



2012 AmeriCorps State Grant Application 'Competitive' Request for Proposals

Thank you for your interest in an AmeriCorps State Competitive Grant. This packet contains information pertaining to the process for applying for 2012 AmeriCorps grants funded by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) through the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS). The Montana Commission on Community Service (Commission) serves as the body to review and recommend funding to the Corporation for National and Community Service.

What organizations are eligible for funding?

- ✓ Public or private nonprofit organizations
- ✓ Faith-based and other community organizations
- ✓ Institutions of higher education
- ✓ Government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties)
- ✓ Indian Tribes
- ✓ Labor organizations
- ✓ Partnerships or consortia
- ✓ Intermediaries planning to subgrant funds

Overview of AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is a national service program that provides opportunities for citizens to serve their country in local communities. Programs design service activities for a team of AmeriCorps Members to join a local program and provide specific, intensive community services such as: tutoring students, teaching community residents about issues directly affecting them, and a wide variety of other services to strengthen communities. Members, serving full-time or part-time, mobilize community volunteers and strengthen the capacity of the organizations where they serve.

Grant awards span a period of time anywhere from one to three years; *all grant awards are subject to the availability of federal funds*. Three-year grants must be renewed annually with a continuation application in the current funding stream. All grants are subject to performance reviews. AmeriCorps is a program funded by the U. S. Congress under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 94.006. The national public/private partnership supporting AmeriCorps is the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). CNCS receives AmeriCorps program funding from Congress and awards funding to state commissions and organizations, such as the Governor's Office of Community Service.

Funding Priorities

In alignment with the Serve America act funding for AmeriCorps programs is targeted toward six Focus Areas identified by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

CNCS Focus Areas:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Stewardship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Opportunity | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Futures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans and Military Families |

Governor's Office of Community Service

The Governor's Office of Community Service and the Montana Commission on Community Service were established in 1993 by the Montana Legislature to administer grants under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. Under the advice of the Montana Commission on Community Service, the Governor's Office of Community Service grants funds to Montana AmeriCorps State programs through two competitive (Competitive and Formula Funding Streams) grant processes; 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.

Within each of the defined Focus Areas the Montana Commission on Community Service has identified three initiatives to be addressed through AmeriCorps service in the State. Applications demonstrating efforts toward addressing one or more of the Montana initiatives will be given priority when compared to equal applications not addressing any of the initiatives.

Montana Initiatives:

- Generate volunteers
- Develop Montanans to be college and career ready
- Support the Governor's initiatives for clean energy, math & science education, and citizen emergency preparedness

All programs operating in Montana must address all of the Montana Expectations in their application.

Montana Expectations:

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

AmeriCorps Program Requirements

Meeting Community Needs

AmeriCorps engages citizens of all ages and backgrounds in helping organizations initiate, improve, or expand services to meet pressing local needs. Service activities must result in a specific, identifiable benefit or improvement that otherwise would not be provided with existing funds or volunteers, and that does not duplicate the routine function of workers or displace paid employees.

Strengthening Communities

Programs must strengthen communities, bringing together both institutions and individuals to cooperate in effecting lasting and constructive change. Strengthening of communities is evidenced by community

involvement in planning and implementation, the development of local partnerships, and the recruitment of volunteers.

Developing AmeriCorps Members

Through the service experience programs must train members on the ethics and skills needed for productive, active citizenship. During the term of service, most AmeriCorps members receive a basic stipend; full-time members are eligible for health care and possibly child care benefits. Upon successful completion of their service members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust that can be used for many kinds of education or to pay back student loans. Programs must also provide members with the training and knowledge necessary to perform the task required for their project.

Program Design

Applicants have a great deal of flexibility to design programs that will best achieve the goals listed above. This flexibility includes the ability to target individuals of a certain age or skill level; to involve appropriate partner organizations to train, supervise, or support members; and to place members individually in projects or organize them in teams. Programs may also determine whether a full-time or part-time schedule is more appropriate to meet the community need.

Montana Commission on Community Service Programmatic Preference

AmeriCorps State programs are not designed for organizations looking for one or two AmeriCorps members to serve on a particular project. AmeriCorps State programs must be large enough to achieve a demonstrable impact. In general, programs sponsoring fewer than 10 full-time members or their equivalent (e.g., 20 half-time members) will not be funded. The applicant has the flexibility to determine an appropriate service period (not to exceed 12 months with the exception of 2 year half time members) for members but should limit the number of different slot types (categories) proposed.

The Montana Commission on Community Service (Commission) will give preference to applicants that select Priority Measures and integrate the Montana Initiatives. The Commission may consider other factors in selecting proposals for funding. All funding decisions require approval by the executive director of the Governor's Office of Community Service and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Montana Commission on Community Service and the Governor's Office of Community Service Appeals Process: <http://serve.mt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Appeals-Process-Updated-10.18.10.pdf>

For more information about starting up an AmeriCorps State program or National AmeriCorps programs, please visit www.americorps.gov, www.nationalservice.gov, and http://s3.amazonaws.com/resource_center_video/taag/program-start-up/index.html.

Note: this funding process is for 'Competitive' grant applications, the 'Formula' grant process will be announced in the spring of 2012.

Interested parties should read all application materials, including attachments, and linked documents prior to submitting any questions or documents to the Governor's Office of Community Service.

Montana AmeriCorps State: To be eligible for consideration, an applicant must meet the intent of all the requirements listed in this packet. The Governor's Office of Community Service will determine whether the applicant's Letter of Intent complies with the requirements. The applicants Readiness Self-Assessment and Audit will be reviewed to make sure they meet the standards of responsibility in accordance with ARM 2.5.407. Such a determination may be made at any time during the procurement process if information surfaces that would result in the determination of non-responsibility. Applicant responses that do not meet the full intent of all requirements listed in this RFP may be deemed unresponsive and not considered in funding decisions.

Attachment A - Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Attachment B - Letter of Intent

Attachment C - Readiness Self-Assessment (New Applicants Only)

Submit Attachments B and C (New Applicants Only) electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST October 19, 2011** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-9077 to confirm the information was received.*

The Governor's Office of Community Service will invite applicants with successful past experience or a strong Readiness Self-Assessment, and who address CNCS Focus Areas and State Expectations to continue with the application process.

Application - AmeriCorps State Grant Application Instructions:

http://serve.mt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Competitive_Application_Instructions_2012.pdf

2012 National Performance Measure Instructions -

- ✓ Disaster Services
http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_0909_nofp_pm_instructions_disaster_services.pdf
- ✓ Education
http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_0909_nofp_pm_instructions_%20education.pdf
- ✓ Capacity Building
http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_0909_nofp_pm_instructions_capacity_building.pdf
- ✓ Economic Opportunity
http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_0909_nofp_pm_instructions_economic_opportunity.pdf
- ✓ Environmental Stewardship
http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_0909_nofp_pm_instructions_environmental_stewardship.pdf
- ✓ Healthy Futures
http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_0909_nofp_pm_instructions_healthy_futures.pdf
- ✓ Veterans and Military Families
http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_0909_nofp_pm_instructions_veterans_military_families.pdf

eGrants - The full AmeriCorps State grant application must be submitted to the Governor's Office of Community Service using eGrants. <http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/>

Attachment D - Cover Letter

MOU or documentation of previous fundraising - (All new applicants are required to supply Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) from partners who will be making contributions to the match share of the grant, or documentation as evidence of the applicants ability to meet match requirements for the grant.)

Current A-133 audit or equivalent - (New Applicants Only)

Submit the cover letter, MOU or documentation of previous fundraising, current A-133 audit or equivalent and application electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST November 4, 2011** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-9077 to confirm the information was received.*

The Governor's Office of Community Service will contact applicants by November 11, 2011 to set up an in person interview on **November 29 or 30, 2011**.

Technical Assistance: Technical assistance will be available to all applicants from October 7 to 28, 2011. Questions should be submitted to Rebecca Steele (resteele@mt.gov) at the Governor's Office of Community Service via email. All questions and answers will be posted publically in an FAQ on the ServeMontana website at http://serve.mt.gov/?page_id=2960. Questions will be dated with the most recent added to the top. Please check the FAQ before submitting additional questions. Reading through the application and performance measure instructions thoroughly is key to understanding the Montana RFP process.

Note: all grant awards are subject to the availability of federal funds.

2012 AmeriCorps State Grant Application
'Competitive' Timeline

Aug. 25	2012 Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity and application instructions posted by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and distributed by the Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS)
Oct. 5	Montana request for proposal posted
Oct. 7	Technical assistance period opens
Oct. 12	Performance measurement training at 2 P.M. MST dial-in number: (641) 715-3620 and participant access code: 937749#
Oct. 19	Letter of intent (all applicants) and readiness self-assessment (new applicants only) due to OCS by noon MST
Oct. 28	Technical assistance period closes
Nov. 4	Cover letter (all applicants), MOU and or documentation of previous fundraising (new applicants only), A-133 or equivalent audit and application (all applicants) due to OCS by noon MST
Nov. 11	Applications sent to the Montana Commission on Community Service Grant Review Workgroup and Outside Reviewer
Nov. 29-30	In-person interviews of selected applicants with the grant review workgroup and OCS
Dec. 2	Grant Review Workgroup's recommendations sent to Full Commission
Dec. 9	Full Commission meeting (video conference) to vote on the Grant Review Workgroup funding recommendations
Dec. 16	OCS notifies applicants of Commission funding recommendations and technical feedback
Jan. 11	Final revised applications due in eGrants by noon MST
Jan. 18	Staff submits competitive applications to CNCS
May-Jun. 2011	CNCS sends out Award Notification of competitive funding

Attachment A - Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity *(Amended by OCS)*

Montana Commission on Community Service
2012 AmeriCorps State Competitive Grant Application



PART I: OVERVIEW

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service Funding Opportunity

Title: AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY 2012

Announcement Type: Initial announcement

CFDA Number: 94.006

Dates: Applications are due November 4, 2011 by Noon Mountain Standard Time to the Governor's Office of Community Service for an initial review. Successful applicants will be notified by May 31, 2012.

The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic participation through service and volunteering. For more than fifteen years, CNCS, through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs, has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

On April 21, 2009, President Obama signed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the most sweeping expansion of national service in a generation. This landmark law not only expands service opportunities, but also focuses national service on key outcomes; builds the capacity of individuals, nonprofits, and communities to succeed; and encourages innovative approaches to solving problems.

In alignment with the Serve America Act, this AmeriCorps State and National (AmeriCorps) *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity* will focus AmeriCorps grant making in six Focus Areas identified by the Act:

- Disaster Services
- Economic Opportunity
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Healthy Futures
- Veterans and Military Families

In order to carry out Congress' intent and to maximize the impact of the investment in national service, CNCS is seeking to fund programs that can demonstrate community impact and solve community problems through an evidence-based approach (e.g. performance data, research, theory of change).

In the AmeriCorps competition this year, CNCS especially seeks to prioritize investment in three areas of its work. CNCS will continue to focus on national service programs that improve academic outcomes for children, youth, and young adults. This focus reflects the extensive experience and past success of national service

programs in education, and aligns with the efforts of the Department of Education. In addition, CNCS seeks to increase its investment in programs that serve veterans and military families or engage veterans in service. CNCS will also focus investment in programs that increase community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation.

This [Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity](#) (Notice) should be read together with the [AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR Sections 2520, 2550](#), the [Application Instructions](#), and the [National Performance Measures Instructions](#).

In accordance with the Obama Administration's emphasis on open government, CNCS has moved toward greater openness and transparency in grant making. This *Notice* includes a description of the review and selection process in Section V.

The following information pertaining to this competition for new and recompetite applications will be published on the CNCS website at (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open/grants.asp>), within a period not to exceed 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

- Blank external review template.
- List of all compliant applications submitted.
- Executive summaries of all compliant applications prepared by the applicants as part of the application. Copies of the SF424 and Program Narrative submitted by applicants for successful applicants.
- Summary of external reviewer's comments for successful applications.

PART II: DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. What is the purpose of AmeriCorps funding?

The purpose of CNCS is to maximize the power of service and volunteering to improve lives in communities across the country. In the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, Congress directed CNCS to focus national service in areas where service can make a major impact, including education, energy conservation, health, economic opportunity for economically vulnerable individuals, increasing service by and for veterans, and providing disaster services.

CNCS is carrying out Congress's intent by targeting AmeriCorps funding in these six focus areas. In accordance with the Act, through this Notice and its other activities, CNCS seeks to:

- Direct the power of national service to solve a common set of challenges.
- Expand opportunities for all Americans to serve.
- Build the enduring capacity of individuals, organizations and communities to effectively use service and volunteering to solve community problems.
- Embrace innovative solutions that work.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations engaged in evidence-based interventions that utilize AmeriCorps members to strengthen communities. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who is enrolled in an approved national service position and engages in community service. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service members receive a

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust.

Brief descriptions of the six Focus Areas follow.

Disaster Services:

Grants will help individuals and communities prepare, respond, recover, and mitigate disasters and increase community resiliency. Grant activities will:

- increase the preparedness of individuals,
- increase individuals' readiness to respond,
- help individuals recover from disasters, and
- help individuals mitigate disasters.

Economic Opportunity:

Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people. Grant activities will help economically disadvantaged people to:

- have improved access to services and benefits aimed at contributing to their enhanced financial literacy,
- transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable housing, and
- have improved employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.

Education:

Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged people, especially children. CNCS is particularly interested in program designs that support youth engagement and service-learning as strategies to achieve high educational outcomes. Grant activities will improve:

- school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children,
- educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools, and
- the preparation for and prospects of success in post-secondary education institutions for economically disadvantaged students.

Environmental Stewardship:

Grants will provide direct services that contribute to increased energy and water efficiency, renewable energy use, or improving at-risk ecosystems, and support increased citizen behavioral change leading to increased efficiency, renewable energy use, and ecosystem improvements particularly for economically disadvantaged households and economically disadvantaged communities. Grant activities will:

- decrease energy and water consumption, improve at-risk ecosystems,
- increase behavioral changes that lead directly to decreased energy and water consumption or improve at-risk ecosystems, and
- increase green training opportunities that may lead to decreased energy and water consumption or improve at-risk ecosystems.

Healthy Futures:

Grants will meet health needs within communities including access to care, aging in place, and addressing

childhood obesity. Grant activities will:

- increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible,
- increase physical activity and improve nutrition in youth with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity, and
- improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities served by CNCS- supported programs (access to health care).

Veterans and Military Families:

Grants will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength. Grant activities will increase:

- the number of veterans and military service members and their families served by CNCS- supported programs, and
- the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service provision through CNCS- supported programs.

Brief description of Capacity Building follows.

Capacity Building:

In addition to the six Focus Areas described above, grants also will provide support for capacity building activities provided by national service participants. As a general rule, CNCS considers capacity building activities to be indirect services that enable CNCS-supported organizations to provide more, better and sustained direct services. Capacity building activities cannot be solely intended to support the administration or operations of the organization. Examples of capacity building activities include:

- Recruiting and/or managing community volunteers.
- Implementing effective volunteer management practices.
- Completing community assessments that identify goals and recommendations.
- Developing new systems and business processes (technology, performance management, training, etc.) or enhancing existing systems and business processes.

National Performance Measures:

In 2012, CNCS will implement the third year of the National Performance Measures Pilot. National Performance Measures allow CNCS to demonstrate the aggregated impact of all AmeriCorps programs. This year, we have focused and refined the Measures and aligned them with our Strategic Plan. This refinement process included adding a few new Measures to fill data gaps.

Our National Performance Measures are split into two groups: Priority Measures and Pilot Measures.

- **Priority Measures** are a subset of the original National Performance Measures Pilot with the addition of capacity building measures.
- **Pilot Measures** are the remaining measures from the National Performance Measures. Pilot with the addition of capacity building measures not included in the Priority Measures.

New and re-competing applicants are strongly encouraged to utilize the National Performance Measures because funding priority will be given to these applicants. (Our funding priority tiers are described in detail in Part B. below, and the National Performance Measures are listed by Tier in Section IX.)

Encore Programs:

Congress set a goal that 10 percent of AmeriCorps funding should support encore service programs that engage a significant number of participants age 55 or older. CNCS seeks to meet that 10 percent target in this competition and encourages encore programs to apply.

B. What are the 2012 AmeriCorps funding priorities?

In the 2012 competition CNCS expects to invest a significant amount of available funding to programs working in the six Focus Areas of Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and Veterans and Military Families.

In particular, CNCS seeks to target its grant making in the Education and Disaster Services Focus Areas for greater impact and increase its investment in the Veterans and Military Families Focus Area. To meet these goals, CNCS will give priority consideration to the following, in descending order of preference:

- **Tier 1:** Programs that select Priority Measures in Education, Veterans and Military Families, and Disaster Services (NOTE: Applicants and grantees that have programs that fit these Priority Measures are required to utilize these Measures. These measures can be found in Section IX, Tier 1).
- **Tier 2:** Programs that select Priority Measures in Economic Opportunity, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures and Capacity Building. (NOTE: Applicants and grantees that have programs that fit these Priority Measures are required to utilize these Measures. These measures can be found in Section IX, Tier 2).
- **Tier 3:** Programs that select Pilot Measures.
- **Tier 4:** Programs in the Focus Areas with self-nominated measures.
- **Tier 5:** Programs outside the Focus Areas with self-nominated measures.

Continuation requests for expansion will receive priority consideration and preference in the same manner.

Applicants proposing programs that receive priority consideration are not guaranteed funding. CNCS will pursue a balanced portfolio across the Focus Areas, and other considerations outlined below in Section V. B. Furthermore, programs must demonstrate significant program focus, design and impact to receive priority consideration.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

CNCS anticipates awarding new, recompeting, and continuation AmeriCorps grants for fiscal year 2012. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations, which have not yet been made. In awarding funds, continuation grants are considered first, followed by new and recompeting grants. Once again, CNCS anticipates that this AmeriCorps grant competition will be highly competitive.

Unless otherwise specified, the grant covers a three-year project period. In approving a multi- year project

period, CNCS generally makes an initial award for the first year of operation. Additional funding is contingent upon satisfactory performance, a grantee's demonstrated capacity to manage a grant and comply with grant requirements, and availability of Congressional appropriations. CNCS reserves the right to adjust the amount of a grant award for subsequent years, or elect not to continue funding, on these bases.

III. ELIGIBILITY

A. Who is eligible to apply?

Public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); Indian Tribes; labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; and intermediaries planning to subgrant funds awarded are encouraged to apply. Organizations that have been convicted of a Federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in this *Notice*.

1. States and Territories with Commissions and Multi-State Applicants

Organizations that are proposing a project that operates in only one state must apply to Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions to be considered by CNCS. Those organizations should reach out to their state commissions to learn about their state or territory processes and deadlines as each state or territory runs its own process. State or Territory Commissions then put forward the projects they select to CNCS to compete for funding. The list of State Commissions can be found here:

<http://www.americorps.gov/about/contact/statecommission.asp>.

Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state apply directly to CNCS.

2. States and Territories without Commissions

Applicants in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, South Dakota, and the U.S. Virgin Islands apply directly to CNCS due to the lack of a State Commission in these areas. Applicants are eligible to apply for funds for member support and program costs. State or Territory government entities are not eligible to apply. Successful applicants will be funded out of the applicable state or territory's formula funding.

3. Indian Tribes

CNCS sets aside one percent of grant funds to support programs operated by Indian Tribes and selected by CNCS on a competitive basis. An Indian Tribe is defined as a federally recognized Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Native village, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation, as defined under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. § 1602), that the United States Government determines is eligible for special programs and services provided under federal law to Indians because of their status as Indians. Indian Tribes also include tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by one of the entities described above.

4. New Applicants

CNCS encourages organizations that have never received funding from CNCS or AmeriCorps to apply for the grants described in this Notice. New organizations should submit applications commensurate with the community need with the understanding that the general practice is to award no more than 50 member slots for new grantees. Organizations that have been convicted of a Federal crime are disqualified from receiving

the assistance described in this Notice.

B. What types of AmeriCorps grants are available in this competition?

The types of AmeriCorps grants in this competition are described below. CNCS will not provide more than one grant for the same project in one fiscal year. Also see the AmeriCorps State and National Fit Finder to decide which type of grant aligns with the proposed project (<http://www.americorps.gov/fitfinder/>).

1. Competitive

These grants are awarded to fund a portion of program costs and members' living allowance.

2. Professional Corps

These grants are awarded to organizations that propose to operate a Professional Corps program in a single or multiple states. Professional Corps programs place AmeriCorps members as teachers, health care providers, police officers, engineers, or other professionals in communities where there is a documented shortage of such professionals. Applicants are eligible to apply for funding for a portion of program costs. Professional Corps member salaries are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget.

3. Full-time Fixed-amount Grants (Non-EAP)

These grants are awarded to organizations operating in a single state, including single-state Professional Corps programs; and organizations that operate their AmeriCorps program in more than one state, including multi-state Professional Corps programs. Organizations in States and Territories without Commissions, and Indian Tribes may apply for a full-time fixed-amount grant. Full-time fixed-amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members only. Applicants apply for a fixed amount per Member Service Year, (MSY), and use their own or other resources for the remaining cost of the program. There is no match requirement for fixed-amount grants, but organizations must still raise the additional funds needed to run the program.

Full-time fixed-amount grants are only available for new and re-competing applications. Second and third-year continuation applicants with cost reimbursement grants must submit a new application if they are interested in a fixed-amount grant.

Full-time fixed-amount grant applicants in the Education Focus Area will be required to select either a Tier 1 Education Measure or Tier 3 Education Pilot Measure. Applicants proposing non- Education programs may select from Tiers 1-5. All performance measures will be negotiated prior to grant selection and award. Approved applicants must agree to participate in any relevant evaluations conducted by CNCS.

4. Education Award Program (EAP) Fixed-amount Grants

These grants are awarded to applicants that apply for a small fixed-amount grant and use their own or other resources for the majority of members' living allowance and program cost. There is no match requirement for EAP grants. Unlike full-time fixed-amount grants, EAPs may enroll less-than-full-time members in addition to full-time members.

C. Match Requirements

1. Fixed-Amount Grants

There is no match requirement for fixed-amount grants. However, the fixed-amount grant does not cover all costs. Fixed-amount grantees provide the additional resources needed to operate the program, but are not required to track or report on them.

2. Cost Reimbursement Grants (non-fixed-amount)

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.

Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act requires that programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to CNCS on the Federal Financial Report.

The living allowance or salary provided to Professional Corps AmeriCorps members does not count toward the matching requirement.

3. Indian Tribes

Indian Tribal Government programs are subject to the same matching requirements for fixed- amount and cost reimbursement grants. However, in accordance with Executive Order 13175, "Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments," CNCS may expedite approving waivers of matching requirements. Tribal governments that require a waiver must submit a request at least 60 days before the AmeriCorps application is due. For full information on applying for a Tribal waiver, send a request for instructions to TribalMatchWaiver@cns.gov.

4. 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 §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 at least 60 days prior to the application deadline.

D. Other Requirements

1. What are the requirements regarding member living allowance?

The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members between \$12,100 (minimum) and \$24,200 (maximum) per member except as noted below.

For cost-reimbursement grants, this amount must be included in the proposed budget. The living allowance is not required for members serving in less than full-time terms of service. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to a less than full-time member, it must comply with the maximum limits in the chart below.

While full-time fixed-amount grant applications don't submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance to members that comply with the minimum and maximum requirements. Full-time fixed-amount grant applicants are not required to identify that amount in the application.

Table 1: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1700	\$12,100	\$24,200
One-year Half-time	900	n/a	\$12,800
Two-year Half-time	900	n/a	\$12,800
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	\$9,600
Quarter-time	450	n/a	\$6,400
Minimum-time	300	n/a	\$4,300

2. What are the exceptions to the living allowance requirements?

Prior to September 21, 1993

If a program existed prior to the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (enacted September 21, 1993), the law does not require a living allowance. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement of \$12,100, but not the maximum requirement of \$24,200.

EAP Fixed-Amount Grantees

EAP grantees are not required to provide a living allowance for less-than-full-time members, but if a living allowance is provided, it must comply with the maximum requirements set forth in the Living Allowance section above.

Professional Corps Grantees

Professional Corps members must receive a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance set forth in the Living Allowance section above. Professional Corps member salaries are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve and are not included in the budget.

3. What is the Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)?

CNCS considers comparative costs per MSY in making funding decisions. One MSY is equivalent to at least 1700 service hours, a full-time AmeriCorps position. 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. Continuation and re-competing grantees requesting a higher cost per MSY than in the previous year must include a compelling rationale for this increased cost. This applies even if the increased cost per MSY is less than the maximum.

Table 2: 2012 Maximum Cost per MSY

Grant Program	Maximum
Minimum-time	\$13,300
Multi-state (not EAP)	\$13,300
Indian Tribes	\$13,300
Professional Corps	\$2,500
Professional Corps Fixed-Amount Grant	\$2,000
Education Award Program Fixed-Amount Grant	\$800
Full-time Fixed-Amount Grant	\$13,000
State Commission Average (of all its subgrants)	\$13,300

4. What are the member enrollment requirements for existing grantees?

We expect grantees to enroll all the members included in their grant award. Enrollment rates have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and re-compete processes. Continuation and re-competing grantees that have not achieved full enrollment in the previous year must provide an explanation and a corrective action plan in the application. Applicants that do not fully enroll are likely to receive a decrease in funding in subsequent years.

5. What are the member retention requirements for existing grantees?

We expect grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible. Retention rates will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and re-compete processes. Applicants that do not retain members are likely to receive a decrease in funding in subsequent years. We recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model. Continuation or Re-competing grantees that have not achieved full retention in the most recently completed program year must provide an explanation and a corrective action plan in the application.

6. What is the amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award for FY 2012?

AmeriCorps members serving in programs funded with FY 2012 dollars who successfully complete a term of service will receive an Education Award from the National Service Trust of \$5,550 for a year of full-time service, with correspondingly smaller awards for less-than-full-time service. The amount of the Education Award is determined on the basis of the Pell Grant award. A member has up to seven years after the term of service has ended to use the award.

Table 3: Term of Service and FY12 Education Award

Award Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	Education Award
Full Time	1700	\$5,550
One-Year Half Time	900	\$2,775
Two-Year Half Time	900	\$2,775
Reduced Half Time	675	\$2,114
Quarter Time	450	\$1,468
Minimum Time	300	\$1,175

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. How to Apply

Organizations that propose to operate in one state apply directly to the State Commission for the state in which they will operate. Single-state applicants must contact their state commissions for state-specific deadlines and application instructions. Organizations that propose to operate in more than one state apply directly to CNCS. Organizations in states and territories without commissions apply directly to CNCS. Indian Tribes may apply through State Commissions, or directly to CNCS.

B. Notice of Intent to Apply

State commissions and multi-state applicants and Indian Tribes are encouraged to send an e-mail by December 15, 2011 to americorpsgrants@cns.gov, stating intent to apply. Commission sub-applicants should not provide this information. For applicants through the Montana Commission on Community Service a notice of intent to apply will be sent on the applicant's behalf by the Governor's Office of Community Service.

Although submission of the Notice of Intent is not mandatory, submitting it will help CNCS plan more efficiently for external and internal review. Include the name of the applicant organization, address, contact person, and phone number in the Notice of Intent. Applicants should state category of funding. State Commissions are encouraged to include an estimate of the number of programs planned for submission. Providing an e-mail address will also allow CNCS to contact applicants directly if application materials are updated.

C. Universal Identifier

Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and register with the Central Contractor's Registry (CCR). 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 24-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. Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by following instructions found here: <http://smallbusiness.dnb.com/establish-your-business/12334338-1.html>.

CCR is the primary registrant database for the U.S. Federal Government. CCR 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 registration, which must be renewed annually.

We urge applicants that are not already registered with the CCR 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 the CCR. It typically takes 3-5 days to finalize CCR registration. To register online go to www.bpn.gov/CCR.

D. Content and Form of Application Submission

1. Submitting in eGrants

CNCS requires that all applicants submit applications electronically via the CNCS web-based application system, eGrants. Applications must arrive at the OCS by November 4, 2011 at 12:00 P.M. MST for those applying through the Commission. All other applications must arrive at CNCS by January 18, 2012 at 5 p.m. ET in order to be considered. This requirement applies to continuation grantees, as well as new and re-competing applicants. CNCS reserves the right to extend the submission deadline. Any notice of such extended deadline will be posted in eGrants.

We recommend 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 processing document, then copy and paste the document into eGrants no later than 10 days before the deadline.

Contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask> if a problem arises while creating an account, preparing, or submitting an application. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the NOFO to which your organization is applying. National Service Hotline hours are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET Monday through Friday.

If technical issues will prevent an applicant from submitting an application on time, please contact the National Service Hotline and Governor's Office of Community Service 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.

2. Page Limits

In eGrants, applicants will enter text for

- Executive Summary: a brief paragraph, maximum of a half-page. Executive Summaries of all compliant applications will be published on the CNCS website following grant notifications.
- Program Design.
- Organizational Capability.
- Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.
- Evaluation Plan.

You may not exceed 26 double spaced pages in the Narratives, including the Executive Summary and Cover Page, as the pages print out from eGrants. Reviewers will not consider material submitted over the page limit, even if eGrants allows you to enter and submit text over the limit. From the Review and Submit page, print out your application prior to final submission to ensure it is not over the 26 page limit. This limit does not include the budget and performance measures.

Do not submit supplementary materials such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested in these application instructions. CNCS will not review or return them.

3. Late Applications

CNCS may consider an application after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter explaining the extenuating circumstance which caused the delay. The letter must be sent to resteele@mt.gov before the deadline. Late applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

If extenuating circumstances make the use of eGrants impossible, applicants may send a hard copy of the application to the address below in Section VII. Agency Contacts, via overnight carrier. Please use a non-U.S. Postal Service because of security-related delays in receiving mail from the U.S. Postal Service. All deadlines and requirements in this Notice apply to hard copy applications. Hard copy applications must include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via e-Grants.

E. Coordination among State Commissions and Multi-state Applicants

CNCS expects State Commissions and multi-state grantees to consult and coordinate activities at the local level, as specified in Section 131. [42 U.S.C. 12583] of the National Community Service Act (NCSA). This consultation is designed to ensure the most effective use of national service resources and lead to enhanced coordination among grantees. The list of State Commissions can be found here:

<http://www.americorps.gov/about/contact/statecommission.asp>.

Multi-state applicants and grantees must:

- Consult in a timely manner with the State Commission of each state in which the organization knows it will operate prior to application submission and describe this consultation in their applications.
- Provide the State Commission with contact information for multi-state programs in their state after grants are awarded, and update these lists on an annual basis.
- Participate in the State Commission's annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state service plan, as well as appropriate training and other events.
- Include the State Commission on the multi-state grantee's mailing list and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

State Commissions must:

- Consult in a timely manner with the multi-state applicants and grantees that contact them prior to application submission.
- Consider the schedules and needs of multi-state programs in their states when planning annual events and technical assistance activities.
- Include multi-state programs in their annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state service plan.
- Add staff of multi-state programs in their state to their mailing list and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

CNCS will solicit State Commission input on multi-state applicants proposing to operate in their state. Participation by State Commissions is optional. This input will be provided via eGrants.

F. Submission Dates and Times

Applications requiring review by the Montana Commission on Community Service are due by November 4, 2011 at 12:00 p.m. Mountain Standard Time. All other applications are due January 18, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

G. Funding Restrictions

Grants under this program, except for fixed-amount and EAP grants, are subject to the applicable Cost Principles under OMB Circulars A-21 (2 CFR part 220), A-122 (2 CFR part 230), or A-87 (2 CFR part 225) and the

Uniform Administrative Requirements for grants under A-102 (45 CFR part 2541) or A-110 (45 CFR 2543 or 2 CFR part 21).

H. Equal Opportunity Survey

Applicants are asked to complete the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants. Applicants may complete the survey in eGrants while preparing the application for submission or contact CNCS to obtain a hard copy.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. What are the Selection Criteria?

Each application must clearly describe a project that will effectively deploy AmeriCorps members to solve a significant community need and respond to the following criteria.

1. Program Design (40 percent)

In assessing Program Design, reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant demonstrates how AmeriCorps members are particularly well-suited to solving the identified community needs.

Specifically, reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant:

- Provides persuasive evidence that the identified needs exist in the targeted community(ies). (5 points)
- Describes the ways in which AmeriCorps members are a highly effective means to solving the identified community needs, including the unique value added by AmeriCorps. (15 points)
- Describes how the interventions the AmeriCorps members and volunteers are engaged in are both evidence-based and will have a measurable community impact. The intervention is evidence-based if programs can demonstrate community impact and solve community problems through an evidence-based approach (e.g. performance data, research, theory of change). (15 points)
- Describes the program components that enable the AmeriCorps members to have powerful service experiences that produce increased community impact and lead to continued civic participation and connectivity with other AmeriCorps and national service participants. (10 points)
- Convincingly links four major elements: (1) the needs identified, (2) the intervention that will be carried out by AmeriCorps members and community volunteers, (3) the ways in which AmeriCorps members are particularly well-suited to deliver the intervention, and (4) the anticipated outcomes. (5 points)

Recompeting grantees must describe their efforts and impact to date, and provide persuasive evidence they should continue to be funded.

If a new applicant is already working to meet the community need identified in the application, the applicant should describe how the proposed use of AmeriCorps members will add value, i.e., be more effective than what is currently being implemented, or enhance existing efforts.

2. Organizational Capability (20 percent)

Reviewers will assess the extent to which:

- The organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan, implement and evaluate the proposed program.
- The organization has secured, or describes an effective plan for securing, the financial and in-kind

resources necessary to support program implementation and to demonstrate community stakeholder support.

- The organization has the ability and structure to ensure its and its subgrantees and/or service locations' compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including prohibited activities.
- Multi-state applicants have consulted with state and territory service commissions to ensure non-duplication and coordination of CNCS resources.
- Current or previous AmeriCorps grantees filled the member positions they were awarded and retained the AmeriCorps members they enrolled or have provided an explanation for less than 100% enrollment and retention.
- Current or previous AmeriCorps grantees have met performance targets and demonstrated compliance with grant terms and conditions.

3. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (20 percent)

For cost-reimbursement grants, reviewers will assess the extent to which:

- The budget is clear, reasonable, cost-effective, and in alignment with the program narrative.
- The requested funds do not exceed the maximum cost per Member Service Year (MSY), or for existing programs, have not increased over previous years. The amount requested is a competitive factor in the selection process.

For EAPs and Full-time Fixed-amount grants, reviewers will assess:

- The applicant's understanding of total program cost and capacity to raise additional resources beyond the fixed-amount.
- The amount requested per member. Fixed-amount applicants are encouraged to request less than the full maximum amount allowed per MSY. The amount requested is a competitive factor in the selection process.

4. Staff Assessment (20 percent)

The scoring of this section will be based on the information provided in the staff risk assessment.

Previous grantees will be scored on the following:

- ability to meet match,
- previous site visit compliance findings and action taken to resolve all issues,
- members were enrolled and exited within the CNCS 30 day requirement, and
- program reporting deadlines.

New applicants will be scored on the following:

- provided evidence of successful past fundraising and an ability to meet match requirements, and
- demonstrated ability to manage an AmeriCorps program through the Readiness Self Assessment.

B. What are the goals of the review and selection process?

The assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. As in the past, CNCS will engage external reviewers to provide insight and input with respect to eligible applications. In addition, CNCS staff will apply their experience and expertise in evaluating applications. In the end, the review and selection process will produce a balanced set of high- quality programs that represent the priorities and selection factors described in this Notice.

Specifically, the review and selection process is designed to:

1. Identify eligible applications that satisfy the following considerations:

- High alignment with criteria.
- Priorities, in the order of preference outlined in Section I.B., above.

- **Additional Considerations:**
 - Recruitment and deployment of community volunteers to leverage impact.
 - State Commission rank and recommendations on single-state applicants.
 - State Commission input on multi-state applications.
 - Relative risk and opportunity.

2. Compile a balanced portfolio based on the following characteristics:

- Geographic representation.
- Equitable treatment of
 - Rural and urban communities.
 - Small and large programs.
 - Single and multi-state programs.
- Focus area representation.
- Strategic Characteristics:
 - Organizations that build capacity for individuals, nonprofits and communities to solve problems.
 - Organizations and/or program models that recruit and engage traditionally underrepresented populations in service and expand opportunities for both youth and adults to serve; particularly for new Americans, low-income individuals, rural residents, older Americans, veterans, members of faith-based organizations, communities of color, Native Americans, and people with disabilities.
 - Organizations that embrace innovative approaches to solving problems.

C. What are the stages in the review and selection process?

Governor's Office of Community Service and Montana Commission on Community Service

1. Compliance Review

Governor's Office of Community service staff will review all submitted applications for compliance with AmeriCorps regulations and the requirements laid out in this document. If an application is deemed by OCS staff to not meet the requirements of this RFP the application will be deemed ineligible and will not proceed through the remainder of the review process.

2. Grant Review Workgroup Review

After passing review by the Governor's Office of Community Service applications will be sent to the Montana Commission on Community Service Grant Review Workgroup. The Grant Review Workgroup will score all applications based on a universal score sheet to determine the ranking of applications. Based on the ranking of applications the Grant Review Workgroup will make a recommendation to the full Montana Commission on Community Service as to which applications will be submitted to CNCS for funding consideration. A vote by the full Commission on the recommendations of the Grant Review Workgroup will provide the final

determination on which applications are sent to CNCS for funding consideration.

Corporation for National and Community Service

1. Compliance Review

Corporation staff will review all applications to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completeness requirements. Applications that are submitted by eligible organizations, submitted by the deadline, and that are complete, will advance to External Review.

2. External Review

External reviewers will assess applications based on the Program Design criteria. Each application will be reviewed by at least three external reviewers. Reviewers will be recruited and selected on the basis of demonstrated expertise in AmeriCorps programming, and/or the selection criteria and focus areas. All external reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

3. Post Review Quality Control (Quality Control)

After the external reviewers complete their assessment, staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review may be used for:

- Applicants with identified discrepancies during external review.
- Applications ranked first by a State Commission that received low scores in External Review.
- Applications for which there are significant panel anomalies.
- Applications submitted by high-performing current grantees that received a low score in external review.

Applications identified for additional assessment will receive a quality control review. The Quality Control reviewer provides an assessment of the application's key strengths and weaknesses.

4. Selection of Applications for Internal Review

Based on results from External Review and Quality Control, CNCS staff will determine which applications advance to Internal Review. Applications will advance to Internal Review based on the results of the External Review and Quality Control, as well as the consideration of the priorities and balancing characteristics.

5. Internal Review

CNCS staff will assess Program Design, particularly focusing on evidence-basis for the proposed solution(s) to the identified community problem(s), appropriateness of national service as a solution, and potential quality of the member experience; Organizational Capability; and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy. Submitted program evaluations will be considered at this stage. Following staff assessment, some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information. Clarification information is used by CNCS staff in making final recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to requests for information in a timely fashion will result in the removal of applications from consideration.

CNCS staff will determine which applications to recommend for selection based on the results of External Review, Quality Control, Internal Review, and Clarification; and the priorities, balancing characteristics, additional considerations, and strategic characteristics listed above.

6. Selection for Funding

The Chief Executive Officer will select the final portfolio based on staff recommendation, and considering overall quality, priorities, balancing characteristics, additional considerations, and strategic characteristics listed above.

D. What feedback will applicants receive?

Following grant awards, each applicant will receive the results of external and, if applicable, internal review pertaining to their application. Feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect any information that may have been provided during clarification.

E. Will the priorities also be used in making decisions regarding continuation expansion requests?

Yes. Requests for continuation expansions will be assessed using the same priorities as the new and recompetite applications.

F. How long will the selection and review process take?

Processing and selecting applications for funding will require approximately four months from the date of the Application Deadline.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. When will grants be awarded?

CNCS will award grants following the grant selection announcement. We anticipate announcing the results of this competition by May 31, 2012.

B. What documents govern the grant?

The Notice of Grant Award incorporates the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant as well as the AmeriCorps regulations and grant provisions.

C. What is the Project/Award Period?

CNCS generally makes grant awards for three years, with funding in annual increments. Grantees will be eligible for non-competitive continuation funding in the second and third year contingent on the availability of appropriations, compliance, and satisfactory performance. The project start date may not occur prior to the date CNCS awards the grant. 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.

Additional funding is contingent upon satisfactory performance, a grantee's demonstrated capacity to manage a grant and comply with grant requirements, and availability of Congressional appropriations. CNCS reserves the right to adjust the amount of an additional grant award in subsequent years, or elect not to continue funding, based on these bases.

D. What are the reporting requirements for these grants?

Grantees other than fixed-amount grantees and Professional Corps are required to provide annual progress reports, bi-annual financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the

AmeriCorps regulations §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740. Professional Corps programs are required to provide annual program and financial reports only. Fixed-amount grantees are required to provide annual performance reports only. All grantees provide quarterly expense reports through the Payment Management System at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Participants in the national performance measures pilot might be required to submit a mid-year progress report.

If you receive an award, you will be required to report at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over \$25,000 and may be required to report on executive compensation for your organization and for your subgrantees. You must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 C.F.R. Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

E. Re-Focusing of Funding

CNCS reserves the right to re-focus program dollars in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.

VII. AGENCY CONTACT

This Notice is available at www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp.

The TTY number is 202_606-3472. For further information or for a printed copy of this Notice, call (202) 606-7508.

For questions regarding multi-state or Indian Tribes applications submitted directly to CNCS, please call (202) 606-7508 or send an e-mail to americorpsgrants@cns.gov.

The mailing address is:

Corporation for National and Community Service
ATT: Office of Grants Policy and Operations/ASN Application
1201 New York Avenue NW Washington, DC 20525

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION TO KNOW BEFORE APPLYING

In addition to consulting the Notice and AmeriCorps regulations as directed in these instructions, multi-state applicants may also consult the CNCS web site for a schedule of technical assistance conference calls, Frequently Asked Questions, and other resources targeted to multi-state applicants. Applicants in a single state should consult with their State Commission.

IX. NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Tier 1: Priority Measures (in Disaster Services, Education, and Veterans and Military Families)

Disaster Services

- ✓ (new) D1: Number of individuals that received CNCS---supported services in disaster preparedness
- ✓ (new) D2: Number of individuals that received CNCS---supported services in disaster response
- ✓ (new) D3: Number of individuals that received CNCS---supported services in disaster recovery

- ✓ (new) D4: Number of individuals that received CNCS---supported services in disaster mitigation

Education

- ✓ ED21: Number of children that completed participation in CNCS---supported early childhood education programs
- ✓ ED23: Number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of social and/or emotional development
- ✓ ED24: Number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of literacy skills
- ✓ ED25: Number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of numeracy (math) skills
- ✓ ED2: Number of students that completed participation in CNCS---supported K---12 education programs
- ✓ ED4A: Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that were sustained by the CNCS---supported program for at least the required time period
- ✓ ED5: Number of students with improved academic performance in literacy and/or math
- ✓ (new) ED27: Number of students in grades K---12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring or other education program, including CNCS---supported service learning, who demonstrated improved academic engagement
- ✓ ED6: Number of students that improved their school attendance over the course of the CNCS-supported program's involvement with the student

Veterans and Military Families

- ✓ V1: Number of veterans that received CNCS---supported assistance
- ✓ (new) V8: Number of veterans' family members that received CNCS---supported assistance
- ✓ V7: Number of family members of active duty military service members that received CNCS---supported assistance
- ✓ (new) V9: Number of active duty military service members that received CNCS---supported assistance
- ✓ V2: Number of veterans engaged in service opportunities as a National Service Participant or volunteer.
- ✓ V10: Number of military family members engaged in service opportunities as a National Service Participant or volunteer.

Tier 2: Priority Measures (in Economic Opportunity, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures and Capacity Building)

Economic Opportunity*

- ✓ O5: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless individuals, receiving housing services
- ✓ O11: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless individuals, transitioned into safe, healthy, affordable housing

Environmental Stewardship**

- ✓ EN4: Number of acres of national parks, state parks, city parks, county parks, or other public and tribal lands that are improved
- ✓ EN5: Number of miles of trails or waterways (owned/maintained by national, state, county, city or tribal governments) that are improved and/or created

Healthy Futures***

- ✓ H8: Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food, transportation, or other services that allow them to live independently
- ✓ (new) H9: Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities who reported having increased social ties/perceived social support

- ✓ H10 (formerly O6): Number of individuals receiving emergency food from food banks, food pantries, or other nonprofit organizations
- ✓ H11 (formerly O7): Number of individuals receiving support, services, education and/or referrals to alleviate long-term hunger
- ✓ (new) H12: Number of individuals that reported increased food security of themselves and their children (household food security) as a result of CNCS-supported services

* Economic Opportunity measures may also be used to report on your program's performance in providing services in the Disaster Services focus area,

** Environmental Stewardship measures may also be used to report on your program's performance in providing services in the Disaster Services focus area,

*** Healthy Futures measures may also be used to report on your program's performance in providing services in the Disaster Services focus area,

Capacity Building

- ✓ (new) G3-3.1: Number of community volunteers recruited by CNCS-supported organizations or National Service Participants
- ✓ (new) G3-3.2: Number of community volunteers managed by CNCS-supported organizations or National Service Participants
- ✓ (new) G3-3.3: Number of organizations implementing three or more effective volunteer management practices as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or National Service Participants

Tier 3: Pilot Measures

Education

- ✓ ED1: Number of students who start in a CNCS-supported education program
- ✓ ED3A: Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that are commenced by CNCS-supported programs
- ✓ ED7: Number of students with no or decreased disciplinary referrals and suspensions over the course of the CNCS-supported programs' involvement
- ✓ ED8: Number of youth with decreased substance abuse, arrest, or gang involvement
- ✓ ED9: Number of students graduating from high school on time with a diploma
- ✓ ED10: Number of students entering post-secondary institutions
- ✓ ED11: Number of students earning a post-secondary degree
- ✓ ED12: Number of CNCS-Supported National Service Participants who begin serving as teachers through a Teacher Corps program
- ✓ ED13: Number of CNCS-Supported National Service Participants who completed serving as teachers through a Teacher Corps program
- ✓ ED14: Number of individuals teaching in high need schools
- ✓ ED15: Number of students in CNCS-supported teacher classrooms with improved academic performance
- ✓ ED17: Number of teachers remaining in the education field, but not teaching in a school (school support staff, school administration, district administration policy, education nonprofits, etc.) after their term of service
- ✓ ED18: Number of teachers who have had a positive impact on student learning as determined by observation-based assessments of teacher performance
- ✓ ED19: Number of individuals receiving certification to teach in schools after their term of service
- ✓ ED20: Number of children who start in a CNCS-supported early childhood education program
- ✓ ED22: Number of children accessing high quality early childhood education programs
- ✓ ED26: Number of students acquiring a GED

Economic Opportunity

- ✓ O1: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving financial literacy services
- ✓ O2: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving job training and other skill development services
- ✓ O3: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving job placement services
- ✓ O4: Number of housing units developed, repaired, or otherwise made available for low---income individuals, families or people with disabilities
- ✓ O9: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals with improved financial knowledge
- ✓ O10: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals placed in jobs
- ✓ O12: Number of economically disadvantaged National Service Participants who are unemployed prior to their term of service
- ✓ O13: Number of economically disadvantaged National Service Participants who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service
- ✓ O14: Number of National Service Participants who have their high school diploma or equivalent but have not completed a college degree prior to their term of service
- ✓ O15: Number of economically disadvantaged National Service Participants that secure employment during their term of service or within one year after finishing a CNCS---supported program
- ✓ O16: Number of National Service Participants that obtain a GED/diploma while serving in CNCS---supported programs or within one year after finishing serving in CNCS---supported programs
- ✓ O17: Number of National Service Participants that complete a college course within one year after finishing a CNCS---supported program

Environmental Stewardship

- ✓ EN1: Number of housing units of low---income households and structures weatherized or retrofitted to significantly improve energy efficiency
- ✓ EN2: Number of low---income households home and public building energy audits conducted
- ✓ EN3: Number of individuals receiving education or training in energy---efficient and environmentally---conscious practices, including but not limited to sustainable energy and other natural resources, and sustainable agriculture
- ✓ EN6: Number of tons of materials collected and recycled

Healthy Futures

- ✓ H1: Number of individuals who are uninsured, economically disadvantaged, medically underserved, or living in rural areas utilizing preventive and primary health care services and programs
- ✓ H2: Number of clients to whom information on health insurance, health care access and health benefits programs is delivered
- ✓ H3: Number of clients enrolled in health insurance, health services, and health benefits programs
- ✓ H4: Number of clients participating in health education programs
- ✓ H5: Number of children and youth engaged in in---school or afterschool physical education activities with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity
- ✓ H6: Number of children and youth receiving nutrition education with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity
- ✓ H7: Number of clients receiving language translation services at clinics and in emergency rooms

Veterans and Military Families

- ✓ V3: Number of veterans assisted in pursuing educational opportunities
- ✓ V4: Number of veterans assisted in receiving professional certification, licensure, or credentials
- ✓ V6: Number of housing units developed, repaired, or otherwise made available for veterans

Capacity Building

- ✓ (new) G3---3.4 Number of organizations that received capacity building services from CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants
- ✓ (new) G3---3.5: Number of staff and community volunteers that received training (of one or more types) as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants
- ✓ (new) G3---3.6: Number of organizations that completed a community assessment identifying goals and recommendations with the assistance of CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants
- ✓ (new) G3---3.7: Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were recruited by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants
- ✓ (new) G3---3.8: Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were managed by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants
- ✓ (new) G3---3.9: Number of organizations reporting that capacity building activities provided by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants have helped to make the organization more efficient
- ✓ (new) G3---3.10: Number of organizations reporting that capacity building activities provided by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants have helped to make the organization more effective
- ✓ (new) G3---3.11: Number of new systems and business processes (technology, performance management, training, etc.) or enhancements to existing systems and business processes put in place as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants
- ✓ (new) G3---3.12: Number of organizations that monitored their progress towards the goals identified in their community assessment with the assistance of CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants
- ✓ (new) G3---3.13: Number of additional activities completed and/or program outputs produced by the program as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants in a) Disaster Services, b) Economic Opportunity, c) Education, d) Environmental Stewardship, e) Healthy Futures and/or f) Veterans and Military Families
- ✓ (new) G3---3.14: Number of organizations that have experienced an increase in requests for their programs and services as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants
- ✓ (new) G3---3.15: Number of additional types of services offered by organizations as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants in a) Disaster Services, b) Economic Opportunity, c) Education, d) Environmental Stewardship, e) Healthy Futures and/or f) Veterans and Military Families
- ✓ (new) G3---3.16: Dollar value of cash resources leveraged by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants
- ✓ (new) G3---3.17: Dollar value of in---kind resources leveraged by CNCS---supported organizations or national service participants
- ✓ (new) G3---3.18: Number of new beneficiaries that received services as a result of capacity building efforts in: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and/or Veterans and Military Families
- ✓ (new) G3---3.19: Number of new beneficiaries from one or more targeted or underserved populations (counts by target population, e.g., racial or ethnic group) that received services as a result of capacity building efforts in: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and/or Veterans and Military Families

Attachment B – Letter of Intent

Montana Commission on Community Service 2012 AmeriCorps State Competitive Grant Application

Name of Applicant Organization:

Organization Address:

City/State/Zip:

Telephone:

E-mail Address:

(Note: to apply all AmeriCorps programs must have access to the Internet)

Organization Mission Statement:

Proposed Program Title:

Proposed Program Executive Summary:

(Please provide a one-paragraph summary of the proposed program. This summary must be one-half page or less and should include who, what, when, and why:

- Who will be serving? Who will be served?
 - What will the AmeriCorps members do?
 - Where will the activity take place?
 - When does the project begin and end?
 - What is the expected outcome(s) of the project?
-

Proposed Program CNCS Focus Area(s):

Contact Person:

Submit Attachment B and C (New Applicants Only) electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST October 19, 2011** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-9077 to confirm the information was received.*

The Governor's Office of Community Service will invite applicants with past experience (successful) and or a strong Readiness Self-Assessment, and who address CNCS Focus Areas and State Expectations to continue with the application process.

Attachment C – Readiness Self-Assessment (New Applicants)

Montana Commission on Community Service 2012 AmeriCorps State Competitive Grant Application

Is My Organization Ready to Apply for an AmeriCorps Grant?

This Readiness Assessment asks simple questions to help you determine whether your organization is poised to successfully apply for and implement an AmeriCorps grant. Read each question carefully and answer honestly. This assessment is a tool to help you plan for the implementation and administration of an AmeriCorps grant-funded program.

Completion of the assessment does not guarantee AmeriCorps funding through the Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS) or the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The Readiness Self-Assessment will be used by the Governor's Office of Community Service to determine if the organization is financially ready for an AmeriCorps Grant.

Fundamental Questions:

Is your organization a public or private nonprofit organization - including labor organizations, faith-based and other community organizations; an institution of higher education; a government entity within the State of Montana; an Indian Tribe; or a partnership or consortia?

Yes No Unsure

Does your organization's plan for utilizing AmeriCorps members address specific unmet community needs in the areas of education, healthy futures, environmental stewardship, veterans, economic opportunity, and/or disaster services?

Yes No Unsure

If the answer to either of the above questions is "No" then your organization would not be eligible to receive an AmeriCorps grant or serve as a Host Site for AmeriCorps members.

Additionally you are ineligible if your organization is a 501 (c)(4) non-profit entity [under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501 (c)(4)] that engages in lobbying.

Do your plans for utilizing AmeriCorps members call for members to provide service exclusively within the state of Montana?

Yes No Unsure

If the answer to the above question is "No" then your program would not be eligible to receive funding through the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service. If the rest of the self-assessment is favorable, then your organization may be interested in applying directly to the Corporation for National and Community Service for an AmeriCorps National Direct grant. If your organization does apply directly to the Corporation for National and Community Service please contact the Governor's Office of Community Service for more information on submitting a multi-state/national consultation form.

Administrative Competencies:

Does your organization have a proven track record of establishing measurable outcomes for its programs?

Yes No Unsure

Does your organization have the infrastructure to recruit, train, and support the efforts of AmeriCorps members? Variables include office space, technology, supervisory time & skill, financial expertise, and the ability to manage volunteers.

Yes No Unsure

Has your organization previously managed a major federal, state, or foundation grant?

Yes No If yes, attach grant numbers for the past two years.

Does your organization have formal internal controls governing all financial operations?

Yes No Unsure

Does your organization have sufficient cash on hand or credit to operate a major grant on a reimbursement basis? Both the Federal and State governments rarely, if ever, pay grant funds in advance.

Yes No Unsure

Has your organization been audited by a Certified Public Accounting firm within the past two years?

Yes No If yes, attach a copy of your most recent audit report.

If you answered "No" to any of the above questions, it is likely your organization would struggle to successfully administer an AmeriCorps grant. Consideration should be given to seeking a partnership with an existing AmeriCorps program in Montana. Serving as an AmeriCorps host site rather than as a primary grant applicant is often a better option for smaller organizations. Contact the Governor's Office of Community Service for more details.

Mission Statement:

1. Does your organization have a clear written mission statement? (if no, skip to question 6)

Yes No Unsure

2. Do all organizational programs and efforts align with the mission?

Yes No Unsure

3. Has your organization said no to potentially good opportunities which are not consistent with the organization's mission?

Yes No Unsure

4. Is the mission understood by all stakeholders within the organization?

Yes No Unsure

5. Is the mission frequently referred to (e.g. in planning sessions and other meetings)?

Yes No Unsure

Governance & Operations:

6. Does your organization have an active and independent board of directors and/or other governing body? (Independent is defined as a majority of board members who are neither employees of the organization nor family members of employees or other board members.)
 Yes No Unsure
7. Does the organization have written policies and procedures, including a conflict of interest policy for employees and directors?
 Yes No Unsure
8. Does your organization plan to use existing staff to manage the AmeriCorps program?
 Yes No If yes, which position(s)? _____

Strategic Planning:

9. Does your organization have a clear and coherent written strategic plan for the future i.e. 3-10 year strategic plan? (if no, skip to question 13)
 Yes No Unsure
10. Does the strategic plan have well defined measurable goals and achievable action steps with timeframes?
 Yes No Unsure
11. Are the goals in the strategic plan well known and understood by the staff and board?
 Yes No Unsure
12. Is the strategic plan made actionable by realistic and detailed annual plans that outline the specific work to be accomplished?
 Yes No Unsure
13. Is this annual plan consistently used at all levels of the organization to guide operations?
 Yes No Unsure
14. Does the organization conduct regular assessment of internal operations to assess efficiency and effectiveness?
 Yes No Unsure

Financial Management:

15. Do you have a "job cost" or "fund based" accounting system?
 Yes No Current system used: _____
16. If your organization uses accrual basis accounting, are there procedures in place to allow for reconciliation between cash and accrual basis reports?
 Yes No Unsure
17. Is your organization's accounting system manual, automated, or a combination?
 Manual Automated Combination

18. Are entries posted to the general ledger?

Daily Weekly Monthly
 Unsure Other (Please describe): _____

19. Does the accounting system track completely and accurately the receipt and disbursement of funds by each grant or funding source?

Yes No Unsure

20. Does your accounting system allow cash basis reporting and for the recording of "in-kind" contributions?

Yes No Unsure

21. Does the organization have a development/fundraising plan in place?

Yes No Unsure

22. Does the organization have plans to secure the financial and in-kind resources to meet required matches?

Yes No Unsure

23. Is your organization familiar with federal cost principles?

Yes No Unsure

24. Is your organization familiar with procedures for the determination and allowance of costs in connection with Corporation for National and Community Service grants and contracts?

Yes No Unsure

Technology:

25. Does every key staff member have access to a computer with up-to-date software, internet access, and e-mail capabilities?

Yes No Unsure

26. Is all staff competent and comfortable using their computer?

Yes No Unsure

27. Is all staff able to find and use resources posted online?

Yes No Unsure

Human Resources:

28. Does your organization have a well-planned process to recruit, develop, and retain the best employees in accordance with an equal opportunity environment?

Yes No Unsure

29. Does your organization provide staff and volunteers with written job descriptions and the necessary resources to carry out duties appropriately?

Yes No Unsure

30. Are time and activity distribution records (time sheets) maintained by funding source and project type for each employee to account for total hours with your organization?

Yes No Unsure

31. Does the organization provide relevant and regular training for staff and board members?

Yes No Unsure

32. Are employee performance appraisals conducted on a consistent and fair basis?

Yes No Unsure

33. Does your organization have a well-planned process to recruit, develop, and retain volunteers?

Yes No Unsure

Internal Controls:

34. Are the duties of the bookkeeper and record keeper separate from cash functions (receipts, deposits, check signing/releasing)?

Yes No Unsure

35. Are checks signed by individual(s) whose duties exclude recording cash received, approving vouchers for payment, and the preparation of payroll?

Yes No Unsure

36. Are purchase approval methods documented and communicated?

Yes No Unsure

37. Are employee payroll reports supported by appropriately signed documentation (timesheets, leave slips, etc.)?

Yes No Unsure

38. Are employees who handle funds bonded against loss by reasons of fraud or dishonesty?

Yes No Unsure

Organizational Needs Assessment and Implementation:

39. Does your organization conduct regular community needs assessments?

Yes No Date Last Conducted: _____

40. Does your organization analyze and use the results of needs assessments to chart change?

Yes No Unsure

41. Does your organization have the ability to grow and/or create new and innovative programs to meet the needs of the community?

Yes No Unsure

42. Are your organization's programs and services well defined?

Yes No Unsure

43. Does your organization have the ability to close a program that is no longer needed or relevant?

Yes No Unsure

Measuring Performance and Continual Improvement of Programs:

44. Does your organization have a comprehensive well-developed community assessment or evaluation system used to measure the impact of programs and services?

Yes No Unsure

45. Does your organization conduct regular community assessments of existing programs' effectiveness in meeting recipient needs and identify areas for improvement?

Yes No Unsure

46. Does your organization collect data to measure performance and progress on a continual basis?

Yes No Unsure

47. Is data analyzed, used in program redesign and communicated to stakeholders on a regular basis? (e.g. annual report)

Yes No Unsure

Partnership and Collaboration:

48. Does your organization participate in partnerships with other groups?

Yes No Unsure

49. Have these relationships led to mutually beneficial collaborations?

Yes No Unsure

Faith Based Organizations:

If the conditions below are not acceptable to your organization, Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) funding is probably not a good option:

- ✓ Participation in CNCS funded programs must be open to all who qualify, without regard to religious beliefs
- ✓ CNCS funded programs cannot require members or participants to engage in religious activities
- ✓ CNCS funded positions must not proselytize
- ✓ CNCS funded programs must be held in a separate place or time from religious activities

Submit Attachment B and C (New Applicants Only) electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST October 19, 2011** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-9077 to confirm the information was received.*

The Governor's Office of Community Service will invite applicants with past experience (successful) and or a strong Readiness Self-Assessment, and who address CNCS Focus Areas and State Expectations to continue with the application process.

Attachment D – Cover Letter

Montana Commission on Community Service
2012 AmeriCorps State Competitive Grant Application

Name of Applicant Organization:

Type of Organization (Nonprofit, Government, etc.):

Federal Employer Identification No (FEIN):

Proposed Program Title:

Proposed Program Executive Summary: (If different than Letter of Intent)

Proposed Program CNCS Focus Area(s): (If different than Letter of Intent)

Proposed Program Montana Initiatives:

(Plans to incorporate the Montana Initiatives into the proposed program? If yes, how?)

CNCS Funds Requested:

Total Project Budget (funds requested + match):

Indirect Cost Rate: (If included in the budget please submit a federally approved indirect cost rate agreement)

Current Applicants:

(Describe the successes and highlights of your program over the past grant year.)

Contact Person:

Submit the Cover Letter, Attachment D, MOU and or Documentation of Previous Fundraising, and Application electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST November 4, 2011** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-9077 to confirm the information was received.*

The Governor's Office of Community Service will contact applicants to set up an in person interview on **November 29 or 30, 2011.**

Thank you for your interest, we look forward to reviewing your proposal!