

**AmeriCorps\*State Grant Application  
Announcement of State Supplement to FFY2016OCSFormula  
Request For Proposal (RFP) for Planning Grants**

Thank you for your interest in an AmeriCorps Planning Grant! This packet outlines the process for applying for AmeriCorps planning grants funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) that are overseen by the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service (ServeMontana).

**Purpose of AmeriCorps Planning Grant Funding**

This packet contains information on the process for applying for 2016 AmeriCorps\*State **Planning Grants** only.

**Planning grants do NOT provide AmeriCorps members.** Funds may be available to *new* applicants to increase AmeriCorps programs statewide by applying for a planning grant. Planning grants provide initial funding to support current staff or hire additional staff who can plan the proposed AmeriCorps program, negotiate collaborations with partners, develop meaningful performance measures and develop systems for successful implementation of the AmeriCorps operational grant application that is submitted for the following grant year. This funding will be available to be granted for ONE YEAR only. There is no guarantee that allocations will be available to fund future years although ServeMontana expects that organizations receiving planning grants will apply for an AmeriCorps operational grant for the 2017-2018 grant year.

**ServeMontana**

The Montana Commission on Community Service was established in 1993 to administer grants under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. Under the Montana Commission on Community Service, ServeMontana administers funds to Montana AmeriCorps State programs, encourages citizens of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to engage in service; involves youth in the life and work of communities; promotes volunteerism in emergency management and preparedness; and helps to strengthen and expand volunteer opportunities for all Montanans.

**Expectations** ServeMontana expects that all respondents display the following characteristics:

- ✓ Inclusive in the design and delivery making the program planning accessible to individuals with disabilities
- ✓ Collaborative approach to program planning and design
- ✓ Address Tribal, rural, underserved or areas of poverty not currently served by AmeriCorps programs

**Montana State Service Plan**

The 2016-2018 Montana State Service Plan outlines the community needs, goals and objectives of the Governor's Office on Community Service. Please visit <http://serve.mt.gov/mtstate-service-plan/> to read the plan. ServeMontana strongly encourages in new programs that meet the needs identified in that Plan.

## **I. Award Information**

### **Funding Available**

The 2016 AmeriCorps\*State funding process is generally competitive. In awarding funds, continuation grants are considered first, followed by new and re-competing grants, and finally planning grants.

### **Award Amount**

Awards for planning grants may not exceed \$75,000 and may average \$30,000-\$50,000. Funds will be used to support development of an AmeriCorps program (no AmeriCorps member positions). ServeMontana will review applications and determine the appropriate award amount, if any.

### **Types of Grants/Funding**

AmeriCorps planning grants will only be awarded on a cost reimbursement basis. Cost reimbursement grants fund a portion of program operating costs. ServeMontana seeks organizations with a proven track record managing federal funds and national service programs.

### **Match Requirements**

Successful applicants are required to match at 24 percent for the first three years of funding. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten. Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to ServeMontana and CNCS on the Federal Financial Report.

#### **1. 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 that plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request no later than May 16, 2016 to [serve@mt.gov](mailto:serve@mt.gov).

### **E. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)**

Applications must include 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: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. The website indicates a 48-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date.

After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants must be registered with the Systems for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/> SAM collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid SAM registration, which must be renewed annually. Applicants that are not already registered with SAM are urged to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a DUNS number in order to register with SAM.

## **II. Application Process**

### **A. How to Apply**

- Get a DUNS number and Register with SAMS
- Establish an eGrants account
- Write a high quality application responsive to the *Notice* and specifically the information outlined in Section III - Application and Submission Information.

- Provide required supplemental materials via email, if applicable
- Submit the application via eGrants by the deadline

### **B. How to Submit an Application in eGrants**

Applicants must submit their applications electronically via the CNCS web-based system, eGrants. Because it is a unique system, it is recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application creation process at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word document and copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline. Please note the length of a document in word processing software may be different than what will print out in eGrants.

Contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask> if a problem arises while creating an account or while preparing or submitting an application in eGrants.

If technical issues prevent an applicant from submitting an application on time, please contact the National Service Hotline prior to the deadline to explain the technical issue and receive a ticket number. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, the applicant must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants.

An application is only complete if it includes all required documentation and is received by the application due date. Incomplete applications will not be considered. All additional required documents should include the applicant organization name and Application ID number at the top of the page and are due by the application deadline to [serve@mt.gov](mailto:serve@mt.gov). Emails should include in the Subject line, the applicant organization name and Application ID number.

### **C. Application Fields and Page Limits**

In eGrants, before Starting Section I you will need to:

1. Start a New Grant Application
2. Select a Program Area: AmeriCorps
3. Select a NOFA: FY 2016 AmeriCorps State Commission (New and Continuations)

The application in eGrants consists of the following components. Complete each section.

- Applicant Info
- Application Info
- Narratives
- Performance Measures: Planning grant applicants will not complete this section but need to enter text to proceed. Enter N/A or 0 in each field.
- Documents
- Budget
- Review, Authorize, and Submit

Applications **may not exceed 10 pages** for the Narratives including the Executive Summary and SF 424 Facesheet, as the pages print out from eGrants. **ServeMontana strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the “Review and Submit” page prior to submission to check that the application does not exceed the page limit.** This limit does not include the narrative portion of the evaluation plan or the logic model, budget, performance measures, or the supplementary materials, if applicable.

Reviewers will not consider submitted material that is over the page limit in the printed report, even if eGrants allows an applicant to enter and submit text over the limit. Do not submit other items not requested in the *Notice* or Application Instructions. ServeMontana will not review or return them.

**D. Required Additional Documents to be submitted via email to [serve@mt.gov](mailto:serve@mt.gov) .**

- Current organizational chart
- A federally-approved indirect cost agreement (if budgeted).
- Current Strategic plan

**DI. Application and Submission information**

Each applicant must clearly describe a project that proposes to plan a program model that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to solve a significant community problem. The quality of your application will be an important factor in determining whether your organization will receive funding. Your application will be assessed as follows:

**A. Applicant Info**

In eGrants, complete the Applicant Info Section. This section is particularly important for data collection and evaluation. Please take the time to reflect your activities accurately in this section.

- Enter your contact information into the fields that appear.
- Select a primary Program Model, and a secondary Program Model, if appropriate.
- Then select characteristics that fit your project under Program Design, Program Location, and Program Focus. Enter or select a Program Director and Program Website URL.

**B. Application Info**

Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF 424 Facesheet, the standard cover sheet for federal grant applications. In the Application Info Section enter:

- Program/Title: PLANNING GRANT <Your Organization's Name>
- Areas affected by your proposed AmeriCorps activity
- Requested project period start and end dates: September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2018
- Indicate if you are delinquent on any federal debt
- State Application Identifier: Enter N/A
- State Single Point of Contact: pre-filled "No, this is not applicable"
- Waiver of Volunteer Leveraging Requirements: Do Not Enter
- Leave the box for "Program Initiative" blank

The "Estimated Funds Request" box will be populated automatically after you complete the budget.

In the Demographics Section enter:

- Total Local, State, and Federal Government Match: Enter the dollar amount of local, state, and federal government match being proposed. The "Total Private Match" + the "Total Local, State, and Federal Government Match" should equal the "Total Match."
- Total Private Match: Enter the dollar amount of private match being proposed. The "Total Private Match" + the "Total Local, State, and Federal Government Match" should equal the "Total Match."
- Total Match: Enter the total dollar amount of match being proposed.
- Other Revenue funds: Enter the amount of funds that your program uses to run the program that are not CNCS share or match.

- Leave the remaining demographics blank.

### **C. Narratives**

Provide a narrative that addresses the following elements. Enter N/A in sections in the eGrants narratives that do not apply to planning grant applicants as instructed below.

In eGrants, you will enter text for:

- Executive Summary,
- Rationale and Approach/Program Design,
- Organizational Capability, and
- Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

Note: the Narratives Section also includes fields for Evaluation Summary or Plan, Clarification Information, Amendment Justification, and Continuation Changes. Please enter N/A in these fields.

### **I. Executive Summary (500 character limit, with spaces), (0%)**

Provide a brief description of your organization and planning grant goals. Please also indicate which performance measure focus area and your program will focus on, or if your model does not fit any of the priority areas, please indicate the user-defined focus area.

### **II. Program Design (26 points)**

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. Problem/Need (9 points)**

- The applicant clearly describes how the community problem/need will be addressed by the program.
- The applicant clearly describes how the community need/problem is prevalent and severe in communities where members will eventually serve and the need has been well documented with relevant data.
- Describe how AmeriCorps members could help you address the community need, and the target communities you would serve.

#### **2. Theory of Change and Logic Model (17 points)**

- The applicant clearly describes the proposed intervention including the roles of potential AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) the roles of leveraged volunteers.
- The applicant clearly describes how the intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's theory of change.
- The applicant clearly describes how the AmeriCorps members will produce significant and unique contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.
- All elements of the logic model are logically aligned.

The logic model shall depict:

- A summary of the community problem outlined in the narrative.
  - The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including:
    - Number of 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 outputs that will result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served.)
- Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur as a result of the intervention.

Programs may include short, medium, or long-term outcomes in the logic model. Programs are not required to measure all outcomes that are included in the logic model. Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention.

### **3. Evidence Base (8 points)**

Applicants will be awarded up to 8 points for providing evidence that their proposed intervention will lead to the outcomes identified in the theory of change. Applicants shall provide a description of the studies and evaluations conducted that provide evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the proposed population and community challenge, and should describe how this evidence places them in one of the five evidence levels listed below. Applicants must fully describe how they meet the requirement of that level, using results from studies and evaluations. Applicants are strongly encouraged to describe the evidence that supports the strongest evidence tier, and all relevant evidence presented must be included in this section. This section must include specific citations of studies and/or evaluation and research reports.

- Applicants classifying their evidence as Moderate or Strong must submit up to two studies, evaluation reports, briefs, or peer-reviewed articles cited in this section as separate attachments. Studies should be sent to [serve@mt.gov](mailto:serve@mt.gov) by the application deadline and include in the subject line the application ID and “evaluation studies.”

For each report cited, include the date of the report, a description that shows its relevancy to the proposed program model, the methodology used in the study, and the strength of the findings (e.g. confidence level.)

#### **The five tiered evidence levels are:**

**No evidence** (0 points) means that the applicant has not provided evidence that they have collected any qualitative or quantitative data to date.

**Pre-preliminary evidence** (2 points) means the applicant presents evidence that it has collected quantitative or qualitative data from program staff, program participants, or beneficiaries that have been used for program improvement, performance measurement reporting, and/or tracking. An example could be gathering feedback from program participants following their receipt of the intervention.

**Preliminary evidence** (3-4 points) means the applicant presents an initial evidence base that can support conclusions about the program’s contribution to observed outcomes. The evidence base consists of at least one non-experimental study conducted on the proposed program (or another similar program that uses a comparable intervention).

- A study that demonstrates improvement in program beneficiaries over time on one or more intended outcomes OR an implementation (process evaluation) study used to learn and improve program operations would constitute preliminary evidence.

Examples of research that meet the standards include:

1. outcome studies that track program beneficiaries through a service pipeline and measure beneficiaries’ responses at the end of the program; and
2. pre- and post-test research that determines whether beneficiaries have improved on an intended outcome.

**Moderate evidence** (5-6 points) means the applicant presents a reasonably developed evidence base that can support causal conclusions for the specific program proposed by the applicant with moderate confidence. The evidence base consists of one or more quasi-experimental studies conducted on the proposed program (or another similar program that uses a comparable intervention) with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes OR two or more non-experimental studies conducted on the proposed program with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes OR one or more experimental studies of another relevant program that uses a similar intervention. Examples of research that meet the standards include: well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental studies that compare outcomes between the group receiving the intervention and a matched comparison group (i.e. a similar population that does not receive the intervention).

**Strong evidence** (7-8 points) means the applicant presents an evidence base that can support causal conclusions for the specific program proposed by the applicant with the highest level of confidence. This consists of one or more well-designed and well-implemented experimental studies conducted on the proposed program with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes.

The description of evidence in this section should include as much detailed information as possible. Applicants are advised to focus on presenting high-quality evidence from their strongest studies rather than only cursory descriptions of many studies. Reviewers will examine criteria that may include: a) how closely the program model evaluated in the studies matches the one proposed by the applicant; b) the methodological quality of the studies presented (e.g., statistical power, internal and/or external validity, sample size, etc.); c) the recency of the studies, with a preference towards studies that have been conducted within the last six years; and d) strength of the findings, with preference given to findings that show a large and persistent positive effect on participants demonstrated with confidence levels.

### **Planning Grant**

**Please refer to Attachment C for information on required accomplishments during the planning grant period.**

- The applicant clearly describes why they are applying for a planning grant and what they hope to achieve during the one-year planning period.
- Provide a detailed description of your planning process and a timeline for planning activities.
- Describe how you will use the planning period to develop your capacity to effectively manage an AmeriCorps program including:
  - Establishing systems and processes for sound programmatic and fiscal oversight;
  - Creating a process for selecting operating and service sites (if applicable) that will ensure the most appropriate and capable organizations are selected;
  - Planning orientation and training for operating and service sites (if applicable);
  - Planning orientation and training for AmeriCorps members;
  - Developing a strong position description and training plan for a full-time AmeriCorps Program Director; and
  - Ensuring you have the ability to provide or secure effective technical assistance.

### **III. Organizational Capability (25 points)**

#### **1. Organizational Background and Staffing (10 points)**

- The applicant provides a brief history of the organization including the year it was established and any funding history with ServeMontana and CNCS, if applicable.
- The applicant discusses their prior experience in the proposed area of programming and other examples of the organization's leadership in the community.

- The applicant describes the organization’s management and staff structure and the role the board of directors, administrators, and staff members will play in the planning process.
- The applicant clearly describes how the organization has adequate experience administering grants.

**2. Compliance and Accountability (15 points)**

- The applicant clearly describes how the applicant’s organization, in implementation and management of its AmeriCorps program, will prevent and detect compliance issues.
- The applicant clearly describes how the applicant will hold itself accountable if instances of risk or noncompliance are identified.
- The applicant clearly describes how the organization will comply with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities.

**IV. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 points)**

**1. Cost Effectiveness (13 points)**

- Describe your plans to develop a cost-effective program including how you will develop diverse non-federal resources that will support your program implementation and sustainability.
- Discuss the adequacy of your budget to support the planning process including your 24% match commitments (cash and in-kind) you have for the planning process, and how you will secure any additional commitments you need for the planning grant.
- The budget is sufficient to carry out the planning grant effectively.
- The budget aligns with the applicant’s narrative.
- The applicant has raised or describes an adequate plan to raise non-CNCS resources to fully support the planning grant.

**2. Budget Adequacy (12 points)**

- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors.
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.

Applicants must fill out the budget and ensure the following information is in the budget narrative (requested information in the budget screens):

- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project.
- Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash) and the sources of these commitments.

<b>V. Evaluations Summary or Plan</b>	Enter N/A
<b>VI. Amendment Justification</b>	Enter N/A
<b>VII. Clarification Information</b>	Enter N/A
<b>VIII. Continuation Update</b>	Enter N/A

**IX. Performance Measures**

Performance measures are not required for planning grants. However, eGrants will require you to complete this section for submission. When completing this section, follow the directions provided in Attachment A.

**X. Documents**

- Evaluation - N/A

- Labor Union Concurrence - N/A
- Federally-Approved Indirect Cost Agreement - Submit via email only if applicable, otherwise enter N/A
- Submission Instructions for Evaluations, Labor Union Concurrence, and Indirect Cost - N/A

**XI. Budget**

**1. Overview of Key Budget Requirements**

Program requirements, including match requirements, are located in the AmeriCorps regulations and summarized below. The acceptable sources of matching funds are federal, state, local, private sector, and/or other funds in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements.

[http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/olc/moodle/fm\\_key\\_concepts\\_of\\_cash\\_and\\_in\\_kind\\_match/view/9468.html?id=3213&chapterid=2268](http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/olc/moodle/fm_key_concepts_of_cash_and_in_kind_match/view/9468.html?id=3213&chapterid=2268)

**Table 3: Match Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
<b>Minimum overall share</b>	24%	24%	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

Current AmeriCorps program match requirements can be found in 45 CFR 2521

Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as the minimum match of 24% for the first three years, and the increasing minimums in years thereafter, are maintained. If you are applying for the first time, you must match with cash or in-kind contributions at least 24% of the planning grant total Operating Costs (Section I) plus Administrative Costs (Section III).

In Section III of the budget, enter a succinct description of the source of match. Identify each match source separately. Include dollar amount, the match classification (Cash, In-Kind, or Not Available) and the source type (Private, State/Local, Federal, Other or Not Available). Define all acronyms the first time they are used.

**2. Preparing the Budget**

The proposed budget should be sufficient to perform the tasks described in the proposal narrative. Reviewers will consider the information provided in this section in the assessment of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criteria.

Follow the detailed budget instructions below to prepare the budget. We highly recommend preparing the budget using the Budget Worksheet prior to entering it in eGrants. This documents is posted under the AmeriCorps grants section on our website. The eGrants system will create the budget and the budget narrative automatically from the detailed budget information you enter. Once you have entered the budget information in eGrants, you will be asked to validate the budget, and eGrants will check the submission for errors. Please be prepared to spend time correcting errors and re-validating your eGrants submission as this can be a lengthy process.

As you prepare the budget: All requested amounts 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.

- Use whole numbers in the sections. Do not include fractional amounts (cents).
- 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.
- Please refer to the relevant OMB Circulars on allowable costs online at [www.whitehouse.gov/OMBcirculars](http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMBcirculars) .
- Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and OMB circulars for grant management, allowable costs, audits and more, as required by Uniform Cost Principles 2CFR200.

## **XII. Review, Authorize, and Submit**

*Helpful hint: You must view or print the assurances/certifications before you can click on each "I Agree" for assurance or certification. The authorized person (i.e. Executive Director) must log-in to eGrants to complete this step.*

eGrants requires that you review and verify your entire application before submitting, by completing the following sections in eGrants:

- Review
- Authorize
- Assurances
- Certifications
- Verify
- Submit

Read the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications carefully. The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant's Authorized Representative or his/her designee and must have an active eGrants account to certify these documents electronically. An Authorized Representative is the person in your organization authorized to accept and commit funds on behalf of the organization. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Be sure to check your entire application to ensure that there are no errors before submitting it. Prior to submission, eGrants will require that you verify the application. In that process, the system will generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected. If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant's authorized representative, that person must log into his/her eGrants account and proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, his/her name will override any previous signatory that may appear and show on the application as the Authorized Representative.

Note: Anyone within your organization who will be entering information in the application at any point during application preparation and submission in the eGrants system must have their own eGrants account. Individuals may establish an eGrants account by accessing this link: <https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp> and then select "Don't have an eGrants account? Create an account."

## **IV. AGENCY CONTACT**

This *Notice* is available at [www.serve.mt.gov](http://www.serve.mt.gov) .

For Further Information or for a printed copy of the notice call 406.444.5547 or send an email to [serve@mt.gov](mailto:serve@mt.gov)

ServeMontana, the Governor's Office of Community Service  
P.O Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59601

## Attachment A: Performance Measures Instructions for Planning Grants;

Note: Performance measures are NOT required for planning grants. However, eGrants will require you to complete this section for submission so please follow the instructions below.

### Home Page

To start the module, click the “**Begin**” button on the Home Page. As you proceed through the module, the Home Page will summarize your work and provide links to edit the parts of the module you have completed. You may navigate sections of the module using the tab feature at the top of each page. Once you have started the module, clicking “**Continue Working**” will return you to the tab you were on when you last closed the module. To edit the interventions, objectives, MSYs, and slot allocations, click “Edit objectives/MSYs/Slots”.

### Objectives Tab

An expandable list of CNCS Focus Areas appears on this tab. When you select a Focus Area, a list of objectives from the CNCS strategic plan appears. A list of common interventions appears under each objective.

- **In order for you to submit the application, you are required to select a Focus Area, an objective, and an intervention in eGrants.** First click on a focus area. Then click on an objective and select an intervention. For all sections, select “other” from the list.

### MSYs/Slots Tab

On this tab, you will enter information about the allocation of MSY. **Planning Grant applicants must enter “1”** when entering the total MSYs for your program. Otherwise, eGrants will continue to give you error messages and prevent submission. Next, **enter “1” for the number of objectives** selected on the previous tab. In the slots column, **enter “1” for number of members** that will be assigned to each objective.

**Performance Measure Tab** Performance measures are not required for planning grants. However, you must create at least one aligned performance measure for eGrants to allow submission.

- Begin by selecting “other” as an objective.
- Enter “N/A” for the title for your performance measure.
- Enter “N/A” in the text box provided.
- For the intervention section, click “add user intervention” and enter “N/A” for the description of the intervention.
- Select “Add User Outcome” and enter “N/A” in the text box.
- Enter “1” for the number of MSYs and slots section.
- Click “next” to proceed to the data collection tab.

### Data Collection Tab

- Expand each output and outcome and enter “N/A” in each text box.
- Enter “1” for your output or outcome.
- After entering “N/A” for the outputs and outcomes section, click “Mark Complete.” You will return to the Performance Measure tab.

### Summary Tab

- The summary tab shows all of the information you have entered in the module.
- To print a summary of all performance measures, click “Print PDF for all Performance Measures.”
- To print one performance measure, expand the measure and click “Print This Measure.”
- Click “Edit Performance Measure” to return to the Performance Measure tab.

- Click “Edit Data Collection” to return to the Data Collection tab.
- Click “Validate Performance Measures” to validate this module prior to submitting your application.

## **Attachment B: Detailed Budget Instructions**

*These instructions have been modified for AmeriCorps Planning Grant Applicants.*

### **Section I. Program Operating Costs**

Complete Section I, Program Operating Costs of the Budget Worksheet by entering the “Total Amount,” “CNCS Share,” and “Grantee Share” for Parts A-I, as follows:

#### **A. Personnel Expenses**

Under “Position/Title Description,” list each staff position separately and provide salary and percentage of effort as percentage of FTE 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. Because the purpose of this grant is to enable and stimulate volunteer community service, do not include the value of direct community service performed by volunteers. However, you may include the value of volunteer services contributed to the organization for organizational functions such as accounting, audit work, or training of staff and AmeriCorps members.

#### **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 line item. If a fringe benefit amount is over 30%, please list covered items separately and justify the high cost. 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.

#### **C. 1. Staff Travel**

Describe the purpose for which program staff will travel. Provide a calculation that includes 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.

We expect all applicants to include funds in this line item for travel for staff and site staff to attend *one* CNCS-sponsored technical assistance meeting. There are typically two to three such opportunities per year and in the past have included the Pacific Cluster Learning Conference, the Financial Management Institute and the Annual Grantee Meeting in Washington, DC. ServeMontana will determine which meeting(s) are applicable on an annual basis after review of the planned CNCS events.

Please itemize the costs. For example: One staff member will attend the Pacific Cluster Conference in SLC, UT. 1 staff X \$250 airfare + \$25 ground transportation + (2 days X \$ 100 lodging) + \$105 per diem = \$580.

#### **C. 2. Member Travel** N/A for planning grant applicants

#### **D. Equipment** N/A for planning grant applicants

#### **E. Supplies**

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials. 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. and H., below. There is not a maximum daily rate.

#### **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. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate. There is not a maximum daily rate. Include registration costs for conference event(s) in this section.

#### **G. 2. Member Training** N/A for planning grant applicants

#### **H. Evaluation**

Include costs for project evaluation activities, including additional staff time or subcontracts, use of evaluation consultants, purchase of instrumentation, and other costs specifically for this activity not budgeted in Personnel Expenses.

#### **I. Other Program Operating Costs** Allowable costs in this budget category should include when applicable:

- 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 grant funded activities, and are not part of the organization's indirect 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** N/A for planning grant applicants

##### **A. Living Allowance** N/A for planning grant applicants

##### **B. Member Support Costs** N/A for planning grant applicants

#### **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, A-87, and A-122.

##### **Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs (you may only choose either A OR B)**

Applicants choose one of two methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a CNCS-fixed percentage rate method or a federally approved indirect cost rate method. Regardless of the option chosen, the CNCS share of administrative costs is limited to 5% of the total CNCS funds actually expended under this grant. Do not create additional lines in this category.

**A. CNCS-Fixed Percentage Method - Five Percent Fixed Administrative Costs Option (skip item A if you plan to claim a federally approved indirect cost rate)**

The CNCS-fixed percentage rate method allows your organization to charge administrative costs up to a cap without a federally approved indirect cost rate and without documentation supporting the allocation. If you choose the CNCS-fixed percentage rate method (Section IIIA in eGrants), you may charge, for administrative costs, a fixed 5% of the total of the 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.

The factor 0.0526 is used to calculate the 5% maximum amount of federal funds that may be budgeted for administrative (indirect) costs, as a way to mathematically compensate for determining Section III costs when the total budget (Sections I + II + III) is not yet established.

2. To determine the Grantee share for Section III: Multiply the total (both Corporation and grantee share) of Sections I and II by 10% (0.10) and enter this amount as the grantee share for Section III A.
3. Enter the sum of the CNCS and grantee shares under Total Amount.

**B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate (skip item B if you are claiming a fixed percentage using A above)**

If you have a federally approved indirect cost rate, you must use it. The 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.

1. Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both the CNCS and Grantee 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.
2. To determine the CNCS share: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as the CNCS share of indirect costs.
3. To determine the Grantee share: Subtract the amount calculated in step 2 (the 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. Source of Match**

In the "Source of Match" field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the Source of Match, the amount, the match classification (Cash, In-kind, or Not Available) and Match Source (State/Local, Federal, Private, Other or Not Available) for your entire match. Define any acronyms the first time they are used.

## **ATTACHMENT C: General AmeriCorps Planning Grant Requirements**

*To be accomplished and documented during the 12 month planning grant award period*

### ***Identify Services to be provided and Program Structure:*** Service Implementation

- Proposed Service Plan and Program Structure
  - National/Montana Priority Areas
  - Member Structure (Number of Members and Slot Types)
  - Program Service Year defined (10-month, 8-months...)
- Staff members working on the program and roles
- Advisory Committee/Board
- Participation in National Service Days

### ***Define and Document Community Needs:***

- Problem to be addressed is a true need of the community
- Local data to support the need
- Community benefit
- Changes in information from original submission

### ***Identify Partners and Host Service Sites:***

- Current partners and past relationships
- Collaboration with local faith based and or small community based organizations
- Service site identification
- Commitment letters from potential host sites

### **Performance Measures**

- Performance Measures developed (*alignment with logic model*)
  - Outputs
  - Outcomes
  - Instruments used to measure impact
- National Performance Measures

### **Members**

#### ***Member Position Descriptions:***

- Minimum requirements and characteristics
- Primary/secondary duties

#### ***Member Recruitment***

- Recruitment plan
- AmeriCorps National Recruitment web page
- Diversity within the program
- Members with disabilities and potential reasonable accommodation

### ***Member Orientation & Training***

- Training for members (program orientation, host site orientation, ongoing) including:
  - Policy and procedures
  - National Identity to AmeriCorps and storytelling tips
- Affiliation with AmeriCorps, training and issuance of official service gear

### **Service Site/Community Partner Plan/Fiscal Agent**

#### ***Service Site***

- Site supervisory list of responsibilities
- Orientation and ongoing training plan for host sites, supervisors, and staff  
Justification for the number of members placed at a site
- Site visit plan for ensuring compliance at host sites

#### ***Agreement***

- Financial support from sites including cash and in-kind match
- Host site agreements
  - Outline responsibilities
  - Policy and procedure expectations
  - Member placement
  - Fiscal responsibilities

#### ***Application, Interview, and Selection***

- Application packet to distribute to interested persons
- Screening and interview process
  - Final selection of members
  - Matching members to host sites

#### ***Member Supervision***

- Plans for bringing members together on a regular basis
- Member evaluation procedure
  - Mid-term evaluation
  - End of term evaluation
- Plans for visiting host sites
- Plans to prepare members for life after AmeriCorps

### **System Manuals and Tracking Instruments**

- Member handbook for each service location
- Member contract that includes all the required items
  - Position description
  - Term type and dates
  - Drug free workplace policy
  - Discipline, suspension, and termination policy
  - Grievance procedure
  - HS Diploma, equivalency, or agreement to obtain prior to using education award

Procedure to assure the program obtains the required documentation

- Signatures
- Health care enrollment/waiver
- Media/photo release
- Child care benefit (as applicable)
- Tax forms
- Member's eligibility to serve
- Procedure for criminal history check compliance

### ***Program Systems in Place***

Policy and procedure manual including all member procedures mentioned above, as well as programmatic policies and procedures

- Position description for program staff
- Financial and accounts procedure manual
- Program tools
- Member time sheets

### ***In-kind voucher forms***

- Site reports
- Data collection instruments

### **Public Awareness Campaign**

- Plan to educate the community about the program
- Program brochure and/or website
- Develop standard messaging about program that includes AmeriCorps

### **Sustainability Plan**

- Plan for non-AmeriCorps, community volunteer generation
  - One time
  - Reoccurring
- Plan for volunteer management, training, and tracking
- Current relationship with funders such as foundations and corporations
- Plans for the next three to five years
- Plans for the program to continue if AmeriCorps resources are cut

### **Financial**

- Plans for securing match
- Adjustments for accounting program required to manage AmeriCorps funding

***ServeMontana will work with planning grantees to complete objectives and progress reporting.***

End.