FFY2027 Montana AmeriCorps State Competitive Program Grant

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)

This Notice outlines the process for applying for an AmeriCorps State grant, funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) doing business as AmeriCorps, administered and overseen by the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service (GOCS aka ServeMontana). The level and timing of grant funding is subject to annual appropriations. GOCS reserves the right to modify any component of this Notice anytime.

Assistance Listing Number: 94.006

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
This Notice is the first in a multistep process an applicant must complete to apply for and receive AmeriCorps State Competitive funding. ServeMontana's role is to solicit, screen, and rank applications. This process is only for ranking; no funding will be awarded from this solicitation. All applications cleared through screening will be ranked and submitted to compete nationally for funding. This Notice should be read together with AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §2520–2550, Mandatory Supplemental Information, Application Instructions, and Performance Measure Instructions, see Associated Documents.

Governor's Office of Community Service aka ServeMontana
Established in 1993, Montana's Commission on Community Service administers grants under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, amended by the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act of 2009 and the Montana Community Service Act of 1994 (MCA 90-14-103). In partnership with the Montana Commission on Community Service, a primary function of the Governor's Office of Community Service (GOCS) is administering funds to AmeriCorps State programs.

Expectations of All Applicants
- ✓ Address rural, Tribal, underserved, or areas of poverty not currently served by AmeriCorps programs;
- ✓ Clearly connect proposed activities to the needs and priorities in the Montana State Service Plan;
- ✓ Take a collaborative approach to program planning, design, and delivery;
- ✓ Recruit Montanans to serve in their local community; and
- ✓ Design and deliver an inclusive program that is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding
AmeriCorps improves lives, strengthens communities, fosters civic engagement, and brings people together to tackle pressing needs through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps Volunteers serve with organizations dedicated to improving communities and the lives of those serving. AmeriCorps Grants are awarded to eligible organizations to engage AmeriCorps Volunteers in evidence based or informed interventions to strengthen communities. AmeriCorps Volunteers are individuals who engage in service through an approved national service position. Volunteers may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving and are *not* employees. Upon successful completion of service, Volunteers earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust.

Who Should Apply to This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)?

Organizations continuing a competitively funded program or proposing an AmeriCorps State program that operates only in Montana must apply to this competition. ServeMontana will engage a Grant Review Workgroup to review and score grants, and select applicants recommended for funding. Funding recommendations are presented to the Montana Commission on Community Service for approval. Applicants that receive funding through this Notice are overseen by ServeMontana.

Tribes and Tribal organizations may apply through this Notice or may apply directly to AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps may award a Cost Reimbursement or an Education Award Program grant to any successful applicant, but a Fixed Cost grant is limited to certain applicants (See Application Types).

Organizations that have never had an AmeriCorps grant or have not had one in more than 2 years, please consider the Montana AmeriCorps Formula grant opportunity. Organizations that are unsure if AmeriCorps State resources are well-suited to meet identified needs should contact ServeMontana for consultation.

Organizations proposing an AmeriCorps program that operates in more than one state or territory must apply directly to AmeriCorps and must consult with State Service Commissions, such as ServeMontana. ServeMontana's National Direct Consultation page outlines the consultation process. Failure to consult will likely result in a 'do not support' recommendation to AmeriCorps.

Montana AmeriCorps State Process and Screening

Organizations applying to this Notice must meet the intent of all the requirements listed in this packet. GOCS staff will determine if the applicant's proposal complies with the requirements, including the standards of responsibility in accordance with ARM 2.5.407. If responses do not meet all requirements listed in this Notice, the application may be deemed unresponsive and/or incomplete and removed from consideration. A determination of unresponsiveness may be made anytime during the process if information surfaces that would result in the determination of non-responsibility.

Dual Points of Contact

From the date this Request for Proposal (RFP) is officially posted until an applicant is selected and announced by GOCS**,** *applicants shall only communicate with designated staff listed below regarding this Notice.* Any unauthorized contact may disqualify the applicant from further consideration.

Kristina Jordan, GOCS Program Officer
Ph: 406-444-5547
Email: kristina.jordan@mt.gov

Keena Irby, GOCS Fiscal Officer
Ph: 406-444-1809
Email: keena.irby@mt.gov

Costs/Ownership of Materials

The applicant is solely responsible for all costs incurred prior to subaward contract execution. The State shall own all materials submitted in response to this RFP.

Associated Documents

The following documents and/or forms should be read alongside this Notice and are available at the Montana Competitive Grant webpage.

- FFY2027 AmeriCorps Application Instructions
- FFY2027 Mandatory Supplemental Information
- FFY2027 Performance Measure Instructions
- Letter of Intent Form
- Match Waiver Request Form
- Evaluation Plan Summary Form
- Budget Worksheet
- Logic Model Worksheet

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TIMELINE

Oct. 6, 2026	**Official posting of the Notice**
Oct. 13-16, 2026	**Technical assistance period*** Submit questions via email to serve@mt.gov.
Oct. 15, 2026	**All applicants: Letter of Intent & associated documents due by 5pm Mountain Time** (see Application and Submission Information) • Letter of Intent (LOI) • PDF of current SAM registration & UEI • Documentation of Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate, if applicable • Confirmation of most recent Single Audit, if applicable
Oct. 22, 2026	**All applicants: Application Due Date by 5pm Mountain Time** (see Application and Submission Information) • Complete Application, submitted to GOCS • Additional Documents, submitted via email to serve@mt.gov
Nov. 18, 2026	**Competitive Grant Review Workgroup Meeting**
Dec. 10, 2026	**Commission on Community Service Meeting**
Dec. 11- 17, 2026	**State of Montana Applicant clarification period** – All recommended applicants
Dec. 17, 2026	**Clarified applications resubmitted in eGrants by 5pm Mountain Time**
TBD 2027	**AmeriCorps Clarification and Resolution**
Mid-April 2027	**Applicants notified of funding determination**
Mid-June 2027	**Awards issued to successful applicants**

***Technical Assistance**

Applicants are encouraged to use the technical assistance period to ask clarifying questions, obtain a better understanding of the RFP process, the project, and to notify the State of any ambiguities, inconsistencies, or errors discovered upon examination of this Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Participation in the technical assistance period is optional, however, all interested parties are encouraged to participate. All questions and written responses will be posted publicly on the ServeMontana website at https://serve.mt.gov/americorps/americorps-grants/Competitive-Program-Grant.

PLANS, FOCUS AREAS, FUNDING PRIORITIES, & PERFORMANCE MEASURES

To receive priority consideration, applicants must show the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes and must include a high-quality program design. Proposing a program that receives priority consideration does not guarantee funding.

Montana State Service Plan

The Montana State Service Plan outlines ServeMontana's goals and objectives, and includes data from a statewide needs assessment that identifies Montana's most pressing needs.

Governor and First Lady Priorities

- American Indian Affairs: Partner with Tribal Nations and people to help create more and better opportunities. Engage Tribal members into service with AmeriCorps programs and foster programs that address needs facing Montana's Tribal Nations with cultural responsiveness.
- Improve Education and Empower Montana's Workforce: Provide better resources for educators, prepare students for the jobs of tomorrow, and bring our kids and grandkids home to serve in AmeriCorps.
- Boosting Literacy: Prepare Montanans of all ages to better engage in daily life through written communication and reading comprehension skills.
- Stewardship of Montana's Public Lands: Support service interventions resulting in healthier landscapes, more recreation opportunities and jobs, less severe wildfires, and improved habitat and water quality.
- Improve Access to Mental Health Care: Increase Montana's access to mental health care, suicide prevention services, health education, and innovative community strategies.
- Increase Opportunities for Veterans: Engage veterans in overcoming barriers to employment and provide services for veterans to fulfill their hopes and dreams. Engage veterans into service with AmeriCorps programs and foster programs that address the diverse needs of veterans and military families.

Montana Encouraged Program Elements

- Program design facilitates AmeriCorps Volunteers receiving impactful civic education and/or service-learning as part of Volunteer development that increases knowledge and deepens the Volunteer's ethic of service.
- Program includes professionalism training and leadership skill development to prepare AmeriCorps Volunteers for meaningful post-service careers (communication & active listening, networking, receiving and giving feedback, etc.).
- Program includes AmeriCorps as a strategy to develop service to career pathways.
- Programs that provide additional benefits to AmeriCorps Volunteer aimed at bolstering Volunteer recruitment, retention, and experience such as paying more than the minimum living allowance, housing, food, etc.
- Program design includes engaging citizens with lived experience to serve in the area of defined need with robust training, development, and support.
- Program design engages Montanans and uniquely prepares them to serve the communities where they live.

AmeriCorps Focus Areas

- Disaster Services: Supporting response, recovery, and resiliency in the wake of disasters.
- Economic Opportunity: Improving economic well-being and security of all people.
- Education: Improving educational outcomes for all people, especially children.
- Environmental Stewardship: Serving public lands and people by conserving natural habitats, protecting clean air and water, and reducing utility bills for underserved households.
- Healthy Futures: Supporting health needs within communities, especially in underserved areas.
- Veterans & Military Families: Improving quality of life of veterans, military families, caregivers, and survivors.

AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

Programs that:

- are housed within faith-based organizations.
- serve communities with concentrated poverty, rural communities, and tribal communities.
- expand access to high-quality youth mental health and substance use recovery services and prepare AmeriCorps Volunteers to enter behavioral health careers. These may include individuals who have experienced substance use and mental health challenges.
- focus on improving quality of life for veterans, active-duty members of the Armed Forces, and their families through models that provide effective interventions or services that are designed to recruit veterans, military spouses, and their older children into national service, e.g., veterans serving in mentorship roles.
- focus on public safety, crime prevention, and/or partnerships between law enforcement and the community.
- focus on expanding outdoor recreation opportunities for future generations by maintaining public lands; supporting wildland fire mitigation and sustainable forest management; and providing reforestation services.
- create workforce pathways for AmeriCorps Volunteers, including deliberate training, such as pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities, certifications, and hiring preferences or support.
- focus on strengthening families, e.g., activities that aim to support low-income parents through parenting education, responsible parenting and healthy relationship skills.
- provide enhanced Volunteer experience by providing opportunities for skill attainment, personal growth and connection to the community they are serving in support of a lifetime of civic participation.
- provide enhanced and expanded services to formerly incarcerated and at-risk youth and/or engage those youth as AmeriCorps Volunteers.
- are evidence-based, and utilize reports from the AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange on programs assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence to scale, replicate, or adapt the intervention, or demonstrate any evidence supporting the performance data described.

Performance Measures

Applications must include at least one aligned Performance Measure, output and outcome, that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. This may be a National Performance Measure or applicant determined. AmeriCorps and GOCS value quality of performance measures over quantity.

Refer to the AmeriCorps Performance Measure Instructions (Associated Documents) and Performance Measure Review Criteria for more information on performance measure requirements and data collection expectations. *Applicants are encouraged to use Appendix B: Performance Measure Checklist in the Performance Measure Instructions.*

FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Program Authority

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

Estimated Available Funds
The actual level and timing of grant funding depends on annual appropriations. AmeriCorps may prioritize funding existing awards instead of making new awards. Publication of this Notice does not obligate AmeriCorps to award any specific number of grants or to commit any particular amount of funding.

Estimated Award Amount
Grant awards have two components: operating funds and AmeriCorps Volunteer positions with corresponding Education Award amounts. Award amounts will be different as determined by the scope of projects.

Project and Award Period
AmeriCorps typically makes three-year grant awards. AmeriCorps generally makes an initial award for the first year of the period of performance, based on the submitted budget. Continuation awards for subsequent years are not guaranteed and depend upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance (see Review Criteria for Continuation Applicants).

The earliest Montana program start date is September 1, 2027 with the understanding some applicants may choose to operate on the calendar year by starting January 1, 2028. AmeriCorps Volunteers may *not* be enrolled or count service hours prior to the start date of the award. A program may *not* certify any hours a Volunteer performs prior to the beginning of the Volunteer enrollment period as designated in the grant award.

Type of Award
AmeriCorps may award a Cost Reimbursement or a Fixed Amount grant to any successful applicant. AmeriCorps will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year. For more information, see the *Eligible Applicants* Section in the Mandatory Supplemental Information (Associated Documents).

Cost Reimbursement: Grant applications that require a line-item budget. Grant reimbursement payments are based on allowable costs incurred and reported monthly to GOCS.

Fixed Amount: Grant applications that do not require a line-item budget. Must achieve 100% Volunteer enrollment and retention rates to receive the full amount of a fixed grant award. Fixed awards may be Full Cost, Education Award Program (EAP), Professional Corps, or No Cost Slots. A Fixed Amount grant is limited to certain applicants.

While Fixed Amount award applicants are not required to submit a line-item budget to AmeriCorps, they must submit a completed budget worksheet (see Associated Documents) to ServeMontana, demonstrating the internal program budget meets the Minimum Thresholds outlined in this Notice and is adequate to operate the proposed program. Budget worksheets must show both federal and grantee share of the budget, and will not be submitted to AmeriCorps.

- **Full Cost** – Eligible to claim maximum cost per Member Service Year (MSY). May apply for all slot types (See MSY Values and Slots table below).
- **Education Award Programs** - AmeriCorps may provide up to but not more than $800 per individual enrolled in an approved National Service Position, or not more than $1,000 per individual if at least 50 percent of the program enrollees are disadvantaged youth. May apply for all slot types.
- **Professional Corps** - Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. May only apply for Full Time Slots. Professional Corps program requirements are in the Mandatory Supplemental Information.
- **No Cost Slots** – Volunteer positions with education awards only. Awards are made for $0 cost per MSY. May apply for all slot types.

ELIGIBILITY, TYPES OF APPLICANTS, AND APPLICATION TYPE INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants

The following non-Federal entities (all defined in 2 CFR §200.1) are eligible to apply:

- Indian Tribes
- Institutions of higher education
- Local governments, including school districts
- 501(c)(3) Nonprofit organizations
- U.S. states and Territories

In addition to Indian Tribes as defined in 2 CFR 200.1, Tribal organizations that are controlled, authorized, or chartered by Federally recognized Indian Tribes are also eligible to apply. If an entity applies for an award as a tribal organization that is controlled or chartered by one or more Indian Tribes [and the organization does not meet any of the other applicant eligibility types], the organization must provide copies or links to documentation which demonstrates that the organization is controlled or chartered by a federally recognized Indian Tribe. If an entity applies as an organization authorized by a federally recognized Tribe, or multiple specific federally recognized tribes, it must submit a resolution or other authorization adopted by the Tribal Council (or comparable tribal governing body) of each Indian Tribe. The authorization(s) must identify the entity applying for an AmeriCorps award by name as a tribal organization that is authorized by the Indian Tribe(s) for the purpose of applying for AmeriCorps funding (or federal grant funds generally).

System for Award Management (SAM) & Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number

To receive an award, all applicants must have an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration and unique identifier (UEI) and must maintain active SAM registration throughout the application process and, if applicable, throughout the life of the award. Applicants should finalize a new registration or renew an existing one at least three weeks before the application deadline, to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. SAM registration must be renewed annually. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees.

> **Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and physical address on AmeriCorps grant applications. The legal applicant name and physical address entered in eGrants and the Standard Form 424 Face Sheet must match the applicant's SAM-registered information EXACTLY.**

Applications must include an Employer Identification Number (EIN) and UEI, which is generated as part of the SAM registration process. *UEI and Dun and Bradstreet (DUNS) numbers are not the same.* Applicants must use "My Account" on the eGrants home screen to enter UEI and EIN numbers in the "Edit Organization's Attributes" module. These entries will populate the Application's eGrants 424 face sheet.

AmeriCorps will not award a grant to applicants without a valid SAM registration and UEI. If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the time AmeriCorps is ready to make the award, AmeriCorps may not award the applicant.

Types of Applicants

Single State Applicants: Organizations proposing to only operate in Montana must apply to this Notice. Each state and territory commission administers its own selection process and submits selected applications to compete for funding directly to AmeriCorps. *A Single-State application from a State or Territory with a Commission that is submitted directly to AmeriCorps by the applicant instead of the Commission will be considered unresponsive and will not be reviewed.* See Mandatory Supplemental Information (Associated Documents) for applicant descriptions.

Federally Recognized Indian Tribes in Montana

Indian Tribes proposing to operate only in Montana are eligible to apply to this Notice, or may apply directly to AmeriCorps Indian Tribes Grants National Direct Opportunity, if available. Contact GOCS for more information.

In addition to Indian Tribes (2 CFR §200.54), tribal organizations controlled, authorized, and chartered by Indian Tribes are also eligible to apply.

Multi-State Applicants: Organizations proposing to operate in more than one state or territory apply directly to AmeriCorps. Also known as "National Direct applicants," Multi-state applicants must consult and coordinate with the Commissions in states where the program will operate. ServeMontana expects National Direct applicants to comply with AmeriCorps consultation requirements see below.

National Direct Consultation: Coordination among State Commissions and National Direct Applicants
National Direct applicants are expected to consult with ServeMontana and coordinate activities at the local level, as specified in Section 131 of the NCSA, 42 U.S.C. § 12583. This ensures coordination and effective use of national service resources.

National Direct applicants, except federally recognized Indian Tribes, must:

- Consult with ServeMontana by completing the form available on the National Direct Consultation webpage, and *describe the consultation in their application*.
- Provide information that connects the proposed activities to the Montana State Service Plan and training opportunities, particularly the ServeMontana Symposium.

AmeriCorps will ask for Commission input on National Direct applicants, except Indian Tribes, planning to operate in their state/territory. The Commission provides input and selects if they "support," "do not support," or are "neutral" on a project in eGrants. AmeriCorps reviews and considers this Commission input. Failure to consult will likely result in a selection of "do not support."

Application Types
New Application
GOCS encourages applicants that have received prior funding from AmeriCorps to apply to this Notice. Applicants are encouraged to plan for sustainable program growth. As such, New Applicants should apply for at least 20 MSY but no more than 50 MSY for the first three-year grant cycle.
Applicants who have received AmeriCorps funding in the last three years can apply for Cost Reimbursement or Education Award Program (EAP) grants but are not eligible to apply for Full-Cost Fixed Amount grants. Existing subrecipients who demonstrate a successful history and capacity to manage a Fixed Amount grant are considered to have AmeriCorps experience and are eligible to apply for Full Cost Fixed Amount grants. See Type of Award.

Organizations that have never received AmeriCorps funding are encouraged to consider ServeMontana's spring Formula grant opportunities.

Continuation Application
Organizations with current AmeriCorps State awards applying for program Year 2 or 3 are considered continuation applicants and must submit an application to be eligible to receive funding for the FY2027 program year.

Continuation applicants must follow the requirements for continuation applications as outlined in this Notice and the Application Instructions. Requests by existing continuation applicants for significant increases/decreases in the level of funding or number of positions will be assessed using the review criteria in this Notice. The review will also be based on progress and financial reports, evaluation plans, and GOCS staff knowledge of the program. To be approved for continuation funding, recipients must demonstrate satisfactory performance with respect to key program goals and requirements, and compliance with grant Terms and Conditions.

Continuation applicants should prioritize addressing the Review Criteria for Continuation Applicants in this Notice. Applicants may also address the Continuation Changes fields listed in the Application Instructions.

Continuation applicant performance measures must comply with Performance Measure Instructions. In the Continuation Changes field of the application, note updates to any performance measures. If significant increases or decreases to output or outcome targets for existing measures are proposed, provide a justification for the change. To add or revise performance measures, use the Performance Measures template document (Additional Documents).

GOCS and AmeriCorps reserve the right to award applicants in an amount less than the requested level of funding and will document the rationale for doing so.

Recompete Application

Previously awarded applicants whose three-year AmeriCorps State competitive award period is ending, may apply to this Notice as a recompete applicant. Organizations who have successfully operated AmeriCorps programs for a minimum of 5 years and consulted GOCS are eligible to apply for Full-Cost Fixed Amount Grants.

Required Minimum Thresholds for All Applications

Applications must meet all threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying. Applications that do not meet all minimum thresholds and provide no justification will not be reviewed.

- All competitive applicants must propose to enroll at least 20 AmeriCorps Volunteers. This requirement does not apply to Indian Tribe applicants or Tribal organizations that are controlled, authorized, or chartered by Federally recognized Indian Tribes.
- All applicants must propose program designs that are either evidence-based or evidence-informed (See section E.1.b (2) Evidence Base). Applicants rated as having insufficient evidence will be removed from funding consideration. Insufficient evidence is determined by:
  - An applicant being assessed as in the pre-preliminary evidence tier AND
  - Providing inadequate responses to the Evidence Quality review standards below.
- Budget includes staff and AmeriCorps Volunteer travel to the ServeMontana Symposium. Symposium takes place annually in March, in Helena.
- Budget includes staff travel for new program and/or financial staff to attend America's Service Commission's (ASC) AmeriCorps Program and Fiscal Boot Camps, typically held in Austin, TX for 5 days with 5 nights hotel stay. GOCS pays for the registration fee.
- Budget includes staff travel and staff training for at least one program and one fiscal staff to attend ASC's National Service Training, either in-person (location determined annually) or virtually. If attending in-person, the training is typically 3 days and the budget should include airfare, 2-3 nights of lodging, and per diem should be budgeted under Staff Travel at the organization's travel policy rate or at the state rate if applicant does not have a travel policy (see next page for additional cost details).
  - Airfare has typically cost at least $800 per person, depending on the location of the event, and should be listed under Staff Travel.
  - The registration fee is at least $400 per person and should be listed in the budget under Staff Training.
- Budget includes staff training and staff travel (if applicable) for at least one program staff to attend the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs' Tribal Relations Training, held annually in Helena. The training is typically 1-2 days with hotel stay depending on attendee distance. Registration fee is $150 and should be listed in the budget under Staff Training.
- Professional Corps applicants must show that the community where it will place AmeriCorps Volunteers has a shortage of professionals in the relevant area, e.g. teachers, medical professionals, etc.

- If service activities require special Volunteer qualifications and/or training, the applicant must describe how the program will meet requirements (e.g., tutoring: 45 CFR §2522.910-.940).

Optional Budget Items for Applicants

After meeting the required minimum thresholds, applicants may choose to budget for the following:

- Member Assistance Program from ASC, if the organization cannot otherwise provide similar benefits to Volunteers (i.e., via an existing employee assistance program).
    - This is an add-on to the ASC program membership. GOCS typically pays for the program membership fee unless otherwise discussed with the applicant.
    - MAP is available at a per-Volunteer fee, see the MAP webpage for the most current plan options. MAP should be listed under Other Operating Costs.
- Staff training opportunities, if applicable and relevant to management and administration of the AmeriCorps program. This may include the cost of travel (to be listed under Staff Travel) and/or registration (to be listed under Staff Training).

Other Eligibility Requirements

Even if an organization is otherwise eligible under C.1, an organization is not eligible if:

- It has violated a Federal criminal statute/
- It proposes activities that are not allowed by AmeriCorps laws, rules, or terms and conditions.
- It has any unpaid federal taxes that are not being paid through an agreement with the relevant tax authority. However, this does not apply if a federal agency decided that a suspension or debarment for the corporation is not necessary.
- It is described in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. §501 (c)(4) and lobbies.

FEDERAL FUNDING RESTRICTIONS AND BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Member Service Year (MSY)

Applicants request the number of positions per slot type in Budget Section II. The Budget calculates the total number of MSYs using the values below. See the Application Instructions (Associated Documents) for more details.

Table: Member Service Year (MSY) Values and Slot Types

Slot Type	Minimum # of Hours	MSY Value
Full-time	1,700	1
Three Quarter-time	1,200	0.7
Half-time	900	0.5
Quarter-time	450	0.26455027
Minimum-time	300	0.21164022

Cost per MSY

Cost per MSY is determined by dividing the Federal share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include childcare or the value of the education award a Volunteer may earn.

Maximum Cost per MSY

The maximum Cost per MSY is set by AmeriCorps annually. Applications cannot exceed the maximum cost per MSY for the application type. Applications that exceed the maximum may be considered unresponsive.

Table: FY27 Maximum Cost per MSY for Application Types

Application Type	Maximum Cost per MSY
Montana Competitive (Cost Reimbursement & Full Cost Fixed Award)	$26,800
Professional Corps	$1,000
Education Award Program	$800 or $1,000
No Cost Slot	$0

Volunteer Living Allowance

A living allowance is not salary or a wage. Programs must provide a living allowance for Volunteers in full-time positions and those serving in a full-time capacity (generally 32 hours or more per week for 6 weeks or more). Programs are not required to provide a living allowance for Volunteers serving in less than full time slot types and capacity. If a program provides a living allowance to a less than full-time Volunteer, it must follow the limits in the table below. For Cost Reimbursement applicants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either AmeriCorps or grantee share, exceptions noted below.

Fixed Amount grant applicants must provide a living allowance that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements, as demonstrated in the submitted Budget Worksheet (see Additional Documents).

Table: FY27 Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Slot Type	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Living Allowance
Full-time	1,700	$20,954	$41,908
Three Quarter-time	1,200	n/a	$29,336
Half-time	900	n/a	$20,954
Quarter-time	450	n/a	$10,896
Minimum-time	300	n/a	$8,801

Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements

Programs existing prior to September 21, 1993 do not have to offer a living allowance. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it does not have to pay its Volunteers the minimum but cannot exceed the maximum.

Education Award (EAP) Grantees are not required to provide a living allowance. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it does not have to pay its Volunteers the minimum but cannot exceed the maximum.

Professional Corps Grantees must provide Volunteers a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance. Professional Corps Volunteer salaries and benefits, including childcare, cannot be included in the federal share of the program budget.

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

AmeriCorps Volunteers who successfully complete a term of service are eligible for an Education Award from the National Service Trust. The amount of the Education Award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant. An alum has up to seven years after their term of service to use the Education Award. Education Award amounts are determined by the federal fiscal year of the grant award.

Fixed Amount Grants

There is no specific match requirement for Fixed Amount grants. AmeriCorps does not provide all funds necessary to operate the program; Organizations must provide additional funds to operate the program. Applicants who have

successfully operated AmeriCorps programs for a minimum of 5 years and have consulted with GOCS are eligible to apply for Fixed Amount Grants. Fixed Amount applicants must be familiar with the AmeriCorps Fixed Award Financial and Administrative Guide and must comply with all Minimum Threshold requirements as described in this Notice, including the completed Budget Worksheet.

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

Cost Reimbursement Grants

Required Match

Applicants must match funds based on the chart below. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet the match requirement at the time of application. The source of funds can be state, local, or private cash and/or in-kind contributions. Applicants must indicate if the match is proposed or secured. A first-time successful applicant is required to match 24% for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every three years to 30% by year ten.

Table: Cost Reimbursement Grant Required Match Schedule

AmeriCorps Funding Year	1, 2, 3	4, 5, 6	7, 8, 9	10+
Grantee Share Required Match	24%	26%	28%	30%

Section 121(e)(5) of NCSA (42 U.S.C. 12571(e)) requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to AmeriCorps on a Federal Financial Report (FFR). Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout. GOCS requires documented permission allowing for funds to be used as match from the non-AmeriCorps federal entity.

Match Waiver

Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify for a match waiver, detailed in 45 CFR §2521.70. To qualify, applicants must demonstrate the lack of local resource, that this lack is unique, efforts to raise resources, and amount of resources raised at the time of application. Match Waiver requests must be submitted at the time of application as an additional document, see Additional Documents section of this Notice.

Indirect Costs

Application budgets may include indirect costs, however no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps State and National grants (45 CFR §2521.95 and §2540.110). Applicants may use a Federally-approved indirect cost rate (IDCR) or a 15 percent *de minimis* rate (see Attachment B in the Application Instructions), or may claim certain costs directly, as outlined in 2 CFR §200.413. States, local governments, and Indian Tribes may use previously approved indirect cost allocation plans.

All methods must be applied consistently across all Federal awards. Applicants that have a Federal negotiated IDCR or that will be using the 15 percent *de minimis* rate must enter that information in the Organization section in eGrants. Use the AmeriCorps eGrants IDCR User Instructions for how to enter the organization's IDCR in eGrants.

Pre-award Costs

Applicants funded under this Notice are approved for pre-award costs for 90 days prior to the start of their program where such costs are incurred in anticipation of the award and are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the scope of work. See the Mandatory Supplemental Information for more detail.

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Application Package
Information necessary to apply is at Montana Competitive Grant webpage. Applicants may email serve@mt.gov or call 406-444-5547 for printed materials or alternative formats.

Content and Form of Application
Applicants submit the following components of a complete application:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) FACE Sheet
- Narratives
  - Executive Summary
  - Program Design
  - Organizational Capability
  - Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
  - Evaluation Summary/Plan
  - Continuation Changes
  - Clarification
- Performance Measures
- Logic Model
- Budget Narrative

Page Limits
Page limits are determined by the number of pages printed from eGrants. Reviewers will **not** consider material over the page limits in the printed application.

Application components with page limits that ***must be*** adhered to:

- Application & Narratives - must not exceed **10 pages** when printed from eGrants; this is generally equivalent to the following metrics in MS Word: 12.5 pages, regular margins, in Calibri font, size 11, double-spaced (2.0), with no extra line spacing or indents between headers or paragraphs.
  - Application sections that count towards the page limit are the narrative portions contained in the Executive Summary, Program Design, Organizational Capability, and Cost-Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy narratives.
  - The page limit *does not* include the Face Sheet, Budget; Budget Narrative; Performance Measures; Continuation, Amendment, or Clarification narratives; Evaluation Plan; or any required additional documents.
- Logic Model - must not exceed **8 pages** when printed from eGrants.
- Continuation Changes – must not exceed **6 pages** when printed from eGrants; this is generally equivalent to the following metrics in MS Word: 7.5 pages, regular margins, in Calibri font, size 11, double-spaced (2.0), with no extra line spacing or indents between headers or paragraphs.
  - This page limit includes narrative from both continuation years in the three-year grant cycle. Do not delete any prior continuation changes narrative. Continuation changes should be labeled by program year.

The page limits do not include the Budget; Budget Narrative; Performance Measures; Continuation, Amendment, or Clarification narratives; Evaluation Plan; or any required additional documents.

How to Submit an Application
Applicants must submit their applications electronically via eGrants, AmeriCorps' web-based application system. See the Application Instructions (Associated Documents) for details on creating an application and navigating eGrants.

The applicant's authorized representative **must** be the person who submits the application. The authorized representative must use their own account to sign and submit the application.

Applicants should contact GOCS and the AmeriCorps Hotline at (800) 942-2677 if they have a problem when they create an account, prepare, or submit the application. When contacting the AmeriCorps Hotline, be prepared to provide the application ID, organization name, and the name of the Notice to which the organization is applying. If the issue cannot be fixed by the deadline, applicants must continue working with the AmeriCorps Hotline to submit via the grant system.

Submission Dates and Times

Letter of Intent

New, Recompete, and Continuation applicants must notify GOCS of their intent to apply by completing the following actions by **Thursday, October 15, 2026, 5:00 pm Mountain Time:**

- Submit the following to serve@mt.gov :
    - Letter of Intent using the form available on the Montana Competitive Grant webpage
    - PDF showing current, unexpired SAM.gov registration and Universal Entity Identifier
    - Documentation of Indirect Cost Rate, if applicable
    - Confirmation that the Organization's most recent Single Audit is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse, as applicable per 2 CFR 200.501, or indication that a Single Audit is Not Applicable.

Intergovernmental Review

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

Application Package

Applications are due in eGrants and additional documents emailed to serve@mt.gov **by Thursday, October 22, 2026, 5:00 pm Mountain Time.** Incomplete applications will not be considered. Late applications may not be reviewed.

- **When the application is submitted in eGrants, notify GOCS by emailing serve@mt.gov.**
- This deadline applies to all applicants. ServeMontana reserves the right to add documents to the RFP and to extend the deadline. Any such changes will be posted on the GOCS website.

Additional Documents

Only submit items requested in this Notice and Application Instructions. Template forms are available on the Montana Competitive Grant webpage. Items not requested will not be reviewed or returned. Applicants must submit additional documents by the application package deadline.

All Applicants:

- Labor union concurrence (if applicable)
- Federal debt delinquency concurrence (if applicable)
- Match Waiver Request Form (if applicable), available on the Montana Competitive Grant webpage
- Fixed Amount applicants must submit a completed Budget Worksheet, available on the Montana Competitive Grant webpage
    - The Budget Worksheet must show that the applicant's internal budget meets the Minimum Thresholds outlined in this Notice and is otherwise adequate to operate the proposed program.

New and Recompete Applicants (see also separate sections for New Applicants and Recompete Applicants below):

- Two letters of support
- Organizational Chart
- Evidence documents. See the Evidence Base section of this Notice and Mandatory Supplemental Information for instructions by evidence tier. If multiple evidence documents are submitted by the applicant, the most recent (as measured by the date of completion or publication) will be reviewed first. No more than 2 evidence documents will be reviewed. Evidence documents that do not sufficiently match the intervention will not be reviewed, see Mandatory Supplemental Information for definition of Same Intervention.

New Applicants (Only):

Data collection system description or plan. Must not exceed 2 pages in Microsoft Word, and includes:

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

GOCS and AmeriCorps may require submission of data collection instruments if approved for funding. For more information on developing a high-quality data collection plan, reach out to GOCS.

Recompete Applicants (Only)

- Applicants who have previously received **three or more years** of competitive funding for the same project being proposed must submit:
    - Evaluation Plan Summary Form using the template found on the Montana Competitive Grant webpage. If applicable, submit the section in the template for an Alternative Evaluation Approach (AEA) request. Evaluation plans are not scored and will not be assessed. Applicants approved for funding will be responsible for confirming they meet all evaluation requirements. Only AEA requests (if applicable) will be reviewed for approval **after** funding decisions are made.
        - AEA Guidance and Evaluation FAQ documents can be found on the Montana Program Management webpage, under the Evaluation and Evidence Building header.

- Applicants who have previously received **six or more years** of competitive funding for the same project being proposed must submit:
    - Evaluation Plan Summary Form as described above for recompete applicants, and
    - Evaluation report in Microsoft Word. The evaluation report should include a title page with the AmeriCorps grant number for the project that was evaluated, the name of the project, and the date of completion of the report. If any of this required information is missing, the applicant may not receive credit for meeting the evaluation requirements.

Additional Documents Formatting and Submission

Email Additional Documents to serve@mt.gov with the subject: [Legal Applicant Name] – [Application ID number].

Emails should include:

- the legal applicant's name and point of contact information;
- a list of documents that should be attached to the email;
- clearly labelled attachments as individually saved files;
- files that include, within each document,
    - a header,

- the legal applicant's name, and
- application ID number.

- If the file size requires multiple emails, please include an ordering system in the subject line, such as "(1 of 3)"

Late Applications
Late applications are assumed to be non-compliant. GOCS will determine whether to accept a late application on a case-by-case basis. Applicants that do not submit a justification or other evidence to overcome the presumption of non-compliance will not be reviewed. GOCS must receive the written justification, submitted via email to serve@mt.gov, by the application deadline.

The written explanation or justification of the circumstance(s) that caused the delay must include:
- the timing and specific cause(s) of the delay,
- the ticket number if a request for assistance was submitted to the AmeriCorps Hotline,
- any information provided to the applicant by the AmeriCorps Hotline, and/or
- any other documentation or evidence that supports the justification.

Technical Assistance
GOCS will host technical assistance calls to answer questions about the funding opportunity. Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate. Call-in information will be posted on the Montana Competitive Grant webpage. A written technical assistance period is also available as described in the timeline.

REVIEW CRITERIA FOR NEW AND RECOMPETE APPLICANTS

For the purposes of responding to this NOFO, AmeriCorps participants should be referred to as AmeriCorps Volunteers. If awarded funding, participants may be referred to as AmeriCorps Members in practice.

Each applicant must describe a project to use AmeriCorps Volunteers to effectively meet community needs while developing professionally.

Application and budget **quality** are key factors in determining the funding recommendation. For tips on preparing quality AmeriCorps applications, see ServeMontana's Grant Writing Tips and Tricks document.

Applications must have a well-designed plan with clear and compelling justification for requesting funds. Reviewers will assess the quality of applications by using the selection criteria below and will consider the weights assigned to each criterion.

Applicants should respond to criteria in the order they appear below. Format each narrative subsection heading in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS (for example, when responding to the Volunteer experience criteria, the start of that section in the application narrative should read "AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE," followed by responses to the criteria). Do not assume all criteria are of equal value; use subsection points to prioritize the length of information provided.

Prior to submission, applicants should use the assessment criteria and/or Scoring Matrix to review the application or have a peer review. The Scoring Matrix is available on the Montana Competitive Grant webpage.

Prior to issuance, and annually thereafter, awards will be subject to review by one or more AmeriCorps senior officials, or their designees, according to the process described in Executive Order 14332, "Improving Oversight of Federal Grantmaking."

Table: Required Narratives

Required Narrative Fields	Narrative Subsection	Subsection Points
Executive Summary		**Pass/Fail**
Program Design	COMMUNITY AND LOGIC MODEL	20
	EVIDENCE TIER	12
	EVIDENCE QUALITY	8
	NOTICE PRIORITY	4
	AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE	6
Organizational Capability	ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND AND STAFFING	15
	AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER SUPERVISION	10
Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT	7
	AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER RETENTION	10
	DATA COLLECTION	8

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (REQUIRED – PASS/FAIL)

Fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. ***Follow the template EXACTLY.***

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

Additional language for Cost Reimbursement applicants:
The AmeriCorps investment 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.

Additional language for Fixed Amount applicants (Full-Cost, EAP, No Cost Slots):
In addition to the AmeriCorps investment, $[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and $[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding will support the project.

PROGRAM DESIGN NARRATIVE (50 POINTS TOTAL)

Community, Logic Model, and Performance Measures (20 points)
Ensure both the Community section and Logic Model incorporate the Funding Priorities listed in this Notice.

Community
The applicant will provide a detailed summary of the community need, including:

- Data that describes the extent of the need. Applicants should provide in-line citations for studies or data sources described, links will not be reviewed; and
- How the applicant's intervention(s) will lead to the outcomes identified in the organization's Logic Model.

Logic Model
The Logic Model is a visual tool that should include short, medium, and/or long-term outcomes. Applicants are not required to measure all components of the Logic Model. The applicant's performance measures should be consistent with the Logic Model and reflect significant program activities. Applicants with multiple interventions should depict each intervention on a separate line within one Logic Model.

Use the Logic Model template available on the Montana Competitive Grant webpage.

The applicant must describe in the Logic Model:

- Inputs or resources necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
  - Locations or sites where AmeriCorps Volunteers will provide services.
  - Setting and community condition where the intervention is delivered.
  - Number of AmeriCorps Volunteers who will deliver the intervention.
  - Characteristics of AmeriCorps Volunteers, including specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required to implement the intervention.
- Core activities that AmeriCorps Volunteers will implement or deliver as part of the intervention, including:
  - Length of each activity (e.g., total number of weeks, sessions, or months of the intervention).
  - Dosage of each activity (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week).
  - Target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level).
- Measurable outputs resulting from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served, types and number of activities conducted). If applicable, identify which National Performance Measure output(s) will be used as indicators.
- Outcomes that result from the intervention, including meaningful changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition resulting from the intervention. If applicable, identify which National Performance Measure outcome(s) will be used as indicators.

Performance Measures *(see Performance Measure Instructions [Associated Documents] for full details)*
Performance measures are submitted to GOCS using the Performance Measure Template available on the Montana Competitive Grant webpage. All applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (output paired with outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. This may be a National Performance Measure or an applicant-determined measure depending on program design; however, applicant-determined performance measures cannot duplicate existing National Performance Measures. Applicants do not need performance measures for every program activity.

Applications may also include National Performance Measure outputs *without* associated outcome(s), provided the output measures a significant program activity. Output-only measures do not fulfill the requirement for an aligned performance measure but may be selected in addition to the aligned measure(s).
Selected Performance Measures must:

- Align with interventions described in the Logic Model.
- Include reasonable targets that are set using the rationale described in the Logic Model.
- Include a description of data collection practices and instruments that are sufficient to ensure reported data is valid, complete, consistent, accurate, and verifiable.

A staff review will be conducted of the full performance measure section using Appendix B: Performance Measures Checklist found in the Performance Measure Instructions.

Evidence Base
Evidence Tier (12 points)
An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of understanding the relative strength of each applicant's evidence base and the likelihood the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the logic model. All evidence tiers are defined in the Mandatory Supplemental Information. Applicants must meet all requirements of an evidence tier to be considered for that tier. If the evaluation reports submitted by the applicant

do not meet the definitions in the Mandatory Supplemental Information, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier.

In 2026, the evidence tiers of competing applicants recommended for AmeriCorps State and National funding were as follows: 57% Strong, 11% Moderate, 25% Preliminary, 7% Pre-Preliminary. AmeriCorps values and funds programs all along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. **Applicants should not be deterred from applying due to their current evidence level**.

To qualify for the preliminary, moderate, or strong evidence tier, the applicant submits the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle (if applicable) and/or up to two additional evidence documents (see Mandatory Supplemental Information for guidance by evidence tier). See Additional Documents for submission instructions.

In the Evidence Tier subsection of the application narrative, applicants must:

- Summarize the study design and key findings of any submitted evidence document and, if applicable, the evaluation report from their last 3-year grant cycle; and
- Describe any other evidence that supports the program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform the program design.
- If citing or describing studies, applicants should use in-line citations. Links will not be reviewed.

Evidence Quality (8 points)

Reviewers will score the quality of the applicant's evidence and the extent to which it supports the proposed program design.

Standards for scoring the preliminary, moderate, or strong evidence tiers:

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

Standards for scoring pre-preliminary evidence tier:

- The applicant uses relevant evidence, including past performance measure data and/or cited research studies, to inform the proposed program design;
- The described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years; and
- The evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries or AmeriCorps Volunteers in at least one key outcome of interest.

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

Notice Priority (4 points)

The applicant describes how the proposed program fits within:

- One or more of the AmeriCorps funding priorities outlined in this notice that are a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes, and
- the current Montana State Service Plan, and
- If applicable, one or more of the Governor and First Lady or Montana funding priorities as outlined in this Notice.

AmeriCorps Volunteer Experience (6 points)

The applicant describes how AmeriCorps Volunteers will be provided with:

- Service to career, leadership, personal growth, and skill development in support of a lifetime of civic participation,
- Connection and orientation to the community,
- An enhanced experience through civic reflections, and
- Elevator pitch training so that participants, staff, and the community know they are AmeriCorps Volunteers.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY (25 POINTS TOTAL)

Organizational Background and Staffing (15 points)

The applicant describes:

- The roles, responsibilities, and structure of staff who will implement and oversee the program, including but not limited to demonstrating the organization has sufficient policies, procedures, and controls to effectively implement a federal grant.
    - This should include an oversight plan to prevent and detect non-compliance and enforce compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations, including prohibited and unallowable activities, and criminal history checks.
- How the applicant will incorporate AmeriCorps Volunteers into its organization, such as in fiscal reporting, human resources, leadership staff, and relevant systems.

AmeriCorps Volunteer Supervision (10 points)

The applicant describes:

- How AmeriCorps Volunteers will receive sufficient guidance and support from the site supervisor to provide effective service, such as regular supervisor/Volunteer check-ins, Volunteer and supervisor opportunities to assess strengths, opportunities for growth, Volunteer training plan, etc.
- How host site supervisors will be trained to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations and expectations.
- Applicants should identify best and/or evidence based practices for successful supervision.

COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (25 POINTS TOTAL)

All organizations applying for a program grant must respond to the following criteria, regardless of grant type.

AmeriCorps Volunteer Recruitment (7 points)

- The applicant describes budget expenses to support inclusive recruitment of AmeriCorps Volunteers where different backgrounds and capabilities are welcomed and prepared to serve the community.
- Applicants should identify best and/or evidence based practices for successful recruitment.

AmeriCorps Volunteer Retention (10 points)

- The applicant describes budget expenses to support AmeriCorps Volunteer retention, which may include additional Volunteer benefits, supporting service to career pathways through resume building and certifications, regular coaching, network and community building, recognition, and other appropriate supports.
- Applicants should identify best and/or evidence based practices for successful retention.

Data Collection (8 Points)

- The applicant describes budgeted items that support data collection and evaluation, including the process for collecting and maintaining high-quality performance data from your organization and community partners, how data will be analyzed, and how this will ensure timely and accurate reporting.

Proposed budgets that exceed the maximum cost per MSY, do not meet the required match and minimum living allowance amounts, and do not include all minimum budget threshold items may be considered unresponsive to the application review criteria. GOCS staff will conduct a "budget check" on the application's budget, budget narrative and for Fixed Amount applicants, the budget worksheet. Budget checks will note deficiencies such as unclear calculations, incorrect dollar amounts, and misalignment with budget instructions, and will be provided to the applicant to adjust the budget during clarification without modifying approved CNCS or Grantee totals.

EVALUATION PLAN SUMMARY (0 POINTS)

Enter "N/A." Any other text entered will not be reviewed. See Additional Documents for submission instructions.

AMENDMENT JUSTIFICATION (0 POINTS)

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

CLARIFICATION INFORMATION (0 POINTS)

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

CONTINUATION CHANGES (0 POINTS)

Enter "N/A" if recompeting. This field is for continuation request narratives, see below.

REVIEW CRITERIA FOR CONTINUATION APPLICATIONS

Continuation applicants are not required to modify previous application narratives to reflect the change from "member" to "Volunteer;" however, AmeriCorps Volunteers should be referred to as such in the FY27 Continuation Narratives. If awarded funding, participants may be referred to as AmeriCorps members in practice.

Applicants should respond to the following subsections. The Continuation Changes narrative should start with the header "FY2027 Continuation Changes," followed by responses to the criteria below. Applicants should not delete any existing narrative from this field.

Continuation applicants should prioritize addressing the Review Criteria for Continuation Applicants, below. Applicants may also address the Continuation Changes fields listed in the Application Instructions.

CHANGES IN PROGRAM SCOPE OR DESIGN (5 POINTS)

The applicant describes and justifies changes in program scope or design (e.g., changes in focus area, priority area, intervention, number or type of MSY, etc.) or describes how there are no changes.

CHANGES TO PERFORMANCE MEASURES (5 POINTS)

The applicant describes and justifies changes to performance measures or goals (e.g., changes to described data collection tools, updates to targets, removing a performance measure), or describes how there are no changes.

CHANGES TO PROGRAM MANAGEMENT STAFFING OR STRUCTURE (5 POINTS)

The applicant describes and justifies changes to program and fiscal management staffing or structure, or describes that there are no changes. Changes to staffing include primary program staff, organizational staff who play a key role in supporting the program, or leadership staff. Changes might include the level of staffing assigned to manage or support the program, an update to the organizational chart that impacts the AmeriCorps program, etc.

BUDGET, MATCH, AND COST PER MSY (15 POINTS)

The applicant describes and justifies changes to the budget, match, and/or cost per MSY.

COMMISSION STAFF ASSESSMENT OF CONTINUATION APPLICANT PAST PERFORMANCE (20 POINTS)

AmeriCorps Montana programs operate on one of two timelines, September through August, or January through December.

For **September through August** program applicants, the GOCS staff assessment will provide reviewers with:

- past performance information for each applicant from the last full program year (FY2025) including compliance and risk; Volunteer enrollment, retention, and exit; and performance measures. At the time of the grant review, programs on this timeline will not have been operating in the current grant year (FY2026) long enough to provide performance data to GOCS for the current year so far.

For **January through December** program applicants, the GOCS staff assessment will provide reviewers with

- past performance information for each applicant from the last full program year (FY2024) including compliance and risk; Volunteer enrollment, retention, and exit; and performance measures, and
- the most up-to-date information available regarding the current program year (FY2025) at the time of the staff assessment and the grant review, as the program will have almost completed the current program year and GOCS will have performance data on file at the time of the grant review.

For all continuation applicants, information on Volunteer enrollment, retention, and exit, will be obtained from eGrants S & N Reports. The application budget request will be compared to the previous year's (FY2026) application.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND AWARD DETERMINATION PROCESS

Montana Application Review

The review process will consist of:

- GOCS staff review Letters of Intent, Additional Documents, and Audit Report as applicable, Minimum Thresholds, and other requirements in this Notice. If the applicant appears to have sufficient capacity to manage federal grants, they may continue in the application process.
- GOCS staff review submitted applications are reviewed for compliance with applicable state and federal regulations and responsiveness to the RFP. If compliant and responsive, applications will continue through the process and next be reviewed by a Grant Review Workgroup
- The Grant Review Workgroup will individually score applications, then meet with applicants present to arrive at consensus scores, ranking of applicants, and a funding recommendation.
- The funding recommendation is presented to the Montana Commission on Community Service for approval. If the funding recommendation is rejected, the review process may be repeated.
- After approval of the funding recommendation, applicants may be requested to clarify/change sections of the application package.
- Clarified applications will be submitted to AmeriCorps for final funding determination.

If unforeseen challenges or circumstances make it impossible, impracticable, or inefficient to conduct the review process as planned, GOCS and AmeriCorps reserve the right to adjust or make changes to the review process anytime. Adjustments or changes will not affect the assessment criteria.

Funding priority will be given to continuation applicants. All other applications will be prioritized in order of the consensus scores assigned by the Grant Review Workgroup. Review scores will not necessarily impact the distribution of funds; however, a lower scoring application will not be recommended at the expense of a higher scoring one. Distribution of funds will be based on the assessment of the Grant Review Workgroup as to how best to carry out the mission of GOCS.

All applications approved by the Montana Commission for submission to AmeriCorps are subject to the following review and selection process:

AmeriCorps Application Review
Reviewers will assess applications based on Program Design, Organizational Capability, Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, and Evidence Selection Criteria

Post-Review Quality Control
AmeriCorps staff will review the initial results for fairness and consistency. Applications may be selected for Post-Review Quality Control assessment.

Applicant Resolution Process
After review but before award, applicants may receive time sensitive requests for additional information and/or changes to the application package after notification. Failure to respond promptly to these requests may result in denial of funding. AmeriCorps will ask all subrecipients for a written compliance implementation plan that includes notification of waste, fraud, and abuse to the agency's Office of Inspector General.

Pre-Award Risk Assessment
AmeriCorps staff will assess risks posed by each applicant. Results from this assessment will inform funding decisions. If AmeriCorps determines an award will be made to an applicant with risks, special conditions may be applied to the award. AmeriCorps may not fund an applicant based on the level of risk.

Due Diligence, including:
- Federal debt delinquency
- Suspension and debarment
- Information available through Office of Management and Budget (OMB)- designated sources of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
  - U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
  - System for Award Management (SAM)
  - "Do Not Pay"
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance and findings of any other available audits or investigations
- IRS Tax Form 990
- Oversight.gov
- Public Litigation Records

Past Performance:
- Applicant's record in managing previous AmeriCorps awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards:
  - Timely compliance with applicable reporting requirements
  - Accuracy of data reported
  - Validity of performance measure data reported
  - Conformity to the terms and conditions of previous Federal awards

- Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements
- Timely closeout of other awards
- Meeting matching requirements
- The extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- National Service Criminal History Check compliance

ServeMontana staff will assess subrecipient programmatic past performance using the criteria above and may submit those assessments to AmeriCorps.

Other Programmatic Risks:

- Publicly available information, including from the applicant organization's website
- Amount of funding requested
- Other elements, such as keyword searches for prohibited activities

Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information
Before making any award that exceeds $350,000, AmeriCorps must review and consider information about the applicant from the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov. Any applicant may comment on information previously entered by another federal agency in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM.gov. AmeriCorps may consider applicant comments when completing its review of risk. AmeriCorps may also consider other information about any applicant receiving an award, including those under $350,000.

AmeriCorps Selection for Funding The review and selection processes are designed to:

- Identify how well eligible applications are aligned with the application selection criteria
- Build a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
  - AmeriCorps Funding Priorities
  - meaningful representation of
    - rural communities
    - innovative community strategies
  - CEO discretion to advance strategic goals

In selecting applicants to receive awards under this Notice, the Chief Executive Officer will try to include a diverse portfolio of applications based on staff recommendations, alignment with selection criteria, and strategic considerations.

AmeriCorps reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, if unforeseen circumstances make it impossible, impracticable, or inefficient to conduct the review process as planned. AmeriCorps reserves the right to re-focus program dollars under this Notice in the event of disaster or other compelling needs.

Feedback to Applicants
Each compliant applicant will receive feedback from the review of its application.

Transparency in Grantmaking
AmeriCorps is committed to transparency in grantmaking. A list of all approved new and recompeting applications will be published on the AmeriCorps website within 90 business days after all grants are awarded. Further information about funded grants and subgrants is also available at USASpending.gov.

FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Disclosure: Awards made under this Notice may be terminated by the agency if it no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities.

Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates
AmeriCorps will make awards following the selection announcement. AmeriCorps anticipates announcing the results of this funding opportunity in mid-April 2027 to State Commissions, depending on the availability of congressional appropriations. Applicants will then be notified by GOCS as to funding decisions.

Selection notifications are not an authorization to begin performance. The Notice of Grant Award is the document that obligates funds and performance may only begin after the Award is issued and no earlier than the listed Performance Period Start Date. Incurring allowable pre-award costs prior to receiving a Notice of Grant Award is at the applicant's risk. The Notice of Grant Award will be available in eGrants once the award is issued.

Uniform Guidance
All awards made under this Notice must follow the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 2205.

Requests for Monitoring or Payment Integrity Information
AmeriCorps will request information to ensure compliance with legal requirements, including the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019. If grantees do not respond timely to these requests, award funds may be placed on manual hold, reimbursement only status, or other restrictions may be applied as appropriate.

AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions
All grantees and subrecipients must follow the FY2027 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, and the FY2027 AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions contain mandatory compliance and reporting requirements, and applicants should review these instructions prior to any grant award. Current versions of the AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions are available on the AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant .

National Service Criminal History Check Requirements
The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a specific screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. See 45 CFR 2540.200– 2540.207 and National Service Criminal History Check Resources for complete guidance.

Use of Material
To ensure materials generated with AmeriCorps funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, GOCS and AmeriCorps reserve a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so, 2 CFR §200.315(b)

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

SERVEMONTANA CONTACTS

Montana Governor's Office of Community Service
PO Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620
Program Officer: 406-444-5547 kristina.jordan@mt.gov
Fiscal Officer: 406-444-1809 keena.irby@mt.gov
General email: serve@mt.gov

OTHER INFORMATION

Technical Assistance

GOCS hosts technical assistance calls to answer questions about the funding opportunity and eGrants. Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in these calls. Information for the technical assistance calls is be posted on GOCS' Grants webpage. A written technical assistance period is also available as described in the Notice Timeline.

AmeriCorps may also host technical assistance information sessions. Resources to effectively manage AmeriCorps grant awards can be found on the Manage Your Grant webpage.

Re-Focusing Funding

AmeriCorps/GOCS reserve the right to refocus funding in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Public Burden Statement

Public reporting burden for collection of information under this Notice of Funding is estimated to average eighty (80) hours per submission, including reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing the application and reporting forms. AmeriCorps informs people who may respond to this Notice of Funding they are not required to respond unless the OMB control number and expiration date are current valid. Use 5 CFR 1320.5(b)(2)(i).This collection is approved under OMB Control *#:* 3045-0047, Application Instructions, State and National Competitive, New and Continuation, Expiration Date: September 30, 2026.

Privacy Act Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 5 U.S.C. §552a, requires that applicants are notified that the information requested under this Notice of Funding is collected pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§12592 and 12615 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended, and 42 U.S.C. §4953 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 as amended.

- Purposes and Uses - The information requested is collected for the purposes of reviewing grant applications and granting funding requests. Routine uses may include disclosure of the information to Federal, state, or local agencies pursuant to lawfully authorized requests.
- Effects of Nondisclosure - The information requested is voluntary; however, to be a recipient of this grant program, disclosure of personal or sensitive information is required to receive federal benefits.

ServeMontana, the Governor's Office of Community Service
Commission Staff Assessment of Continuation Applicant Past Performance

Commission (GOCS aka ServeMontana) staff will complete the following assessment for all continuation applicants.

1) Applicant:
2) Federal Request:
3) Total Match:
4) Match %:

	FY2026 Application Request	FY2027 Application Request	Difference
Federal Funds			$0
Cash Match			$0
In-Kind Match			$0
Total Match	$0	$0	$0
Match %	#DIV/0!	0%	#DIV/0!
Project Cost	$0	$0	$0
MSY	-		0.00
Cost per MSY	$0	$0	$0
Living Allowance	$0	$0	$0

5) Assessment of past performance and

- Budget, match, and cost per MSY
- Compliance and risk
- Volunteer enrollment rate and 8-day enrollment period compliance
- Volunteer retention and 30-day exit window compliance
- Performance measures
    i. Prior application measures and targets versus current application request
    ii. Last full grant year performance versus goals
    iii. Current grant year performance versus goals (if applicable)

End of AmeriCorps State Grant Request for Proposal (RFP)