

serve montana

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE



2014 AmeriCorps State Grant Application Competitive Request for Proposals

Thank you for your interest in an AmeriCorps Competitive Grant. This packet outlines the process for applying for 2014 AmeriCorps grants funded by the 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 recommend funding to the Corporation for National and Community Service.

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 competitive 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.

Montana Expectations

Programs operating in Montana must address all of the 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
- ✓ Ability of the organization to administer federal grants
- ✓ Address rural, underserved or areas of extreme poverty not currently served by AmeriCorps programs
- ✓ AmeriCorps members trained and prepared to respond to disasters in their community

Montana AmeriCorps State Process

To be eligible for consideration, an applicant must meet the intent of all the requirements listed in this packet. OCS will determine whether the applicant's Letter of Intent, Readiness Self-Assessment, and Proposal comply with the requirements. The applicants 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.

Montana Commission on Community Service and the OCS 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.

Who should apply for these funds

Applicants who will apply through this RFP

Organizations that are proposing an AmeriCorps project that operates in only Montana must apply to this competition through the Governor's Office of Community Service. The Governor's Office of Community service will put applicants through a selection process, described in this RFP, and put forward to CNCS the applicants selected to compete for funding.

Applicants that may apply directly to CNCS

Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state or territory apply directly to CNCS. Tribes may apply directly to CNCS or through the state commission.

2014 AmeriCorps State Grant Application Process

- October 7** -Montana RFP (request for proposal) officially posted
-Technical assistance period opens*
- October 15** Technical Assistance Call
Phone (641) 715-3620
Conference Code: 937749#
- October 16** Due Date noon MST**
-All applicants
 - Letter of Intent
-New applicants
 - Current A133 or other audit
 - Readiness Self-Assessment
- November 12** Due Date noon MST***
-All applicants
 -Application
 -Cover Letter
 -Letters of Support
 -Logic Model Chart
 -Organizational chart
- December 9** -Applicant interviews with Grant Review Workgroup
 -Representative must be present for interview
- December 16** -Full Commission vote on the funding recommendations
- Spring 2014** -Successful applicants will be notified

Notes:

*Technical assistance will be available to all applicants from October 7 to November 12, 2013. Questions should be submitted via email to serve@mt.gov. All questions and answers will be posted publicly in an FAQ on the ServeMontana website at <http://serve.mt.gov/funding/>.

The Letter of Intent and Readiness Assessment are attached at the end of this document. All documents should be submitted electronically to serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST November 12, 2013. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-5547. The Governor's Office of Community Service will invite those submitting compliant materials to continue the application process.

*** Applications will be submitted in **eGrants**, the online grant program used by the Corporation for National and Community Service <http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/>. The cover letter, letters of support, logic model chart, and organizational chart should be submitted electronically to serve@mt.gov. All materials must be received by OCS by **Noon MST November 12, 2013**. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours call 406-444-5547.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Purpose of AmeriCorps funding

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed (e.g., based on proposed program's data or a similar program's data) interventions to strengthen communities. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust.

B. Focus Areas

AmeriCorps funds are targeted to the following focus areas:

Disaster Services

Grant activities will increase the preparedness of individuals, improve individuals' readiness to respond, help individuals recover from disasters, and help individuals mitigate disasters. Grantees also have the ability to respond to national disasters under CNCS cooperative agreements and FEMA mission assignments.

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 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 individuals, especially children. CNCS is particularly interested in program designs that support youth engagement and service-learning as strategies to achieve improved academic 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 educational institutions for economically disadvantaged students.

Environmental Stewardship

Grants will provide support for direct services that contribute to increased energy and water efficiency, renewable energy use, or improving at-risk ecosystems. In addition, grants will support increased individual behavioral change leading to increased efficiency, renewable energy use, and ecosystem improvements particularly for economically disadvantaged households and 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 improved at-risk ecosystems; and increase green training opportunities that may lead to decreased energy and water consumption or improved at-risk ecosystems.

In addition, the Administration is exploring ways to provide service, training, education, and employment opportunities for young Americans through protecting, restoring and enhancing public and tribal lands. CNCS is exploring potential programs along the lines of a "21st Century Civilian Service Corps" that can facilitate

conservation service work on public lands and encourage a new generation of natural resource managers and environmental scientists, particularly in low income and disadvantaged communities.

Healthy Futures

Grants will provide support for health needs within communities including access to care, aging in place, and childhood obesity. Grant activities will improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities served by CNCS-supported programs; increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible; and increase physical activity and improve nutrition in youth with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity.

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 increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS-supported programs. To the greatest extent possible, proposed activities should be aligned with the Veteran and Military Family National Performance Measures.

C. Additional Program Models

Capacity Building

Grants also will provide support for capacity building activities provided by national service participants. As a general rule, capacity building activities to be *indirect services* that enable organizations to provide more, better, and sustained *direct services* in the above six focus areas. 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.

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.

Professional Corps

Professional Corps programs recruit and place qualified members in positions as teachers, health care providers, police officers, engineers, or other professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Applicants are eligible to apply for funding for a portion of the program costs. Professional Corps members' salaries are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget. In order to be considered for funding, applicants must demonstrate that there are an inadequate number of professionals in the community(ies) where the corps seeks to place members. These grants can either be fixed amount or cost reimbursement grants.

D. National Performance Measures

The Serve America Act emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on a core set of issue areas. National Performance Measures allow CNCS to demonstrate aggregated impact of all its national service programs, including AmeriCorps State and National. They are divided in two categories: Priority Measures and Complementary Program Measures. For more information, please refer to the National Performance Measure Instructions.

E. 2014 AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

In the FY 2014 AmeriCorps competition, CNCS seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in economic opportunity, education, veterans and military families, and disaster services. 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 and military families in service. CNCS will also focus investment in programs that increase community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation. CNCS will focus investment in programs that increase economic opportunities for communities and AmeriCorps members.

Finally, CNCS will focus on summer programming for K-12 students, especially those programs that address the academic “summer slide.” Proposed activities will engage youth and young adults as summer members to help support summer reading, math, science, and environmental learning activities for youth in rural and urban areas most likely at risk of summer learning loss.

CNCS will seek to build a diversified portfolio across the focus areas, and other considerations are outlined below in Section V. B. Applicants proposing programs that receive priority consideration are not guaranteed funding. Furthermore, programs must demonstrate significant program focus, design, and outcomes to receive priority consideration. CNCS will give priority consideration to applicants in the following Tiers, in descending order of preference:

Tier 1: Programs that select:

- Complementary Program Measures in Economic Opportunity (Programs that select O12, O14, O15, O17 must also select an additional Priority or Complementary Program Measure from Tier 1, 2, or 3 that measures community impact), or
- Priority Measures in Veterans and Military Families, or
- Priority Measures in Disaster Services, or

NOTE: CNCS’ expectation is that if Tier 1 is selected at least 30% of your MSYs are in the complementary program measures or priority measures above. If that is not the case and Tier 1 has been selected, please explain in the narrative why it was not possible to meet the 30% threshold. Programs that fit these Priority or Complementary Program Measures should use these measures. These measures can be found in Section IX, Tier 1.

Tier 2: Programs that select Priority Measures in:

- Environmental Stewardship, or
- Healthy Futures, or

- Capacity Building, or
- Education and are not serving 100% in schools that received awards under the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program and are implementing one of the SIG school intervention models and/or Priority Schools identified by a State educational agency (SEA) that has received approval from the Department of Education of its request for Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility, or

Programs that have selected Priority Measures other than those in Tier 1 for:

- Economic Opportunity

NOTE: CNCS' expectation is that if Tier 2 is selected at least 30% of your MSYs are in the priority measures above. If that is not the case and Tier 2 has been selected, please explain in the narrative why it was not possible to meet the 30% threshold.

Programs that fit these Priority Measures should use these measures. These measures can be found in Section IX, Tier 1 or 2. Applicants whose members will be serving in schools that received awards under the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program and are implementing one of the SIG school intervention models and/or Priority Schools identified by a State Educational Agency (SEA) that has received approval from the Department of Education of its request for Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility must check the box on the Performance Measure tab in eGrants "SIG/Priority Schools" to be considered for Tier 1. The "NCES School ID" will need to be entered in the service location information at the time the members are enrolled.

Tier 3: Programs that select Complementary Program Measures. These measures can be found in Section IX. Tier 3.

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 as described above.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Funding Available

CNCS expects a highly competitive AmeriCorps FY 2014 grant competition. CNCS expects to award new, re-competing, and continuation AmeriCorps grants. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations, which have not yet been made.

B. Award Amount

Awards will be for funds and AmeriCorps member slots. CNCS will review applications and determine the appropriate award amount, if any. Award amounts vary.

C. Award Period

Unless otherwise specified, the grant generally 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. In most cases, the

application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding is not guaranteed. Factors considered in awarding continuation grants include satisfactory performance, demonstrated capacity to manage the grant, compliance with grant requirements, agency priorities, and the availability of appropriated funds. CNCS reserves the right to adjust the amount of a grant or elect not to continue funding for subsequent years.

D. Types of Grants

AmeriCorps grants can be awarded on a cost reimbursement or fixed amount basis. CNCS will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year. See Definitions in the Appendix.

Fixed-amount grants are only available to re-competing programs. Second and third-year continuation applicants with cost reimbursement grants must submit a new application if they are interested in applying for a fixed-amount grant. New applicants are not eligible to apply for fixed amount grants.

Full-time fixed amount applicants in the Education Focus Area will be required to select either a Priority Education Measure or Complementary Program Measure. Applicants proposing No-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.

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement		Fixed Amount		
Available Subtypes Maximum	Traditional	Professional corps	Full-Time/Less than FT service in a full time capacity	EAP	Professional Corps
Maximum Cost per MSY (see section 3)	\$13,300	\$2,000	\$13,000	\$800	\$2,000
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	All		Full-Time/Less than FT service in a full time capacity	All	Full time only
Budget Submission Required	Yes		No		
Availability of funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSY	No		Yes		
Special requirements		Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries must be paid entirely by organization where member serves and not included in the budget	If in Education Focus Area, must select Priority Education measure or Complementary Program measure. Non-Education programs may select PMs from any Tier		Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. No CNCS funds may be used to pay member living allowance or salary.

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement		Fixed Amount		
Available Subtypes	Traditional	Professional Corps	Full-Time/Less than FT serving in a full time capacity	EAP	Professional Corps
Match Requirements	Yes	Yes; Living allowance or salary paid to members may not be counted toward the match requirement.	No, but organizations must raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.		
Financial Tracking Requirements	Yes		No		
Available to New Applicants	Yes		No		
Match Requirement – Level	First-time Applicant required to match at 24% each year for the first three-year funding period; subsequent match requirements determined according to 45 CFR 2521.60; NCSA 121(e)(5) (42 USC) requires that other federal funds used to match a grant awarded under this notice must report the amount and source of these funds to CNCS on the FFR		There is no specific match requirement for fixed amount grants but CNCS does not provide all the funds necessary to operate the program. Organizations must raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.		

III. ELIGIBILITY

A. 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); labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; Tribes; and intermediaries planning to subgrant awarded funds are encouraged to apply. Receiving funding previously from CNCS or another Federal agency is not a prerequisite to applying under this *Notice*.

Organizations that have been convicted of a Federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in this *Notice*. Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501 (c)(4) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. §501 (c)(4), that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

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 with the understanding that the general practice is to award no more than 50 member slots for new Grantees. New applicants are not eligible to receive fixed amount grants.

B. Match Requirements

Fixed amount Grants

There is no specific match requirement for fixed amount grants but CNCS does not provide all the funds

necessary to operate the program. Organizations must raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.

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 and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to CNCS on the Federal Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year.

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

Alternative Match

Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at 45 CFR §2521.60(b). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined in the Application Instructions. Applicants that plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request to Serve@mt.gov.

C. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)

Applications must include a DUNS number and an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. All applicants must be registered with the Systems for Award Management (SAM).

DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. The website indicates a 48-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. After obtaining a DUNS number register with SAM at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.

SAM collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid SAM registration, which must be renewed annually. Applicants that are not already registered with SAM are urged to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications.

D. Other Requirements

1. Member Living Allowance

The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members that is between \$12,100 (minimum) and \$24,200 (maximum) per member except as noted below. A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage.

Programs are not required to provide a living allowance 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 Table below. For cost-reimbursement grants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either CNCS or grantee share.

While full-time fixed-amount grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements to members (EXCEPTION: as noted in section D.2. below.) Fixed-amount grant applicants are not required to indicate that amount in the application and request those positions as “without living allowance” in the budget.

Table 1: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum #	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1700	\$12,100	\$24,200
One-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	\$4,260

2. Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements (for programs existing prior to September 21, 1993)

If a program existed prior to September 21, 1993, a living allowance is not required. 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 are not required to provide a living allowance, but if a living allowance is provided, it must comply with the maximum requirements set forth in the Living Allowance Table above.

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

3. Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

Maximum Costs per MSY are set forth in Table 2 below. CNCS considers comparative costs per MSY in making funding decisions. New applicants that submit with a low cost per MSY and re-competing applicants that submit with a lower cost per MSY than previously funded may receive higher priority for funding. 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 childcare 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: 2013 Maximum Cost per MSY

Grant Program	Maximum
Individual Competitive State Program (cost reimbursement)	\$13,300
Professional Corps Grant (Cost Reimbursement)	\$2,000
Professional Corps Fixed-amount Grant	\$2,000
Education Award Program Fixed-amount Grant	\$800
Full time Fixed-amount Grant	\$13,000

4. 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 recompetete processes. Continuation and recompetete Grantees that have not achieved full enrollment in the previous year must provide an explanation and a corrective action plan in their application. Successful applicants that do not fully enroll are likely to receive a decrease in funding in subsequent years.

5. 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 recompetete processes. Successful applicants that do not retain their 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 recompetete Grantees that have not achieved full retention in the most recently completed program year must provide an explanation and a corrective action plan in their application.

6. Amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award for FY 2014

AmeriCorps members serving in programs funded with FY 2014 dollars who successfully complete a term of service will receive an Education Award from the National Service Trust of \$5,645 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 his or her term of service to use the Education Award.

Table 3: Term of Service and FY14 Education Award

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	FY13 Education Award
Full Time	1700	\$5,645
One-Year Half Time	90	\$2,822
Reduced Half Time	67	\$2,150
Quarter Time	45	\$1,493
Minimum Time	30	\$1,195

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. How to Apply

Organizations that propose to operate in Montana apply directly to the Governor's Office of Community Service. Organizations that propose to operate in more than one state apply directly to CNCS.

This *Notice* should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550, the Application Instructions, and the Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. The Notice and Application Instructions can be found at http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp. The full regulations are available online at www.ecfr.gov. The TTY number is 800-833-3722. For a printed copy of related material, call 202-606-7508.

1. Notice of Intent to Apply (Required for application submission)

Applicants are **REQUIRED** to send a Notice of Intent to Apply by **Wednesday, October 16, 2013**. Letters should be sent by e-mail to serve@mt.gov. **Failure to submit a Notice of Intent to Apply will render an applicant ineligible to apply.** All Notices of Intent to Apply will receive an email response acknowledging receipt. With the letter of intent to apply new applicants are also required to submit the completed Readiness Self-Assessment, and a copy of the applying organizations most recent audit (if available).

The Notice of Intent to Apply and Readiness Self-Assessment are attached at the end of this RFP.

2. Submission Dates and Times

The deadline for applications is 12:00 p.m. Mountain Standard Time on Tuesday November 12, 2013. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered, except when noted below. OCS reserves the right to extend the submission deadline and any notice. This deadline applies to continuation Grantees, as well as new and re-competing applicants. Additionally applicants will be required to submit an Organizational Chart, Logic Model Chart and Letters of Commitment at this due date.

3. Late Applications

OCS may, at its discretion, consider an application received after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter to serve@mt.gov explaining the extenuating circumstance that caused the delay. The letter must be received no later than the application deadline. If the applicant experiences technical difficulties with eGrants that are unresolved, the correspondence must include the eGrants help desk ticket number. OCS will determine whether or not to accept a late application on a case-by-case basis.

Content and Form of Application Submission

1. Submitting in eGrants

Applicants must submit their applications electronically via the CNCS web-based system, [eGrants](#). Because it is a unique system, it is recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the eGrants application creation process at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline. Please note the length of a document in your word processing software likely will be different than what will appear in eGrants. See more details under 2 Page Limits.

Contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask> if a

problem arises while creating an account or while preparing or submitting an application in eGrants. National Service Hotline hours are Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the *Notice* to which your organization is applying.

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

An application is only complete if it includes all required documentation and is received by the application due date. Incomplete applications will not be considered. All additional required documents that are not possible to attach in eGrants are due by the application deadline. See below for a list of required documentation. All documents should be attached to an email and sent to [serve.mt.gov](mailto:serve@mt.gov).

Required Additional Documents:

- Logic Model Worksheet (See section 2.b.)
- Organizational Chart (See section 3.a.)
- Letters of Commitment from most significant community partners (See section 3.a.)

2. Page Limits

In eGrants, applicants will enter text in the following fields

- Executive Summary
- Program Design
- Organizational Capability
- Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
- Evaluation Plan

Applications may not exceed 15 pages for the Narratives, including the Executive Summary and SF 424 Facesheet, as the pages print out from eGrants. CNCS strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the "Review and Submit" page prior to submitting it to check that the application does not exceed the page limit. This limit does not include the budget, performance measures, evaluation plan or required supplementary materials (e.g., letters of commitment, organizational chart, logic model worksheet).

Reviewers will not consider submitted material that is over the page limit, even if eGrants allows an applicant to enter and submit text over the limit. Do not submit non-required supplemental materials such as videos, DVDs, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested in the *Notice* or application instructions. CNCS will not review or return them.

C. Funding Restrictions

Grants under this program, except for full-time fixed-amount and EAP grants, are subject to the applicable Cost Principles under OMB Circulars 2 CFR Part 220 (formerly A-21), 2 CFR Part 230 (formerly A-122), or 2 CFR Part 225 (formerly A-87) and the Uniform Administrative Requirements for grants under A-102 (45 CFR Part 2541) or A-110 (45 CFR 2543 or 2 CFR Part 215).

D. Growing Private Sector Partnerships

Applicants wishing to make information from their application available to potential private sector funders can opt in during the application process. Such applicants may be asked to provide information in different formats at a future date.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Assessment Criteria

Each applicant must clearly describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to solve a significant community problem. We urge your organization to submit a high quality application carefully following the guidance in the *Notice* and in the Application Instructions. The quality of your application will be an important factor in determining whether your organization will receive funding. Your application will be assessed as follows:

Threshold issues

Applications should reflect that they meet the threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying. A few examples follow. If an applicant wants a grant for a Professional Corps, its application should demonstrate that the community, in which it will place professionals, has an inadequate number of said professionals. If an applicant wants a fixed amount grant, its application should reflect that only full-time or less than full-time positions serving in a full time capacity will be permitted.

B. Assessment of New and Recompeting Applicants

1. Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the executive summary.

The [Name of the organization] will have [Number of] AmeriCorps members who will [what the members will be doing] in [the locations the AmeriCorps members will be]. At the end of the 1st program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional [number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable] that will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing.]

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

Fixed-amount grant applicants should list their leveraged resources as they are not required to match.

CNCS will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on www.nationalservice.gov in the interest of transparency and Open Government.

2. Rationale and Approach/Program Design (50 percent)

In assessing how you will meet the criteria, reviewers will consider the quality of your response to the following:

a. Problem/Need (9 points)

Describe the community needs the AmeriCorps members will be addressing. Provide information about the

extent/severity of the need in the community(ies) where your proposed AmeriCorps members will serve and cite specific relevant data such as unemployment rate as well as the poverty rate.

b. AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed and Measurable Community Impact (25 points)

Please complete and submit by the application deadline the Logic Model chart (Attached). This chart should be e-mailed to [serve.mt.gov](mailto:serve@mt.gov) at the application due date.

Theory of Change and Logic Model (17 points)

Applicants will be awarded up to 17 points for providing a detailed theory of change (logic model) using the Logic Model Worksheet (see appendix). Logic model (also referred to as theory of change) means a well-specified conceptual framework that identifies key components of the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice (i.e., the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the relationships among the key components and outcomes, theoretically and operationally.

Points will be awarded based on clarity and completeness of the logic model. The logic model shall depict:

- Number of locations or sites in which members are providing direct services
- Number of AmeriCorps members that will be delivering the intervention or program model
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will be implementing or delivering
- The duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention)
- The dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)
- The target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level)
- The indicators and data collection tools that will be used to measure and track program outcomes

In addition to completing the Logic Model worksheet, describe how the intervention is designed to address the problem described in the previous section and what evidence there is to support that the intervention will lead to the outcomes identified in the theory of change. Why should CNCS invest in this project?

Applicants that selected Tier 1 or Tier 2: CNCS’ expectation is that at least 30 percent of your MSYs are in the complementary program measures or priority measures above. If that is not the case, please explain in the narrative why it was not possible to meet the 30% threshold.

Evidence Base (8 points)

Applicants will be awarded up to 8 points for providing evidence that their proposed intervention will lead to the outcomes identified in the theory of change (logic model). In this section, applicants shall provide a description of the studies and evaluations conducted that provide evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the proposed population and community challenge. This section shall include specific citations of studies and/or publicly available evaluation and research reports. In this section, the applicant should indicate whether the body of evidence suggests that their intervention is evidence-informed or evidence-based based on the definition below. Points will be awarded based on:

- 1) the amount of evidence;
- 2) the quality of evidence based on the study design;

- 3) the degree of match between the program model evaluated in the studies and the one proposed by the applicant; and
- 4) meeting the criteria for evidence-informed or evidence-based, with higher points going towards evidence-based programs.

Evidence informed means that:

a) there is at least one study that is a correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; quasi-experimental study that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations (See http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/reference_resources/wwc_procedures_v2_1_standards_handbook.pdf); or randomized controlled trial that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with or without reservations and

b) The study referenced in paragraph (a) found a statistically significant or substantively important (defined as a difference of 0.25 standard deviations or larger), favorable association between at least one critical component and one relevant outcome presented in the logic model for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice.

Quasi-experimental study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental design by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. These studies, depending on design and implementation, can meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations (they cannot meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations).

Randomized controlled trial means a study that employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, schools, or districts to receive the intervention being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the intervention (the control group). The estimated effectiveness of the intervention is the difference between the average outcome for the treatment group and for the control group. These studies, depending on design and implementation, can meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

Evidence-based: Means evidence from previous studies whose designs can support causal conclusions (i.e., studies with high internal validity), and studies that in total include enough of the range of participants and settings (i.e., studies with high external validity). This is defined as:

- (1) more than one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study or well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study that supports the effectiveness of the practice, strategy, or program; or
- (2) one large, well-designed and well-implemented randomized controlled, multisite trial that supports the effectiveness of the practice, strategy, or program.

c. Member Training (8 points)

What are the anticipated training topics and the timeline for member training? How and when will the applicant ensure that members and generated volunteers are aware of and are adhering to the rules regarding prohibited activities?

d. Member Supervision (8 points)

Describe the plan for supervising members that ensures they will receive adequate support and guidance.

e. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification (Required - 0 points)

How will the program participants know they are AmeriCorps members? How will the communities in which they serve know they are AmeriCorps members? How will the applicant's program ensure that its participants will wear the AmeriCorps logo daily? How will the applicant ensure participants are prepared to speak about their AmeriCorps experience to members of the community?

3. Organizational Capability (25 percent)

In assessing how the applicant will meet the criteria, reviewers will consider the quality of your response to the following:

a. Organizational Background and Staffing (7 points/10 points for new applicants) Describe how the organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program. Describe the applicant organization's prior experience administering AmeriCorps grants or other federal funds. Please email an organizational chart to serve@mt.gov.

As documentation of community support and commitment to the program, please submit letters from the applicant's most significant community partners. The letters should include what the partners see as the benefit to the community provided by the applicant's AmeriCorps members and what activities would not happen without the AmeriCorps members. Please email them to serve@mt.gov.

b. Compliance and Accountability (11 points/15 points for new applicants)

How will the applicant's organization ensure compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited activities at the Grantee, subgrantee, and service site locations (if applicable)? How will the applicant's organization prevent and detect compliance issues? How will the applicant's organization hold itself, subgrantees, and service site locations (if applicable) accountable if instances of risk or noncompliance are identified?

c. Past Performance For Current Grantees and Former Grantees Only (7 points for recompeting applicants and formula Grantees)

Describe the applicant's performance against performance measure targets during its last three years of program operations. How successful has the applicant been in solving the identified problem? If the applicant did not meet performance targets, provide an explanation and describe the plan for improvement.

Describe any compliance issues and areas of weakness/risk identified during the last full year of program operation at your organization, your subgrantees (if applicable), and service site locations (if applicable). If the applicant, its subgrantees, and/or service site locations had compliance or areas of weakness/risk identified, provide an explanation and describe the corrective action taken and your plan for improvement.

Enrollment: If the program enrolled less than 100% of the slots received during its last full year of program operation, provide an explanation, and describe the plan for improvement. Enrollment rate is calculated as slots filled, plus refill slots filled, divided by slots awarded.

Retention: If the applicant was not able to retain all of its members during the last full year of program operation, provide an explanation, and describe the plan for improvement. While retention rates may vary among effective programs depending on the program model, the expectation is that Grantees to pursue the

highest retention rate possible. Retention rate is calculated as the number of members exited with award (full or partial award) divided by the number of members enrolled.

d. Continuous Improvement (0 points)

Describe the plans for soliciting timely and regular feedback from internal and external stakeholders to inform continuous improvement efforts. Describe the plans for using data to inform continuous improvement.

4. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

In assessing how the applicant will meet the criteria, reviewers will consider the quality of your response to the following:

For Cost-Reimbursement grants:

a. Cost Effectiveness (13 points) Cost per MSY

Cost effectiveness will be evaluated by analyzing cost per MSY in relation to your program design. Having a low cost per member is a competitive advantage. New applicants that submit with a low cost per MSY and re-competing applicants that submit with a lower cost per MSY than previously funded may receive higher priority for funding. If the applicant requests above the maximum, it must justify your request. Please note that such requests are rarely approved.

All re-competing and continuation Grantees requesting a higher cost per MSY than in the previous year must include a compelling rationale for this increased cost including why this increase could not be covered by grantee share. **This applies even if the increased cost per MSY is less than the maximum or if the increase is due to increased costs associated with the grant.**

For Cost Reimbursement and Full-time Fixed Grants

Discuss how the program is a cost effective approach for addressing the community need(s) identified in the application. Consider the total costs and benefits of the program and, to the extent possible, document the costs and benefits. Compare the cost effectiveness of the program with the costs and benefits of alternative models or approaches (if available), and demonstrate how your program model is most cost effective. Applicants with a program design that achieves equal results at a lower cost will be advantaged over programs that achieve similar results at a higher cost.

For Fixed Amount grants (Full-time and EAP):

Discuss how the applicant will raise the additional resources it will need to manage and operate an AmeriCorps program beyond the fixed amount. Identify the total amount the applicant has budgeted to operate the program, including the fixed-amount from the CNCS and Grantee share and how your program determined that amount. Keep in mind that full-time AmeriCorps program costs include expenditures for the AmeriCorps living allowance, health care, and criminal history checks. Education Award Programs are not required to pay living allowances or cover health care for members, but must conduct criminal history checks.

b. Budget Adequacy (12 points)

Applicants must fill out the budget and complete the budget narrative in eGrants and provide the following information in the application narrative:

- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project.

- Discuss the adequacy of the budget to support the program design and objectives.
- Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments (in-kind, and cash) secured to date and the sources of these commitments.
- Describe plans for securing additional resource commitments, potential sources, and timeline.

When considering the above information, reviewers will assess the quality of the application based on the following factors:

- The extent to which the budget is clear.
- The extent to which the budget includes sufficient resources to carry out the program effectively.
- The extent to which the program will obtain financial and in-kind resources to support program implementation.
- Whether an applicant adequately budgeted for its required share of costs.

5. Evaluation Summary or Plan (Required for recompeting grantees - 0 percent)

If the applicant is competing for the first time, please enter N/A in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field since it pertains only to recompeting Grantees. If the applicant is recompeting for AmeriCorps funds for the first time the program must submit your evaluation plan, the Evaluation Summary, or Plan field in eGrants. If the applicant is recompeting for a subsequent time, the program must submit your evaluation report according to the instructions in V. E., below as well as an evaluation plan for the next three-year period.

Evaluation plans must include the following:

- A description of the intervention or program to be implemented by members. The description must include a theory of change and a clear statement of the outcomes anticipated.
- A description of the program evaluation design including research questions, research methodology and the outcomes that will be measured.
- A description of the data collection procedures including the types and sources of data, the population or sample, and a data analysis plan. The organization's data management system should be addressed if it will be used to collect data for the evaluation.
- A description of how the evaluation results, both interim and final, will be used.

The evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of your grant, as described in 45 CFR § 2522.710:

- If you are a State and/or National Grantee (other than an Education Award Program grantee), and your average annual CNCS program grant is \$500,000 or more, you must arrange for an external evaluation of your program, and you must submit the evaluation with any
- Subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in §2522.730 of this subpart.
- If you are a State and/or National Grantee whose average annual CNCS program grant is less than \$500,000, or an Education Award Program Grantee, you must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of your program, and you must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in §2522.730 of this subpart.

A formula program will be considered a recompeting application, if it satisfies the CNCS definition of "same project," below, and has been funded in formula for at least one three-year cycle. If the project satisfies the

definition of same project, and the applicant has completed one three-year cycle, you will be required to submit an evaluation plan. If the project does not satisfy the definition, it will be considered new and will not be required to submit an evaluation plan, summary, or completed evaluation.

Two projects will be considered the same if they:

- Address the same issue areas
- Address the same priorities
- Address the same objectives
- Serve the same target communities and population
- Utilize the same sites
- Use the same program staff and members

Programs that have previously received AmeriCorps funding need approval to be considered a new project.

6. Amendment Justification (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used if you are awarded a grant and need to amend it.

7. Clarification Information (0 percent)

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

8. Continuation Changes (0 percent)

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

C. Assessment of Continuation Applications

For each continuation application staff will complete an assessment document that will provide reviewers with critical information about the performance of the grantee. Reviewers will provide each continuation applicant with feedback on the narrative and budget, but will only score the application based on the information provided in the staff assessment document. The Staff Assessment document is available at <http://serve.mt.gov/funding>. The following are the scoring areas included on the staff assessment document:

1. Budget, Match and Cost Per MSY(10 Points)

Staff will provide reviewers with information pertaining to the program’s performance in relation to their budget. This information will include spending as compared to their budget, ability to meet budgeted match and the programs cost per MSY as compared to previous operating periods.

2. Compliance Findings (10 Points)

Staff will describe any compliance issues and areas of weakness/risk identified during the last full year of program operation at your organization, your subgrantees (if applicable), and service site locations (if applicable). If the applicant, its subgrantees, and/or service site locations had compliance or areas of weakness/risk identified, provide an explanation and describe the corrective action taken and your plan for improvement.

3. Member enrollment (10 Points)

If the program enrolled less than 100% of the slots received during its last full year of program operation the program should provide an explanation and describe the plan for improvement in the continuation narrative. Enrollment rate is calculated as slots filled, plus refill slots filled, divided by slots awarded.

4. Member retention (10 Points)

If the applicant was not able to retain all of its members during the last full year of program operation, the program should provide an explanation and describe the plan for improvement in the continuation narrative. While retention rates may vary among effective programs depending on the program model, the expectation is that Grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible. Retention rate is calculated as the number of members exited with award (full or partial award) divided by the number of members enrolled.

5. Performance measure progress versus stated goals (10 Points)

Staff will scribe the applicant's performance against performance measure targets during its last year of program operations. How successful has the applicant been in solving the identified problem? If the applicant did not meet performance targets, provide an explanation and describe the plan for improvement.

D. Goals of the review and selection process

1. Identify eligible applications that satisfy the following considerations:

- High alignment with criteria.
- Priorities, in the order of Tier preference outlined in Section I.E., above.
- Relative risk and opportunity.

2. Consider:

- Recruitment and deployment of community volunteers to leverage impact
- State Commission rank and recommendations on single-state applicants
- The strength of the need and evidence base for the program

3. Yield a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:

- Geographic representation.
- Meaningful representation of
 - Rural and urban communities
 - Small and large programs
 - Single and multi-state programs
 - Faith-and community-based organizations
- Focus area representation
- Organizations and/or program models that build capacity for individuals, nonprofits and communities to solve problems
- Organizations and/or program models that recruit and engage traditionally underrepresented populations as AmeriCorps members and expand opportunities to serve as AmeriCorps members, particularly for new Americans, low-income individuals, "Opportunity Youth-- the one in six young

people (ages 16-24) who are disconnected from school or work”, rural residents, older Americans, veterans, communities of color, Native Americans, and people with disabilities

- Organizations that embrace innovative approaches to solving problems, including service-learning

Applicants must check the relevant boxes in the Performance Measure tab in eGrants in order to be considered for assessment of the above strategic considerations. Applicants should only check the boxes if the strategic consideration is an intentional part of their program design and they have implementation strategies.

E. Stages in the review and selection process

State Level Review

Applicants submitting proposals to serve the state of Montana only will first be subject to review at the state commission level. The purpose of the state level review is to determine the rank of applications and which proposals will be forwarded to the CNCS to continue the review process. **Not all applications submitted to the commission will necessarily be selected to continue the review process.** The state review process will consist of:

- a) A review by commission staff for general compliance pertaining to state and federal regulations as well as responsibility to the request for proposal.
- b) Applications passing staff review will next be reviewed by a grant review committee made up of members of the Montana Commission on Community Service (Commission) as well as an outside reviewer. The grant review committee will score applications and make ranking recommendations to the full Commission.
- c) Grant review committee rankings will be submitted to the Commission for approval. The vote of the Commission will determine which proposals will continue the review process by being submitted to CNCS.
- d) After revisions, proposals will be submitted to CNCS to continue the review process.

CNCS Review

1. Compliance Review

CNCS staff will review all applications to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completeness requirements. In order to be compliant and advance to External Review, an applicant must satisfy all the following requirements:

- Submit a Notice of Intent to Apply by the deadline: October 16, 2013 (see Section IV.A.1)
- Submit an application by the application submission deadline: November 12, 2013 at 12:00 p.m. (see Section IV.A.2)
- Submit an application that is complete, in that it contains all required elements and additional documents via e-mail and follows the instructions provided in this *Notice*.

2. External Review

External reviewers will assess applications based on the Rationale and Approach/Program Design and Past Performance criteria. Each application will be reviewed by at least three external reviewers. External reviewers will be recruited and selected on the basis of demonstrated knowledge of AmeriCorps programming, and/or the selection criteria and focus areas. All external reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest. Submitted program evaluations will be considered at this stage.

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 to assess:

- 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.

4. Selection of Applications for 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 outlined in Section I.B. above and the strategic considerations identified in Section V.B.3. above. Strategic Consideration will be given based on the check boxes selected by the applicant in the “Grant Characteristics” section of the Performance Measures tab in eGrants. Those applications that do not advance to internal review will not be recommended for funding.

5. Internal Review

CNCS staff will assess Program Design, particularly focusing on the theory of change and evidence-basis for the proposed solution(s) to the identified community problem(s), appropriateness of AmeriCorps service as a solution, and potential quality of the member experience; Organizational Capability; and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

Following staff assessment, some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information and/or make changes to their application including the budget. This information is used by CNCS staff in making final recommendations. Applications may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked clarification questions. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to requests for additional 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 their assessment of the applicants that move from External Review and Quality Control into Internal Review, and Clarification in light of CNCS’ Tier priorities and strategic considerations.

6. Risk Assessment Evaluation

CNCS staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds. This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant’s eligibility or the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If CNCS determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. In evaluating risks, CNCS may consider the following:

- Financial stability;

- Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance;
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant’s record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
 - Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements, and
 - If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards;
- Information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
 - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS),
 - Duns and Bradstreet, or
 - “Do Not Pay”;
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under OMB Circular A-133 and findings of any other available audits;
- IRS Tax Form 990;
- An applicant organization's annual report;
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website; and
- The applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

7. Selection for Funding

With the goal of a diversified portfolio based on the NOFO priorities and strategic considerations, the Chief Executive Officer will select the final portfolio based on staff recommendation from the applicants that advanced to Internal Review.

8. Feedback to Applicants

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.

CNCS is committed to transparency in grant making. The following information pertaining to this competition for new and recompetete applications will be published on the CNCS website (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open-government-initiative/transparency/results-grants-competition>), within 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

- A blank template of external review form.
- A list of all compliant applications submitted.
- Executive summaries of all compliant applications submitted by the applicants as part of the application.
- Standard Form 424 Face Sheet (SF424) and Program Narrative submitted by applicants for successful applications.
- Summaries of external reviewer’s comments for successful applications.
- A list of external reviewers who completed the review process.

F. Continuation Expansion Requests

Requests for continuation expansions will be assessed using the same criteria as the new and recompetete

applications and whether the applicant has lowered its cost per MSY.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION A. Award Notice

CNCS will award grants following the grant selection announcement. We anticipate announcing the results of this competition around April 18, 2014, dependent on the availability of appropriations.

B. Documents that 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. Project/Award Period

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

Unless otherwise specified, the grant generally 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. In most cases, the application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding is not guaranteed. Factors considered in awarding continuation grants include satisfactory performance, demonstrated capacity to manage the grant, compliance with grant requirements, agency priorities, and the availability of appropriated funds. CNCS reserves the right to adjust the amount of a grant or elect not to continue funding for subsequent years.

D. Use of Material

To ensure that materials generated with CNCS funding are available to the public and readily accessible to Grantees and non-Grantees, CNCS reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so. 45 CFR § 2543.36; 2541.30

E. Reporting Requirements

Cost reimbursement Grantees are required to provide mid-year and end of year progress reports, semi-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.

Fixed-amount Grantees are required to provide mid-year and end of year progress reports and an internal or external evaluation report. All grantees provide quarterly expense reports through the Payment Management System at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

While applications will not be evaluated on these criteria, Grantees will be expected to have data collection and data management policies and practices that provide reasonable assurance that they are providing CNCS with high quality performance measure data. At a minimum, Grantees should have policies and practices which address the following five aspects of data quality:

- The data measures what it intends to measure;
- The Grantee collects data in a consistent manner;
- The Grantee takes steps to correct data errors;

- The Grantee ensures that the data reported is complete; and
- The Grantee actively reviews data prior to submission.

F. Re-Focusing of Funding

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

VII. AGENCY CONTACT

This *Notice* is available at <http://serve.mt.gov>. For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice*, call (406) 444-5547. 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:

Governors Office of Community Service
ATT: Grants Manager
PO Box 2008101
Helena, MT 59620

DEFINITIONS

New applicants are those that have never had AmeriCorps State and/or National funding before. Current and former formula Grantees are not new.

Recompete applicants are those that have received AmeriCorps State and/or National funding before and are in Year 3 of their grant cycle and are applying for continued funding for the program for another three years.

Continuation applicants are those that are in their first or second year of a funding cycle.

Previous applicants are those that have been funded through state formula grants and/or were unsuccessful recompute applicants in previous years.

Cost Reimbursement Grants fund a portion of program operating costs and member living allowances with flexibility to use all of the funds for allowable costs regardless of whether or not the program recruits and retains all AmeriCorps members. Cost reimbursement grants include a formal matching requirement.

Full-time Fixed Amount / Less than FT serving in a full time capacity Grants (Non-EAP) These fixed amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members or less than full-time members that are serving in a full time capacity only, including Professional Corps. These grants provide a fixed amount of funding per Member Service Year (MSY) that is substantially lower than the amount required to operate the program. Organizations use their own or other resources to cover the remaining cost. Programs are not required to submit budgets or financial reports, there is no specific match requirement, and programs are not required to track and maintain documentation of match. However, CNCS provides only a portion of the cost of running the program and organizations must still raise the additional resources needed to run the program. Programs can access all of the funds, provided they recruit and retain the members supported under the grant based on the MSY level awarded.

Fixed-amount grants are only available to re-competing programs. Second and third-year continuation applicants with cost reimbursement grants must submit a new application if they are interested in applying for a fixed amount grant. New applicants are NOT eligible to apply for fixed amount grants.

Full-time fixed amount applicants in the Education Focus Area are required to select either a Priority Education Measure or Complementary Program Measure. Applicants proposing non- Education programs may select from Tiers 1-5.

Education Award Fixed Amount Grants (EAP) Programs apply for a small fixed amount per MSY, can enroll less than full-time members, and use their own resources to cover all other costs. Programs can access funds under the grant based on enrolling the full complement of members supported under the grant. As with full-time fixed amount grants, there are no specific match or financial reporting requirements.

Fixed-amount grants are only available to re-competing programs. Second and third-year continuation applicants with cost reimbursement grants must submit a new application if they are interested in applying for a fixed amount grant. New applicants are NOT eligible to apply for these grants.

One **Member Service Year** (MSY) is equivalent to a full-time AmeriCorps position (at least 1700 service hours.)

Evidence informed means that:

- a) there is at least one study that is a correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; quasi-experimental study that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations (See http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/reference_resources/wwc_procedures_v2_1_standards_handbook.pdf); or randomized controlled trial that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with or without reservations and
- b) The study referenced in paragraph (a) found a statistically significant or substantively important (defined as a difference of 0.25 standard deviations or larger), favorable association between at least one critical component and one relevant outcome presented in the logic model for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice.

Quasi-experimental study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental design by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. These studies, depending on design and implementation, can meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations (they cannot meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations). Randomized controlled trial means a study that employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, schools, or districts to receive the intervention being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the intervention (the control group). The estimated effectiveness of the intervention is the difference between the average outcome for the treatment group and for the control group. These studies, depending on design and implementation, can meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

Evidence-based: Means evidence from previous studies whose designs can support causal conclusions (i.e., studies with high internal validity), and studies that in total include enough of the range of participants and settings (i.e., studies with high external validity). This is defined as:

- (1) more than one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study or well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study that supports the effectiveness of the practice, strategy, or program; or
- (2) one large, well-designed and well-implemented randomized controlled, multisite trial that supports the effectiveness of the practice, strategy, or program.

Additional Documents

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Tier 1: Priority Measures in Disaster Services, Education and Veterans and Military Families and Complementary Program Measures in Economic Opportunity

Economic Opportunity
O1: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving financial literacy services
O9: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals with improved financial knowledge
O2: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving job training and other skill development services
O3: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals receiving job placement services
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*
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*
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*
O17: Number of National Service Participants that complete a college course within one year after finishing a CNCS-supported program*
Disaster Services
D1: Number of individuals that received CNCS-supported services in disaster preparedness
D2: Number of individuals that received CNCS-supported services in disaster response
D3: Number of individuals that received CNCS-supported services in disaster recovery
D4: Number of individuals that received CNCS-supported services in disaster mitigation
Veterans and Military Families
V1: Number of veterans that received CNCS-supported assistance
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
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.

*Programs that select O12, O14, O15, O17 must also select an additional priority or complementary program measure from Tier 1, 2, or 3 that measures community impact.

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

Education – operating less than 100% in School Improvement Grant(SIG)/DOE Priority Schools and other non SIG/Priority Schools
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
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
Economic Opportunity¹
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 Stewardship²
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 Futures³
H8: Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food, transportation, or other services that allow them to live independently
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
H12: Number of individuals that reported increased food security of themselves and their children (household food security) as a result of CNCS-supported services
Capacity Building
G3-3.1: Number of community volunteers recruited by CNCS-supported organizations or National Service Participants
G3-3.2: Number of community volunteers managed by CNCS-supported organizations or National Service Participants
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

¹The following Economic Opportunity measures may also be used to report on your program’s performance in providing services in the Disaster Services focus area,

² The following Environmental Stewardship measures may also be used to report on your program’s performance in providing services in the Disaster Services focus area,

³ The following Healthy Futures measures may also be used to report on your program’s performance in providing services in the Disaster Services focus area,

Tier 3: Complementary Program 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
O4: Number of housing units developed, repaired, or otherwise made available for low-income individuals, families or people with disabilities
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
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
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
G3-3.4 Number of organizations that received capacity building services from CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants
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
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
G3-3.7: Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were recruited by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants
G3-3.8: Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were managed by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants
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
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
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
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
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

Capacity Building, cont.

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

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

G3-3.16: Dollar value of cash resources leveraged by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants

G3-3.17: Dollar value of in-kind resources leveraged by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants

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

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

Logic Model Chart

Project Resources	Core Project Components	Evidence of Project Implementation and Participation	Evidence of Change		
INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	Outcomes		
			Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
What we invest (#and type of AmeriCorps members)	What we do	Direct products from program activities	Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, opinions	Changes in behavior or action that result from participants' new knowledge	Meaningful changes, often in their condition or status in life

Readiness Self-Assessment (New Applicants)

Montana Commission on Community Service 2014 AmeriCorps 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 area of education?

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.

Does your plan 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

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?
 Yes No Unsure

Has your organization been audited by a Certified Public Accounting firm within the past two years?
 Yes No

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

Strategic Planning:

9. Does your organization have a 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. Does the organization conduct regular assessment of internal operations to assess efficiency and effectiveness?

Yes No Unsure

Financial Management:

14. Do you have a "job cost" or "fund based" accounting system?

Yes No Current system used: _____

15. 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

16. Is your organization's accounting system manual, automated, or a combination?

Manual Automated Combination

17. Are entries posted to the general ledger?

Daily Weekly Monthly

Unsure Other (Please describe): _____

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

Yes No Unsure

19. Does your accounting system allow cash basis reporting and for the recording of "in-kind" contributions?
 Yes No Unsure
20. Does the organization have a development/fundraising plan in place?
 Yes No Unsure
21. Does the organization have plans to secure the financial and in-kind resources to meet required matches?
 Yes No Unsure
22. Is your organization familiar with federal cost principles?
 Yes No Unsure
23. 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:

24. Does every key staff member have access to a computer with up-to-date software, internet access, and e-mail capabilities?
 Yes No Unsure
25. Is all staff able to find and use resources posted online?
 Yes No Unsure

Human Resources:

26. 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
27. Does your organization provide staff and volunteers with written job descriptions and the necessary resources to carry out duties appropriately?
 Yes No Unsure
28. 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
29. Does the organization provide relevant and regular training for staff and board members?
 Yes No Unsure
30. Are employee performance appraisals conducted on a consistent and fair basis?
 Yes No Unsure
31. Does your organization have a well-planned process to recruit, develop, and retain volunteers?
 Yes No Unsure

Internal Controls:

32. Are the duties of the bookkeeper and record keeper separate from cash functions (receipts, deposits, check signing/releasing)?
 Yes No Unsure

33. Are checks signed by individual(s) whose duties exclude recording cash received, approving vouchers for payment, and the preparation of payroll?
 Yes No Unsure

34. Are purchase approval methods documented and communicated?
 Yes No Unsure

35. Are employee payroll reports supported by appropriately signed documentation (timesheets, leave slips, etc.)?
 Yes No Unsure

36. Are employees who handle funds bonded against loss by reasons of fraud or dishonesty?
 Yes No Unsure

Organizational Needs Assessment and Implementation:

37. Does your organization conduct regular community needs assessments?
 Yes No Date Last Conducted: _____

38. Does your organization analyze and use the results of needs assessments to chart change?
 Yes No Unsure

39. Are your organization's programs and services well defined?
 Yes No Unsure

Measuring Performance and Continual Improvement of Programs:

40. 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

41. Does your organization conduct regular community assessments of existing programs' effectiveness in meeting recipient needs and identify areas for improvement?
 Yes No Unsure

42. Does your organization collect data to measure performance and progress on a continual basis?
 Yes No Unsure

43. 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:

44. Does your organization participate in partnerships with other groups?
 Yes No Unsure

45. 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 electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST October 16, 2013** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant.

Letter of Intent

Montana Commission on Community Service
2014 AmeriCorps Competitive Grant Application

Name of Applicant Organization:

Contact Person:

Organization Address:

City/State/Zip:

Telephone:

E-mail Address:

Organization Mission Statement:

Proposed Program Title:

Type of Grant Applying for: (Cost-Reimbursement, Fixed Amount, EAP, Professional Corps)

Proposed Program CNCS Focus Area(s):

Submit electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST October 16th, 2013** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-5547 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.

Cover Letter

Montana Commission on Community Service
2014 AmeriCorps Competitive Grant Application

Name of Applicant Organization:

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

Organization Address:

City/State/Zip:

Telephone:

E-mail Address:

Program Title:

Executive Summary:

Program CNCS Focus Area(s):

CNCS Funds Requested:

Members Requested:

Total Project Budget (funds requested + match):

Contact Person:

Submit electronically to the Governor's Office of Community Service at serve@mt.gov by **Noon MST November 12, 2013** to be considered for an AmeriCorps Grant. *Note: If you do not receive an email confirming receipt within 24 hours please call 406-444-5547 to confirm the information was received.*

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