the most rigorous option feasible, and (c) how the proposed alternative approach will help the grantee build their evidence base. Evaluation plans should include, at a minimum, the required elements listed in this *Notice*. The evaluation plan must be consistent with the information submitted in the Formula funding application and in the request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. CNCS guidance on alternative evaluation approaches can be found on the CNCS website.

If the request for the alternative evaluation approach plus the Evaluation Plan itself will exceed the character limit of the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system, the applicant should do the following:

- Enter the Evaluation Plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system.
- Include a note in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field stating that the applicant is requesting an alternative evaluation approach.
- Include the alternative evaluation approach at the END of the application narrative with the heading “REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPROACH.” This section of the application narrative will not count against the page limit.

E.1.F Amendment Justification (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used if the applicant is awarded a grant and needs to amend it.

E.1.G Clarification Information (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period.

E.1. H. Continuation Changes (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter changes in the application narratives in continuation requests.

NJ Commission and Federal Award Information

F.1. Pre-Award Risk Assessment

AmeriCorps staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant to assess an applicant’s ability to manage federal funds. This evaluation is in addition to assessment of the applicant’s eligibility and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If AmeriCorps determines that an award will be made to an applicant with assessed risks, special conditions that correspond to the degree of assessed risk may be applied to the award.

Additionally, if CNCS concludes that the reasons for applicants having a poor risk assessment are not likely to be mitigated, those applications may not be selected for funding.

In evaluating risks, CNCS may consider some of the following criteria:

Due Diligence:

- federal debt delinquency

- suspension and debarment
 - information available through 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
 - System for Award Management (SAM)
 - “Do Not Pay”
 - reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance and findings of any other available audits or investigations
 - IRS Tax Form 990

Operational and Financial Management:

- financial stability
- Operational and Financial Management Survey

Past Performance:

- applicant’s record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
 - timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements
- accuracy of data reported
 - conformance to the terms and conditions of previous federal awards
 - applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients
 - meeting matching requirements
 - the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
 - *Grant progress reports – attainment of Performance Measures*
 - *Enrollment and retention*
 - *Monitoring findings - CNCS and/or OIG (if applicable) State Commission (for their subgrantees)*
 - *Commission rank*

Other Programmatic Risks:

- publicly available information, including information from the applicant organization's website

Commission staff should review for the same types of risks for the applicants they submit.

Commission staff will assess its re-competing direct grantees related to programmatic past performance. This assessment is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant’s eligibility for funding or the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this assessment will inform funding decisions. In evaluating programmatic performance, CNCS may consider the italicized criteria above for applicants that are current formula and competitive grantees.

Additionally, the Commission may use the results of the review of the risk assessment evaluation in determining which applications to fund.

Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information

Prior to making any award that exceeds \$250,000, CNCS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM and FAPIIS (see 41 U.S.C. §2313). Additionally, CNCS may expand upon these requirements and use its discretion to review and consider information about any applicant receiving an

award, including those under the simplified acquisition threshold.

Any applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through FAPIIS 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 FAPIIS.

The Commission may consider 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 the Risk Assessment Evaluation section of this Notice.

The Commission 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.

The Commission reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, if unforeseen challenges or urgent circumstances make it impossible, impracticable, or inefficient to conduct the review process as planned. Any such adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria that will be used to assess applications.

F.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

F.2.a. Uniform Guidance

All awards under this Notice 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.

F.2.b. Requests for Improper Payment Information

AmeriCorps may, from time to time, request documentation from recipients 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.

F.2.c. CNCS Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this *Notice* will be subject to the 2018 CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and the 2021 Specific Terms and Conditions for the particular program (when applicable.) 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>.

F.2.d. National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a specific screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires grantees to conduct and document NSCHCs on persons (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving AmeriCorps funds. This includes staff that receive part of their salary through a subgrant. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such AmeriCorps funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award. Grantees should utilize the two vendors CNCS has engaged to conduct the required NSCHCs. **Failure to conduct an NSCHC may result in significant disallowed costs.**

Unless CNCS has provided a grant recipient with a written exemption or written approval of an alternative search procedure, recipients ***must*** perform the following checks:

All award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers must undergo NSCHCs that include:

- A nationwide name-based search of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW); *and*
- Either
 - A name- or finger-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work *or*
 - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

Special Rule for Persons Serving Vulnerable Populations. Award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers *with recurring access to vulnerable populations* (i.e., children age 17 or younger, individuals age 60 or older, or individuals with disabilities) must undergo NSCHCs that include:

- A nationwide name-based check of the NSOPW; and
- Both
 - A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *and*
 - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

See 45 CFR § 2540.200–§ 2540.207 and CNCS Criminal History Check Resources for complete information and FAQs.

F. 3. Use of Material

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

F.3 Reporting

Recipients are required to submit a variety of reports which are due at specific times during the life cycle of an award. All reports must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time.

Cost reimbursement sub-grantees are required to provide quarterly progress reports, quarterly financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR 2522.500-2522.540 and 2522.700-2522.740. Final financial and progress reports are due 10 days after the end of the agreement.

Fixed Amount grantees are required to provide quarterly and final progress reports and an internal or external evaluation report.

The Commission 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.

E.5 Re-Focusing of Funding: The Commission reserves the right to re-focus program dollars for this competition in the event of disaster or other compelling needs.

I. IMPORTANT NOTICES

Public Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for collection of information under this Notice of Funding is estimated to average six hours per submission, including reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing the application and reporting forms. CNCS informs people who may respond to this Notice of Funding that they are not required to respond unless the OMB control number and expiration date are current valid. (See 5 C.F.R. 1320.5(b)(2)(i).) The OMB Control Number for the information collection is 3045-0187. It expires on 9/30/2020.

Privacy Act Statement: The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C § 552a) requires that we notify you that the information requested under this Notice of Funding is collected pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 12592 and 12615 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended, and 42 U.S.C. 4953 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 as amended. Purposes and Uses - The information requested is collected for the purposes of reviewing grant applications and granting funding requests. Routine uses may include disclosure of the information to federal, state, or local agencies pursuant to lawfully authorized requests. In some programs, the information may also be provided to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to determine the existence of any prior criminal convictions. The information may also be provided to appropriate federal agencies and contractors that have a need to know the information for the purpose of assisting the government to respond to a suspected or confirmed breach of the security or confidentiality or information maintained in this system of records, and the information disclosed is relevant and unnecessary for the assistance. Effects of Nondisclosure - The information requested is voluntary; however, to be a recipient of this grant program, disclosure of personal or sensitive information is required to receive federal benefits.

SECTION III
2021 AmeriCorps State & National
Mandatory Supplemental Guidance

SECTION IV
2021 Application Instructions

SECTION V
2021 Performance Measures

Please access these necessary sections at the CNCS website via the following link:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities/2021/ameri-corps-state-and-national-grants-fy-2021>

Sections III, IV, and V Attachments are also available on the NJ Department of State AmeriCorps Funding page at:

<https://www.state.nj.us/state/volunteer-grant-opportunities.shtml>

