This Notice outlines the process to apply for an AmeriCorps Planning Grant only. Planning grant funding is provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) doing business as AmeriCorps and administered by the Montana Governor’s Office of Community Service (ServeMontana). The level and timing of grant funding is subject to annual appropriations. OCS reserves the right to modify any component of this RFP, at any time.

Notice of Funding Available (NOFA)
This Notice is the first in a multistep process an applicant must complete to apply for and receive AmeriCorps State Formula Planning Grant funding. ServeMontana’s role is to solicit, screen and rank applications. All applications cleared through screening will be ranked and submitted to AmeriCorps for funding determination. A description of the process used by AmeriCorps is contained in this Notice. This Notice should be read together with AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 C.F.R.2520–2550, Mandatory Supplemental Information, Application Instructions, and Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. It is recommended that applicants review federal regulations at www.ecfr.gov and grant management materials on AmeriCorps’ website.

ServeMontana
Montana’s Commission on Community Service was established in 1993 to administer grants under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, amended by the Edward M Kennedy Serve America Act of 2009. Under the Montana Commission on Community Service, ServeMontana administers funds to AmeriCorps State programs, encourage citizens of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to engage in service, involve youth in the life and work of communities, and strengthen volunteerism for all Montanans.

Purpose of Planning Grant Funding
The purpose of an AmeriCorps planning grant is to provide resources to eligible organizations to assess and develop an AmeriCorps intervention to address Montana’s needs and develop contributors. Planning Grants do not include performance measures or provide service positions. Planning Grants are intended to support staff, travel, and other allowable expenses to plan an operational AmeriCorps State program and then apply for a program grant.

Funds may be available to new applicants to increase AmeriCorps programs statewide by applying for a one year planning grant. Planning grants provide initial funding to support staff or employ contractors to assess needs and plan the proposed AmeriCorps program. Examples of expected planning activities include needs assessments, collaboration with partners, developing meaningful training, developing data collection for performance measures, and assuring adequate financial systems for successful implementation an AmeriCorps operational grant program. When completing an application for submission, applicants should use this Notice, AmeriCorps Application Instructions, Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, and other available resources.
ServeMontana expects all respondents to display the following features:

✓ 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
✓ Collaborative approach to program planning, design, and the delivery
✓ Planning process is designed to be inclusive and accessible to individuals with disabilities

Who Should Apply To This Notice Of Funding Available (NOFA)?
Organizations proposing to complete a one-year planning period to determine if AmeriCorps State resources are best-suited to meet identified community needs. During the planning grant period, OCS and/or the planning grantee may determine that AmeriCorps resources are not the best resource. Organizations with a proven track record managing federal funds, in particular national service programs, are encouraged to apply.

Applying to this Notice is required for organizations seeking assess, plan, and propose to serve primarily in the state of Montana. Tribes and Tribal organizations may apply through this Notice or may choose to apply directly to AmeriCorps for planning funds.

Organizations proposing a program to place members who serve Montana’s are encouraged to apply to the Montana AmeriCorps Formula State FY2022 Operating Grant Notice of Funding Available.

Montana AmeriCorps State Process
To be eligible for consideration, an applicant must meet the intent of all the requirements listed in the Notice. ServeMontana will determine whether the submitted materials comply with the requirements in accordance with standards of responsibility set forth in ARM 2.5.407. Federal awarding requirements are incorporated into this notice per ARM 2.5.407(6)(e). Applicant responses that do not meet the full intent of all requirements listed in this RFP may be deemed unresponsive and will not be considered. Such a determination may be made at any time during the process if information surfaces that would result in the determination of non-responsibility.

Dual Points of Contact - All Applicants
From the date this Request for Proposal (RFP) is officially posted until an applicant(s) is selected and announced by OCS, applicants shall only communicate with designated state staff listed below, regarding this Notice. Any unauthorized contact may disqualify the application from further consideration.

Joe Naiman-Sessions, OCS Grants Manager  Sheree Isola, OCS Financial Manager
ph: 406.444.5547  ph: 406.444.1809
joe.naiman-sessions@mt.gov  ShIsola@mt.gov

Costs/Ownership of Materials
The applicant is solely responsible for all costs it incurs prior to contract execution. The State shall own all materials submitted in response to this RFP.
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TIMELINE

March 21, 2022  Official posting of the Notice

March 30, 2022  Formula Technical Assistance Teleconference

April 15, 2022  All applicants, due to serve@mt.gov by 5pm Mountain Time
  • Letter of Intent (LOI)
  • PDF of current SAM & CCR registration, https://www.sam.gov/portal/SAM/#1
  • Documentation of Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate, if applicable
  • New Applicant Readiness Self-Assessment
  • Current organizational chart
  • Current Strategic plan

April 9, 2022  Last day to submit an Alternative Match Request

April 18-22, 2022  Technical assistance period* Submit questions via email to serve@mt.gov.

April 28, 2022  New and Recompete Formula applicants: Application Due Date 5pm Mountain Time
  • Complete Application, submitted in eGrants https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp
  • Additional Documents, submitted via email to serve@mt.gov
  • AmeriCorps Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS)

May 11, 2022  Formula Operating and Planning Grant Review Workgroup Meeting

May 18, 2022  Commission Meeting

May 19-26, 2022  Applicant clarification period – All recommended applicants

May 26, 2022  Clarified applications resubmitted in eGrants no later than 5pm

July 2022  Applicants notified of funding determination

*Technical Assistance
Participation in the technical assistance period is optional, and highly encouraged. Applicants are encouraged to use the opportunity 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 in this RFP. All questions and written responses will be posted on the ServeMontana website at http://serve.mt.gov/AmeriCorps/americorps-grants.
FUNDING PRIORITIES

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 2022-2024 Montana State Service Plan outlines the goals and objectives of the Governor’s Office on Community Service (OCS). Applicants should strive to implement evidence-based service strategies to meet one or more needs identified in the State Service Plan, visit http://serve.mt.gov/About/State-Service-Plan.

Governor’s Priorities

• **American Indian Affairs**- Partner with Tribal Nations and people to help create more and better opportunities. OCS seeks to engage Tribal members into service with Montana’s AmeriCorps programs and to foster programs that make real impacts in addressing the diverse needs facing Montana’s Tribal Nations, with cultural competency.

• **Improve Education and Empower Montana’s Workforce** – Provide better resources for K-12 Educators, prepare Montana students for the jobs of tomorrow, and to bring our kids and grandkids home to serve in AmeriCorps. Students who receive quality learning are more likely to read at grade level, graduate from high school, and earn more money as adults.

• **Promote Stewardship of Montana’s Public Lands** – Bring Montanans together in service interventions that result in healthier landscapes, more recreational opportunities, more jobs, less severe wildfires, and improve 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, connect them with employment opportunities, and provide services for veterans to fulfill their hopes and dreams. OCS seeks to engage veterans into service with Montana’s AmeriCorps programs and to foster programs that make real impacts in addressing the diverse needs facing Montana’s veterans and military families.

Montana Encouraged Planning Elements

• Planned program design will incorporate National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service’s recommendations in their Final Report Appendix C, Best Practices in Civic Education and Service Learning. AmeriCorps members should receive impactful civic education and/or service-learning as part of member development that increases knowledge and deepens the members’ ethic of service.

• Planned program design includes engaging citizens with lived experience to serve people in the area of defined need with robust training, development, and support.

• Planned program design engages Montanans and uniquely prepares them to serve the communities where they live.
AmeriCorps Priorities
AmeriCorps seeks to prioritize the investment of National Service resources in the following areas:

- Efforts that support and aid local communities respond to and recover from COVID-19 disruptions including impacts to student subgroups described in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- Educational opportunity and economic mobility for communities experiencing persistent unemployment or underemployment, and students experiencing homelessness or those in foster care.
- Programs that prioritize civic engagement and social cohesion.
- Evidence-based interventions on the AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange that are assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence. Please note that many of these interventions have demonstrated effectiveness in improving outcomes for individuals living in underserved communities and that the agency has committed resources to supporting grantees seeking to replicate and evaluate these interventions in similar communities.  
- Veterans and Military Families, Caregivers, and Survivors – a program model that improves the quality of life of veterans and improves the well-being of military families, caregivers, and survivors.
- Rural intermediaries - organizations that demonstrate measurable impact and primarily serve rural communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.
- Environmental stewardship and climate change including renewable energy and energy efficiency, building community resilience, sustainable food systems and agriculture, and conservation and habitat preservation.
- Faith-based organizations.

AMERICORPS FOCUS AREAS & PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Focus Areas
The National and Community Service Act of 1990, amended by the 2009 Serve America Act, emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focuses on a core set of issue areas. To carry out Congress’ intent and to maximize the impact of investment in National Service, AmeriCorps maintains six primary Focus Areas:

- **Disaster Services** Grants provide support to increase the personal preparedness of individuals for disasters; improve individuals’ readiness to respond to disasters; help individuals recover from disasters; and/or help communities mitigate disasters.

- **Economic Opportunity** Grants provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people; help those people have

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1 AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange: [https://americorps.gov/about/our-impact/evidence-exchange](https://americorps.gov/about/our-impact/evidence-exchange)
improved access to services that enhance financial literacy; transition into or remain in safe, affordable housing; and/or have improved employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.

**Education** Grants provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved education outcomes for economically disadvantaged students; improved school readiness for economically disadvantaged children; improved educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools; and/or support economically disadvantaged students prepare for success in post-secondary educational institutions.

**Environmental Stewardship** Grants support responsible stewardship of the environment, while preparing communities for challenging circumstances and helping Americans respond to and recover from disruptive life events: programs that conserve natural habitats; protect clean air and water; maintain public lands; support wildland fire mitigation; cultivate individual and community self-sufficiency and provide reforestation services after floods or fires.

**Healthy Futures** Grants provide support for activities to address the opioid crisis; increase seniors’ ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible; and/or increase physical activity and improve nutrition with the purpose of reducing obesity.

**Veterans and Military Families** Grants positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength, and increase the number of veterans, wounded warriors, military service members, and their families benefiting from service with AmeriCorps.

**Capacity Building** Grants provide support for capacity building activities provided by AmeriCorps members. As a general rule, capacity building activities are *indirect services* that enable organizations to provide more, better, and sustained *direct services* in the above six focus areas. Capacity building cannot be solely intended to support the administration/operations of the organization. Examples include recruiting and/or managing community volunteers, implementing effective volunteer management practices, conducting community assessments that identify goals and recommendations, developing new systems and processes (technology, performance management, training, etc.), or enhancing existing systems and business processes.

**Performance Measures**
Planning Grant applicants do not include performance measures. To submit the application, specific instructions must be followed in the eGrants performance measure module.

**ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION TYPE INFORMATION**

**Eligible Entities**
The following non-Federal entities, as defined in 2 CFR §200.69, who are registered in System for Award Management (SAM) are eligible to apply:
• Indian Tribes, 2 CFR §200.54: In addition to being eligible to apply under this Notice, federally recognized Indian Tribes are also eligible to apply under a separate Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity for Indian Tribes for operating or planning grants.
• Institutions of higher education, 2 CFR §200.54
• Local governments, 2 CFR §200.64
• Nonprofit organizations, 2 CFR §200.70
• States, 2 CFR §200.90

System for Award Management (SAM) & Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number
All applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete and, if a grant is awarded, throughout the life of the Award. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

Applications must also include a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number and an Employer Identification Number (EIN). The UEI number does not replace an EIN. UEI and Dun and Bradstreet (DUNS) numbers are not the same. For UEI and EIN numbers to appear on the application they must be entered in the “My Account” portion of eGrants under “Edit Organization’s Attributes.” Organizations with an existing DUNS number should also provide it in the Organization’s Attributes.

• Current SAM.gov registrants have been assigned their UEI and can view it within SAM.gov.
• New SAM.gov registrants will be assigned a UEI upon registration with SAM.gov and can view it there.
• OCS suggests finalizing a new registration or renewing an existing one at least two weeks before the application deadline to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise.

The legal applicant’s name and address listed on the 424 Facesheet must match the SAM entity name and physical address exactly. Applicants that do not comply with these requirements are ineligible to receive an award.

State and Territory Service Commissions (for Single-State Applicants)
Organizations that propose to operate in only one state must apply through the Governor-appointed State Service Commission. Each state and territory commission administer its own selection process and submits the 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 is unresponsive and will not be reviewed. See the Mandatory Supplemental Information for applicant descriptions.

Federally Recognized Indian Tribes in Montana
Indian Tribes in Montana are eligible to apply to this Notice or may apply directly to AmeriCorps Indian Tribes Grants National Direct Opportunity. If interested in pursuing an AmeriCorps Indian Tribes Grant, please reach out to the OCS Grants Manager for more information.

In addition to Indian Tribes (2 CFR §200.54), tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, and chartered by Indian Tribes are also eligible to apply. An entity applying on behalf of one or more federally recognized tribe(s) must
submit a Tribal Council adopted sanctioning resolution which covers entire of the period of performance. The resolution must identify the entity by name as a tribal organization and indicate whether it is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by an Indian Tribe(s). It must authorize the entity to be the legal applicant and act on behalf of and include the Indian Tribe(s) in a AmeriCorps application for the purpose of conducting the activities and providing the services described in the application.

**Application Types**

**New Application**

Organizations seeking to plan to utilize AmeriCorps resources, including AmeriCorps members, and who have never received AmeriCorps funding, are encouraged to apply to this Montana Formula Planning Grant notice.

Organizations that are seeking to operate an AmeriCorps program and place members in the first year of funding are encouraged to apply to the Montana Formula Operating Grant notice. Montana Formula Operating Programs are eligible to request up to a 6-month planning period. For more information, refer to the Montana Formula Operating Grant Notice of Funding Available.

**Continuation Applications**

Planning Grants are not eligible for continuation grants. Organizations seeking a second or more year of AmeriCorps funding must apply through the Montana Formula Operating Grant Notice of Funding.

**Minimum Thresholds for Planning Applications**

Applications should meet all threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying.

- All applicants should budget staff travel and staff training on the CNCS share of the budget for 1-2 staff to attend the America’s Service Commission’s Program Boot Camp in Fall 2022 in Austin, TX, ServeMontana Symposium in March 2023 in Helena, MT, and National Service Regional Training in Spring 2023, location TBD.

**Other Eligibility Requirements**

Under section 132A(b) of the National Community Service Act, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this Notice. Applications that propose to engage in activities that are prohibited under statutes, regulations, or the terms and conditions of its awards are not eligible to receive funding.

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 for AmeriCorps funding.

AmeriCorps will not award grants to an entity if it is aware that the entity has any unpaid Federal tax liability:

- which has been assessed
- for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and
- that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability
This exclusion will not apply to an entity which a Federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the Federal Government. A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this Notice.

**FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

**Program Authority**
Awards under this Notice are authorized by the [National and Community Service Act of 1990](https://www.csc.gov), as amended, (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.)

**Available Funds**
AmeriCorps Formula State funding process is generally competitive. Formula Planning and Formula Operating Program applications both apply to the same Montana AmeriCorps formula funds available pool. OCS prioritizes Operating Program requests. Funding available for planning grants is subject to funds based on AmeriCorps appropriations, allocations, and approval.

**Estimated Award Amount**
Awards for planning grants may not exceed $70,000. Funds will be used to support strategic development of an AmeriCorps program (no AmeriCorps member positions). ServeMontana will review applications and determine the appropriate award amount, if any.

**Project and Award Period**
If funds are available, planning grant awards cannot exceed 12 months in duration and are not eligible to be continued. ServeMontana expects organizations receiving planning grants will apply for an AmeriCorps operational grant in the next grant year or will responsibly determine that an AmeriCorps program is not the best strategy to meet the stated needs.

The project start date may not occur prior to the date AmeriCorps awards the grant. The earliest suggested start date is September 1, 2022. Applicants recommended for funding should plan to complete any hiring, National Service Criminal History Check, and/or contracting processes prior to the start date, to begin efforts on day one.

**Type of Award**
AmeriCorps planning grants will only be awarded on a line-item cost reimbursement basis. Cost reimbursement grants fund a portion of costs and require documented match.

**FEDERAL FUNDING RESTRICTIONS AND BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS**

**Cost Sharing and Matching**
Awarded Planning Grants are required to generate 24% match. Planning Grants are administered on a cost reimbursement basis. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet the match requirement at the time of application submission. Funds may be from state, local, or private sources; proposed or secured; and cash or in-kind contributions. AmeriCorps permits matching AmeriCorps grant funds from other federal sources but requires programs that use other federal funds as match 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. OCS requires documented permission allowing for funds to be used as match from the non-AmeriCorps federal agency.

**Indirect Costs**

Budget Section III may include indirect costs. However, no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps State grants (45 CFR 2521.95 and 2540.110). Applicants may use the Five/Ten Percent Fixed Administrative Costs, a Federally-approved indirect cost rate, or a 10 percent *de minimis* rate (see [Attachment B](#)), 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 indirect cost rate or that will be using the 10 percent *de minimis* rate must enter that information in the Organization section in eGrants.

**Preaward Costs**

If awarded, the following expenses to the grant are permitted prior to the budget period with prior written approval from OCS:

- National Service Criminal History Checks costs
- Supplies
- Staff time and benefits

These expenses must be submitted for reimbursement with the first Periodic Expense Report.

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**APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

**How to Submit an Application**

Applications must be electronically in eGrants. It is *strongly recommended* that applicants initiate and begin the eGrants application well before the deadline. eGrants requires Microsoft Internet Explorer, any other internet browser will encounter compatibility issues. Applicants should draft the content as a word processing document, then copy and paste the content into the appropriate eGrants fields. The length of a document in word processing software will likely be different than what will print out in eGrants- follow the page limits.

The application’s authorized representative must be the person who certifies and submits the application, and must use their own eGrants account to do so. The submitting authorized representative must be on the organizational chart and should be listed on the authorized signature sheet submitted during contracting.

If a problem arises when creating an account or preparing or submitting the application contact the National Service Hotline at 800.942.2677 or via eGrants Questions. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization name, and the Notice to you are applying. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, applicants must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit the application via eGrants.
Content and Form of Application

In eGrants, enter the following components are considered complete application and required for submission:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet: Populates when applicant completes eGrants fields in Applicant Info and Narratives
  - Executive Summary
  - Program Design
  - Organizational Capability
  - Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
  - Evaluation Summary/Plan
  - Continuation Changes
  - Clarification
- Logic Model
- Standard Form Budget and Budget Narrative (See Attachment B)
- Performance Measure Module (See Attachment A on how to complete)
- Authorization, Assurances, and Certification

Application Package

Information necessary to apply is accessible at https://serve.mt.gov/americorps/americorps-grants/. Applicants may email serve@mt.gov or call 406.444.5547 for printed materials. TTY # 800.833.3722.

Page Limits

Page limits are determined by eGrants print out length. The character limits in eGrants fields do not align with page limits set in the Notice and eGrants will allow an applicant to enter text that exceeds page limits. The length of a document in word processing will likely be different than the eGrants printout.

**OCS strongly encourage applicants to print the Application for Federal Assistance from the “Review and Submit” tab in eGrants prior to submission in order to confirm it does not exceed the page limits. Reviewers will not consider material that is over the page limits in the printed report.**

Application & Narratives must not exceed 7 pages. Anything beyond 7 pages will not be reviewed.

- The application sections that count towards the page limit are the:
  - SF-424 Face Sheet
  - Narrative portions contained in the Executive Summary, Program Design, Organizational Capability, and Cost-Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy narratives.
- The application page limit does not include the Budget; Performance Measures; Continuation, Amendment, Clarification or Evaluation Plan narratives; or any required additional documents.
Submission Dates and Times

5 p.m. Friday, April 15, 2022 - Letter of Intent
Applicants should notify OCS of their intent to apply by submitting a Letter Of Intent (LOI). Submit the LOI by completing the template and emailing it to serve@mt.gov. The following is due with the LOI:

- Readiness Self-Assessment
- SAM.gov registration confirmation
- Current indirect rate cost agreement, if used to claim indirect/administrative costs

5 p.m. Thursday April 28, 2022 - Application Package
Applications are due in eGrants and additional documents emailed to serve@mt.gov.

- This deadline applies to new applicants and includes submission of additional documents. ServeMontana reserves the right to add documents to the RFP and to extend the deadline. Any such changes will be posted on OCS’s website.
- When the application is submitted in eGrants, send an email to serve@mt.gov.

Additional Documents
Only submit items requested in this Notice and Appendix B. Items submitted that are not requested will not be reviewed or returned. Applicants must submit additional documents by the application deadline:

- Federal debt delinquency (if applicable)
- Current organization audit (if applicable)
- Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS) in a MS Word file
- Two letters of support
- Readiness Self-Assessment (If no LOI submitted)
- SAM.gov registration confirmation (If no LOI submitted)
- Current indirect rate cost agreement, if used to claim indirect/administrative costs (If no LOI submitted)

Additional Documents Formatting and Submission
Additional Documents must be emailed to serve@mt.gov with the subject line: [Legal Applicant Name] – [Application ID number].

Emails should include the following information:

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

Tribal Sanctioning Resolution Additional Documents
Entities applying on behalf of a Federally Recognized Tribe must submit sanctioning resolution adopted by the Tribal Council of each Indian Tribe (See the Eligible Applicants) by the time the grant is awarded (typically July).
Late Applications

All applications received after the submission deadline published in this Notice are presumed to be non-compliant. To overcome this presumption, the applicant must provide a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay, including:

- the timing and specific cause(s) of the delay
- the ticket number if a request for assistance was submitted to the National Service Hotline
- any information provided to the applicant by the National Service Hotline
- any other documentation or evidence that supports the justification

OCS must receive the written justification no more than one business day after the submission deadline at serve@mt.gov. Applicants must continue working in eGrants and with the National Service Hotline to submit the application as soon possible. OCS will determine whether to accept a late application on a case-by-case basis. Applicants that do not submit a justification or any other evidence to overcome the presumption of non-compliance within the published timeframe will not be reviewed.

Reviews Criteria New Planning Grant Applicants

Each applicant must describe planning efforts to effectively address significant community need(s). OCS urges applicants to submit high quality applications that follow this Notice and Application Instructions. Application and budget quality are key factors in determining the funding recommendation.

Applications should be based in evidence and includes citation; however, reviewers will not review any documents external to the application.

Applicants should address the assessment criteria. Each narrative subsection heading should be formatted in all capital letters. Reviewers will consider the quality of the application’s response, do not assume all criteria are of equal value. Use subsection points to prioritize the length of information provided in the narratives. Prior to submission, OCS recommends applicants use the assessment criteria and/or score sheet to review your application, or to have a peer review. Scoresheets are available on Serve Montana’s AmeriCorps Grants page.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (REQUIRED – PASS/FAIL)

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

The [Name of the organization] proposes to plan to utilize AmeriCorps members to [how the community need will be addressed] in [the locations the AmeriCorps members may serve]. The organization will learn about AmeriCorps grant and financial management. The organization will complete planning and financial reporting on time. At the end of the planning period, the [Name of the organization will be responsible for developing an AmeriCorps program that will result in [anticipated outcome/benefit and for whom]. In addition, organization will plan to leverage [number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable] who will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing.]

This program will focus on the AmeriCorps focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)]. * The AmeriCorps 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.

PROGRAM DESIGN NARRATIVE (50 POINTS TOTAL)

PROBLEM/NEED (15 points)
• The applicant clearly describes how the community need/problem is prevalent and severe in communities where members will eventually serve, and the need has been well documented with relevant data.
• The applicant clearly describes how the community need has been or will be identified by the program.
• The applicant provides a clear explanation for why a planning grant is needed.

RATIONALE & APPROACH (15 points)
• The applicant clearly describes why they are applying for a planning grant and what they intend to achieve during the one-year planning award period.
• Describe how AmeriCorps members could serve to help you address the community need, and why AmeriCorps interventions are the best solution to address the community need.

Planning Process & Timeline (15 points)
• The applicant describes a clear and logical planning process, including:
  o A detailed description of who is leading the planning process
  o A clear description of how the planning period will be used to develop the necessary components to effectively manage an AmeriCorps program in the future
  o An assessment of community partners and stakeholders
  o A detailed plan for program sustainability
• The planning timeline includes development of the following program elements:
  o Theory of change/logic model
  o Data collection and performance measurement
  o Intervention and evidence base
  o Member training and supervision plans
  o Program compliance and accountability
  o Securing match to support the program
Notice Priority (5 points)
- The applicant proposed program fits within one or more of the 2022 AmeriCorps and Montana funding priorities as outlined in the Funding Priorities section.

Logic Model (0 points)
In the Logic Module section, place N/A in all required narrative boxes.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY (25 POINTS TOTAL)

Organizational Background and Staffing (20 points)
- The applicant provides a brief history of the organization including the year it was established and any funding history with ServeMontana and AmeriCorps, if applicable.
- The applicant describes how it has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan the proposed program.
- The applicant describes the organization’s management and staff structure and the role the board of directors, administrators, and staff members will play in the planning process.
- The applicant describes its prior experience in the proposed area of programming and examples of the organization’s leadership in the community.
- The applicant describes its plans to engage community members and partner organizations in the planning process.
- The applicant has sufficient policies, procedures, and controls in place to prevent, detect, and mitigate the risk of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement, such as appropriate segregation of duties, internal oversight activities, measures to prevent timekeeping fraud, etc.

Culture that Values Learning (5 points)
- The applicant’s board, management, and staff collect and use information, including performance data, for learning and decision making.

COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (25 POINTS TOTAL)

Only enter “See budget” narrative box. Any other narrative will not be reviewed.

Reviewers will assess the quality of the submitted budget to the following criteria.
- Budget is free of mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award
- Contains adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated
- Budget follows the budget instructions
- Required training travel is budgeted for (see Threshold requirements)
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount in the budget

All applicants must complete the budget and ensure the following information is in the source of funds:
- Indirect rate cost used to claim indirect/administrative costs
- Identify non-AmeriCorps funding and resources necessary to support the project indicating the amount, source, whether it is cash or inkind, and if the commitments are proposed or secured.
EVALUATION PLAN (0 POINTS)
Enter N/A.

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.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND AWARD DETERMINATION PROCESS

Applications cleared through this process will be sent the AmeriCorps for final funding determination. The review process will consist of:

- OCS staff review Letters of Intent; Additional Documents and Audit Report, as applicable. If the applicant is determined to have sufficient capacity to manage federal grants, they are eligible to continue the application process.
- Submitted applications are reviewed for compliance with pertinent state and federal regulations, and responsibility to the request for proposal. All compliant and responsive applications will continue through the review process.
- Applications passing staff review will next be reviewed by a Grant Review Workgroup responsible for scoring applications and making funding recommendations.
- The Grant Review Workgroup will individually score the applications then convene with applicants present to arrive at a consensus score and a funding recommendation.
- Grant Review Workgroup recommendations are presented to the Montana Commission on Community Service for approval. If the proposal of the review committee is rejected by the Montana Commission the review process may be repeated.

*If unforeseen challenges or circumstances make it impossible, impracticable, or inefficient to conduct the review process as planned, OCS and AmeriCorps reserve the right to adjust or make changes to the review process at any time. Adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria used to assess applications.*

Funding priority
OCS prioritizes formula funds first by application type and organization experience. Within each tier, applicants are ranked based on consensus scores by the Grant Review Workgroup.

1. Formula Operating Program Continuation requests
2. New/Recompete Formula Operating Program applicants currently administering AmeriCorps programs or planning
3. Planning Grant applicants
4. New Formula Operating Program applicants not currently administering AmeriCorps programs or planning
Review scores will not necessarily have sole bearing on the distribution of funds. However, a lower scoring application will not be recommended for funding at the expense of a higher scoring one. The distribution of funds will be based on the assessment of the Grant Review Workgroup as to how best to carry out the mission of OCS.

OCS and AmeriCorps reserve the right to award applications in an amount other than at the requested level of funding and will document the rationale for doing so.

When making funding recommendations, the Grant Review Workgroup will consider the score of the application, the effectiveness of the program in addressing Montana’s needs, the priorities, if any, set by the Governor and/or State Service Plan, and the input of commission staff.

All applications approved by the Montana Commission to be submitted to AmeriCorps are subject to the following review and selection process:
AmeriCorps will engage Reviewers with relevant knowledge and expertise to assess and provide input on the eligible applications. The review and selection process is intended to produce a diversified set of high-quality programs that represent the priorities and strategic considerations described in this Notice. The determinations made by AmeriCorps reviewers may be different than what the applicant self-determined upon submission of its application.

Selection for Funding
OCS and AmeriCorps review and selection process is designed to identify how well eligible applications are aligned with the application review criteria and build a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:

- AmeriCorps Funding Priorities (See Funding Priorities)
- meaningful representation of
  - geographic diversity
  - rural communities
  - faith-based organizations
  - focus area representation

Based on the evaluation of these strategic considerations, applications may be selected for funding over applications with a greater degree of alignment with the review criteria. In selecting applicants to receive awards under this Notice, the Montana Commission, and the AmeriCorps Chief Executive Officer will endeavor to include a diverse portfolio of applications based on staff recommendations and strategic considerations.

Compliance and Eligibility Review:
OCS Staff conduct a Compliance Review to determine if an application meets the requirements published in this Notice. Reviewing for eligibility ensures only the applications that are eligible for award are reviewed. However, determinations of eligibility can take place at any point during the application review and selection process. Applicants that are determined to be ineligible will not receive an award.

Post-Review Quality Control: After the initial review process is complete, AmeriCorps staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Quality Control assessment.
Pre-Award Risk Assessment: AmeriCorps staff will evaluate the risks posed by each applicant to assess an applicant’s ability to manage federal funds. This evaluation is in addition to assessment of the applicant’s eligibility and the quality of its application based on the Selection Criteria. Results from this assessment will inform funding decisions. If AmeriCorps determines that an award will be made to an applicant with assessed risks, special conditions that correspond to the degree of assessed risk may be applied. Additionally, if AmeriCorps concludes the reasons for an applicant having a poor risk assessment are not likely to be mitigated, the application may not be funded.

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

*Due Diligence:*
  - federal debt delinquency
  - suspension and debarment
  - information available through OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
    - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)
    - U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
    - System for Award Management (SAM)
    - “Do Not Pay”
  - reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance and findings of any other available audits or investigations
  - IRS Tax Form 990
  - Oversight.gov
  - Public Litigation Records

*Operational and Financial Management:*
- Financial stability
- Operational and Financial Management Survey

*Other Programmatic Risks:*
- publicly available information, including information from the applicant organization's website

AmeriCorps may use the results of the review of the risk assessment evaluation in determining which applications to fund. If AmeriCorps concludes that the reasons for applicants having poor risk assessment evaluations are not likely to be mitigated, those applications may not be selected for funding.

**Clarification Process**

As a result of the review, prior to OCS submission to AmeriCorps, and again after submission to AmeriCorps, applicants may receive time sensitive requests to provide clarifying information and/or make changes to the application including changes to the budget, narratives, or performance measures. This information is used in making final recommendations. Failure to respond to OCS/AmeriCorps clarification requests in a timely manner may result in the removal of application from consideration. Applications may be approved for funding with or without clarification requests.
FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates
Depending on availability of funding, AmeriCorps expects that successful State Commissions will be notified no later than early August, contingent on appropriations and AmeriCorps. Applicants will be notified by OCS as to funding determination. This notification is not an authorization to begin grant activities. A formal Notice of Grant Award will be produced and then the state contracting process is initiated.

Uniform Guidance
All awards made under this Notice are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 2205.

Official Guidance
All AmeriCorps active Guidance is available on the agency’s Guidance webpage: https://www.americorps.gov/about/agency-overview/official-guidance. The contents of these documents do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way unless incorporated into a contract or grant agreement. These documents are intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Requests for Monitoring or Payment Integrity Information
AmeriCorps may randomly select and request documentation from recipients in order to monitor the award or to comply with other legal requirements, such as the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on manual hold, reimbursement only status, or other remedies may be applied as appropriate.

AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions
All awards made under this Notice will be subject to the FY 2022 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, and the FY 2022 Program-Specific Terms and Conditions for the particular program (when applicable). These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. AmeriCorps General and Program Specific Terms and Conditions are available at https://americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/directs-territories-tribes.

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. Programs are encouraged to minimize barriers to service without putting their program beneficiaries at genuine risk.

- In general, award subrecipients must conduct an NSCHC for AmeriCorps members and staff funded under, or whose salary is reflected as match on, the award.
- The cost of conducting NSCHC is an allowable expense under the award and the individual subject to the NSCHC may not be required to cover the cost without being reimbursed.
- Failure to conduct a compliant NSCHC may result in significant disallowed costs.
- AmeriCorps strongly encourages applicants to review the regulations and additional guidance to fully understand how to comply with the requirements.
• AmeriCorps strongly encourages funded applicants to utilize the two AmeriCorps-approved vendors to conduct the required NSCHCs.

A NSCHC consists of a check of the:

1. National Sex Offender Public website through NSOPW.gov (nationwide check);
2. State criminal history record repository or agency-designated alternative for the individual's State of residence and State of service; and
3. Fingerprint-based check of the FBI criminal history record database through the State criminal history record repository or agency-approved vendor.

All checks must be conducted, reviewed, and an eligibility determination made before the individual begins work or service.

An individual is not eligible to serve or work in a position subject to the NSCHC requirements if:

• the individual refuses to consent to a criminal history check;
• makes a false statement in connection with a criminal history check;
• is registered, or is required to be registered, on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; or
• has been convicted of murder.

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

Use of Material
To ensure materials generated with AmeriCorps funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, OCS 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 are required to submit a variety of reports which are due at specific times during the life cycle of an award. All reports must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time.

Planning grantees are required to provide four progress reports based on performance periods, more information can on progress reporting can be found at: https://serve.mt.gov/americorps/program-directors/. Grantees are also required to submit monthly and semi-annual financial reports. A final financial report is due at the end of the grant.
AGENCY CONTACTS

Montana Governor’s Office of Community Service
PO Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620
Grants Manager: 406.444.5547 joe.naiman-sessions@mt.gov   General email: serve@mt.gov

OTHER INFORMATION

Technical Assistance
OCS will host technical assistance call to answer questions about the funding opportunity and eGrants. AmeriCorps strongly encourages all applicants to participate in these sessions. Call-in information for the technical assistance calls is on OCS Grants website.

In addition to consulting the Application Instructions, Mandatory Supplemental Information, and AmeriCorps regulations, applicants are encouraged to consult the ServeMontana website for updated materials during the RFP period.

Re-Focusing Funding
AmeriCorps/OCS 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 six 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 that they are not required to respond unless the OMB control number and expiration date are current valid. (See 5 C.F.R. 1320.5(b)(2)(i).) This collection is approved under OMB Control #: 3045-0047, Application Instructions, State and National Competitive, New and Continuation, Expiration Date: September 30, 2023.

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

*OCS and AmeriCorps reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, if unforeseen challenges or urgent circumstances make it impossible, impracticable, or inefficient to conduct the review process as planned. Any adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria used to assess applications.*
Appendix A: General AmeriCorps Planning Grant Requirements

To be accomplished and documented during the planning grant award period.

**Organization Capability**

- Leadership and oversight for program and within organization
- Financial Management systems
  - Financial and accounts procedure manual
  - Plans for securing match
  - Accounting program required to manage AmeriCorps funding
- Policies and procedures
- Position description for program staff
- Capacity to develop and implement National Service Criminal History Checks (NSCHC)

**Define and Document Community Needs**

- Problem to be addressed is a true need of the community
- Local data to support the need
- Community benefit

**Identify Evidence-based Service Intervention to be provided and Program Structure**

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

**Identify Partners and Service Locations**

- Current partners and past relationships
- Collaboration with local faith based and or small community-based organizations
- Service site identification with national service
- Member supervision strategy
- Site supervisor training strategy
- Commitment letters from potential host sites

**Develop Logic Model and Identify Performance Measures**

- Develop logic model as per AmeriCorps definition
- National Performance Measures (alignment with logic model)
  - Outputs
  - Outcomes
  - Data collection policies, procedures, and tools
Member Recruitment and Management

Program Systems in Place
- Policy and procedure manual including all member procedures, along with programmatic policies and procedures

Develop Member Position Descriptions in compliance with AmeriCorps
- Minimum requirements and characteristics
- Primary/secondary duties

Member Recruitment
- Recruitment plan
- AmeriCorps National Recruitment webpage
- Diversity within the program, recruitment from locations where the service occurs
- Inclusivity, members with disabilities and reasonable accommodation

Member Orientation & Training
- Member onboarding plan and procedures, including NSCHC
- Training for members (program orientation, service site orientation, ongoing) including:
  - Policy and procedures
  - Life after AmeriCorps
  - National Identity to AmeriCorps and storytelling tips
  - Member time keeping
- Affiliation with AmeriCorps, training and issuance of official service gear

Service Site/Community Partner Plan/Fiscal Agent

Service Site
- Service site recruitment plan
- Site supervisor position description
- Orientation and ongoing training plan for service sites, supervisors, and staff
- Justification for the number of members placed at a site
- Site visit plan for ensuring compliance at host sites

Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement
- Service Site agreements
  - Outline responsibilities
  - Policy and procedure expectations
  - Member placement
  - Fiscal responsibilities; example Financial support from sites; cash and in-kind match

Application, Interview, and Selection
- Application packet to distribute to interested persons
- Screening and interview process
  - Final selection of members
  - Matching members to host sites
Member Supervision

- Plans for convening members on a regular basis
- Member evaluation materials and procedures for:
  - Mid-term evaluation
  - End of term evaluation
- Plans and materials for visiting service sites

Manuals and Tracking Instruments

- Member handbook for each service location
- Member service agreement that includes the required items in the grant Terms and Conditions
  - Position description
  - Term type and dates
  - Drug free workplace policy
  - Discipline, suspension, and termination policy
  - Grievance procedure
  - HS Diploma, equivalency, or agreement to obtain prior to using Education Award

Procedure to assure the program obtains the required documentation

- Signatures
- Health care enrollment/waiver
- Media/photo release
- Childcare benefit (as applicable)
- Tax forms
- Member’s eligibility to serve

Public Outreach Plan

- Plan to increase awareness and educate the community about the program
- Program website and brochures
- Develop standard messaging about program that includes AmeriCorps and identifies as service

Sustainability Plan

- Plan for non-AmeriCorps, community volunteer generation, training, and management for:
  - Episodic (event based/one time)
  - Recurring volunteers
- Current relationship with funders such as foundations and corporations
- Plans for the next three to five years
- Plans for the program to continue if AmeriCorps resources are cut
Submitt[ing your Application in eGrants]

New Applicants
New applicants must establish an eGrants account by accessing this link:

In eGrants, before Starting Section I you will need to:
- Start a new Grant Application
- Select a Program Area: AmeriCorps
- Select a “FY 2022 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission (New and Continuations)”
  - The correct eGrants listing will state “Due Jan. 5, 2022.” Note while the listing is correct, the deadline is not. Follow the deadlines listed in this Notice.

Your application consists of the following components. Make sure to complete each section.

I. Applicant Info
Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF 424 Facesheet.
If you can only submit your application in hard copy, please follow the instructions in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.
- If you are applying for the first time, have only received formula funding in the past, or are a former grantee (non-formula) whose last AmeriCorps grant was received more than five years ago, select New. (Note: previous
Enter or update the requested information in the fields that appear. The contact person needs to be the person who can answer questions about the application.

II. Application Info
In the Application Info Section enter:

- Areas affected by your proposed program. Please include the two-letter abbreviation with both letters capitalized for each state where you plan to operate. Separate each two-letter state abbreviation with a comma. For city or county information, please follow each one with the two-letter capitalized state abbreviation.
- Requested project period start and end dates. The length of the project period is specified in the Notice.
- Under the Applicant Info tab, in the Program Information section, the program title must include “PLANNING.”
- The Application is Subject to Review by State Executive Order 12372 Process: This is pre-filled as “No, this is not applicable.”
- Indicate Yes or No if the applicant is delinquent on any federal debt. If yes, provide an explanation.
- State Application Identifier: Enter N/A.

III. Narratives
The narrative section of the application is your opportunity to convince reviewers that your project meets the selection criteria as outlined in the Notice. Below are some general recommendations to help you present your project in a way the reviewers will find compelling and persuasive.

- **Lead from your organization’s strengths and be explicit.** Do not make the mistake of trying to stretch your proposed program description to fit funding priorities and special considerations articulated in the regulations or the Notice.
- **Be clear and succinct.** Do not use jargon, boilerplate, rhetoric, or exaggeration. Describe clearly what you intend to do and how your project responds to the selection criteria.
- **Avoid circular reasoning.** The problem you describe should not be defined as the lack of the solution you are proposing.
- **Explain how.** Avoid simply stating that the criteria will be met. Explicitly describe how the proposed project will meet the criteria.
- **Don’t make assumptions.** Even if you have received funding from AmeriCorps in the past, do not assume your reviewers know anything about you, your proposed program, your partners, or your beneficiaries. Avoid overuse of acronyms.
- **Use an impartial proofreader.** Before you submit your application, let someone who is completely unfamiliar with your project read and critique the project narrative.
- **Follow the instructions and discuss each criterion in the order they are presented in the instructions.** Use headings to differentiate narrative sections by criterion.
In eGrants, you will enter text for

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

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

**Narrative Categories**

Reviewers will assess the application against the Selection Criteria. To best respond to the criteria listed in the Notice and Application Instructions, we suggest that you include a brief discussion of each bullet if it pertains to your application. See the [Notice of Funding Available Review Selection for Planning Grants](#) for full details.

Each application must clearly describe an effectively describe significant community problem and how the organization is suited to meet the need with AmeriCorps resources. Specifics about the selection criteria are published in the Notice.

1. **Executive Summary**
   
   Please complete the executive summary template per the instructions in the *Notice*.

2. **Program Design (50 points)**
   
   In assessing Rationale and Approach/Program Design, reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant demonstrates the community need, why AmeriCorps resources are particularly suited to address them, and the organization’s ability to plan and implement AmeriCorps resources.

3. **Organizational Capability (25 points)**
   
   Reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant demonstrates organizational background and staffing and structures, including compliance and accountability, to support the planning effort.

4. **Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 points)**
   
   In assessing Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, reviewers will examine the degree to which the budget is cost effective and appropriate for the program being proposed. Enter N/A in the narrative as the assessment will be of the budget.

5. **Evaluation Summary or Plan (0 points)**
   
   Enter N/A.

6. **Amendment Justification (0 points)**
   
   Enter N/A. This field will be used if you are awarded a grant and need to amend it.

7. **Clarification Information (0 points)**
   
   Enter N/A. This field may be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period. Please clearly label new information added during clarification with the date.

8. **Continuation Changes (0 points)**
   
   Enter N/A. This field is used to enter changes in continuation requests.

**IV. Logic Model**
Enter N/A in all narrative fields of this section. A required task of funded planning grants is to develop a Logic Model for the proposed program.

V. Performance Measures
Performance measures are not required for planning grants, but all applicants must submit performance measures in order for the application to be able to be submitted. See Attachment A for instructions for entering performance measures for planning grants.

VI. Program Information
In the Program Information Section, applicants must check the relevant boxes in order to be considered for AmeriCorps’ assessment of the strategic considerations and Special Initiatives. Applicants should only check the boxes for those characteristics that represent a significant part of the program.

AmeriCorps Funding Priorities
Check any priority area(s) that apply to the proposed program. Only select Priorities that represent a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes.

Grant Characteristics
Check any grant characteristics that are a significant part of the proposed program.

VII. Documents
In addition to the application submitted in eGrants, additional documents are required to be sent via email to serve@mt.gov as part of your application package. After the documents have been submitted via the instructions in the Notice, change the status in eGrants from the default “Not Sent” to the applicable status “Sent,” “Not Applicable,” or “Already on File at AmeriCorps.” As applicable, submission and appropriate status are required for the following:

1. Evaluation - Planning grants are not required to submit an Evaluation. Select “Not Applicable” if no Evaluation is submitted, or “Sent” once submitted to OCS.
2. Labor Union Concurrence - Select “Not Applicable.” Planning grants should determine if a Labor Union Concurrence is necessary as part of the planning activities.
3. Federally-approved Indirect Cost Agreement – Applications that include a federally approved indirect cost rate amount in their budget must enter the current approved indirect cost rate agreement information into eGrants at the same time they submit their application. See Attachment C.
4. Other Documents – Send all Additional Documents listed in the Notice: Additional Documents to the e-mail listed in the serve@mt.gov, as part of your application. Then select “Sent.”
5. Delinquent on Federal Debt - Any applicant who checks Yes to the question on federal debt delinquency must submit a complete explanation to serve@mt.gov no later than the due date.

VIII. Budget
Applicants are encouraged to use the Budget Worksheet to draft a budget prior to entering it into eGrants.

**Match Requirements**
Program requirements, including requirements on match are located in the AmeriCorps Regulations and summarized below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Type</th>
<th>Match Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost Reimbursement including States and Territories without Commissions, Indian Tribes</td>
<td>Minimum grantee share is 24% of costs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Subrecipients are required to meet match rate and have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements with cash or in-kind contributions at least 24% of the project’s total Operating Costs (Section I) plus Administrative Costs (Section III).
- The acceptable sources of matching funds are federal, state, local, and/or private sector funds in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements.
- In the “Source of Funds” field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the match. Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal) for your *entire match*. (The total amount in the Source of Funds field should match the total amount in the budget narrative exactly.) Define all acronyms the first time they are used.

*Note*: AmeriCorps legislation permits the use of non-AmeriCorps federal funds as match. Please discuss the intent of using federal funds to match an AmeriCorps grant with the other federal agency prior to submitting your application. Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act requires that grantees who use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to AmeriCorps. If you use other federal funds as match, you must ensure you can meet the requirements and purpose of both grants. Grantees who use federal funds as match will be required to report the sources and amounts on the Federal Financial Report (FFR).

**Preparing Your Budget**
The proposed budget should be sufficient to perform the tasks described in the narrative. Reviewers will consider the information provided in the budget sections in the assessment of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criterion.

Follow the detailed budget instructions in the Attachment B to prepare the budget. OCS recommends preparing the budget in the same order as indicated in the Budget Worksheets available on the Grants Webpage.

As you enter the detailed budget information, eGrants will automatically populate a budget summary and budget narrative report. Prior to submission be sure to review the budget checklist (Attachment) to ensure the budget is compliant. In addition, eGrants will perform a limited compliance check to validate the budget. If eGrants finds any
compliance issues you may receive a warning and/or error message. All errors must be resolved before you can submit your budget. Some eGrants warnings are not required to be resolved to submit.

Prepared budgets must meet the following criteria:
- Each amount requested must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.
- Itemize each cost and present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.
- Do not include unallowable expenses, e.g., entertainment costs (which include food and beverage costs) unless they are justified as an essential component of an activity.
- eGrants only accepts whole dollar amounts. Do not include fractional amounts (cents).
- Please add the cost of the NSOPW, state check and/or FBI check for criminal history checks for each covered position in the budget. If funds are not budgeted, an explanation for how the costs will be covered must be noted in the budget.

Organizations must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and the requirements of the Uniform Guidance. Refer to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200) for allowable, allocable, and reasonable cost information, as well as, audit requirements, including the need to provide audits to the Clearinghouse if expending over $750,000 in federal funds.

IX. Funding/Demographics
In the Funding/Demographics Section enter the information requested which could include:
- Other Revenue funds: Enter “0”
- Number of Volunteers Generated by AmeriCorps members: enter “0.”
- Number of disadvantaged youth enrolled: enter “0”

X. Review, Authorize, and Submit
Applicants must submit common federal government-wide Representations and Certifications through SAM.gov. Entities creating new registrations in SAM.gov and existing entities completing their annual registration renewals in SAM.gov are required to review financial assistance representations and certifications before their registration can be activated. As entities renew and re-register their accounts, the data collected make SAM.gov the federal repository for the government-wide information.

eGrants requires the entire application is reviewed and verified before submitting, by completing the following sections in eGrants:
- Review
- Authorize
- Assurances
- Certifications
- Verify
- Submit
Read the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications carefully (https://espan.cns.gov/cnsmisc/ECERTS.HTM, and https://espan.cns.gov/cnsmisc/EASSUR.HTM). The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant’s Authorized Representative or designee and must have an active eGrants account to sign electronically. An Authorized Representative is the person in your organization authorized to accept and commit funds on behalf of the organization. If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant’s Authorized Representative, that person must log into his/her eGrants account and proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, his/her name will override any previous signatory who may appear and show on the application as the Authorized Representative.

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

A copy of the governing body’s authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file with OCS.

Be sure to check the entire application to ensure there are no errors before submitting it. When verifying the application, eGrants will also generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected prior to submission.
Note: Performance measures are NOT required for planning grants. However, to successfully validate the application for submission eGrants requires you to complete this section. Follow the instructions below.

Performance Measure Module Home Page
To start the module, click the “Begin” button on the Home Page. The Home Page will summarize the Performance Measure Module and provide links to edit the completed parts of the module. Navigate sections of the module using the tabs at the top of each page. Once the Performance Measure Module has been initiated, clicking “Continue Working” will return the user to the last tab when the module was closed. To edit the interventions, objectives, MSYs, and slot allocations, click “Edit objectives/MSYs/Slots.”

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

- **To submit the application, you are required to select a Focus Area, an objective, and an intervention.** First click on a Focus Area. Then click on an objective and select an intervention. For all sections, select “other” from the list.

Member Service Years (MSY)/Slots Tab
On this tab, you will enter information about the allocation of MSY. **Planning Grant applicants must enter “1” when entering the total MSYs. Otherwise, eGrants will continue to give error messages and prevent submission.**

- Next, enter **“1” for the number of objectives** selected on the previous tab.
- In the slots column, enter **“1” for number of members** that will be assigned to each objective.

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

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

Data Collection Tab

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

Summary Tab
The summary tab shows all of the information you have entered in the module.

- To print a summary of all performance measures, click “Print PDF for all Performance Measures.”
• To print one performance measure, expand the measure and click “Print This Measure.”
• Click “Edit Performance Measure” to return to the Performance Measure tab.
• Click “Edit Data Collection” to return to the Data Collection tab.
• Click “Validate Performance Measures” to validate this module prior to submitting the application.

ATTACHMENT B: DETAILED BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS

These instructions have been modified for AmeriCorps Planning Grant Applicants, and are to be used with the AmeriCorps 2022 Application Instructions. Submitted budgets must comply with the instructions.

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

A. Personnel Expenses
Under “Position/Title Description,” list each staff position separately and provide salary and percentage of effort as percentage of FTE devoted to this award. Each staff person’s role listed in the budget must be described in the application narrative and each staff person mentioned in the narrative must be listed in the budget as either CNCS and/or Grantee share. Because the purpose of the planning grant is to enable national service and stimulate community volunteerism, do not include the value of direct service performed by community volunteers. However, you may include the value of volunteer services contributed to the organization for organizational functions such as accounting, audit work, or training of staff and AmeriCorps members.

• Budget for one full time staff person. If awarded, ideally the planning staff person will be retained by the organization to see the planning and if applicable, program grant, process through.

B. Personnel Fringe Benefits
Under “Purpose/Description,” identify the types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position. Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Worker’s Compensation, Retirement, SUTA, Health and Life Insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate line item. If a fringe benefit amount is over 30%, please list covered items separately and justify the high cost. Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates, but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item.

C. Staff Travel
Describe the purpose for staff travel by trip needed for the planning activities such as outreach, site development and training. Provide a calculation that itemizes costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel-related expenses multiplied by the number of trips/staff. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information. Reimbursement should not exceed the federal mileage rate unless a result of applicant policy and justified in the budget narrative. Only domestic travel is allowable.

All applicants must include funds in this line item for travel for staff to attend one or more CNCS-sponsored training events. There are typically two to three such opportunities per year. Budget for at least 2 of the following:
AmeriCorps Service Commission’s Program or Fiscal Boot Camp, National Service Regional Training, ServeMontana Symposium. ServeMontana will determine which meeting(s) are applicable on an annual basis after review of the planned CNCS events.

Itemize the costs. For example: One staff member will attend the National Service Regional Training in Albuquerque, NM. 1 staff X $550 airfare + $25 ground transportation + (4 days X $200 lodging) + $100 per diem = $1475.

**C. Member Travel**  
Leave blank, not appliable to planning grants.

**D. Equipment**  
Leave blank, not appliable to planning grants.

**E. Supplies**  
Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials. Any single item costing $1,000 or more must be individually listed.

**F. Contractual and Consultant Services**  
Include costs for consultants related to the project’s operations, except training or evaluation consultants, who will be listed in Sections G. and H., below. There is not a maximum daily rate.

**G. Staff Training**  
Include the costs associated with training staff on project requirements and training to enhance the skills staff need for effective project implementation, i.e., project or financial management, team building, etc. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate. There is not a maximum daily rate. Include registration costs for conference event(s) in this section.

**G. Member Training**  
Leave blank, not appliable to planning grants.

**H. Evaluation/Data Collection**  
Include costs for project evaluation or data collection tool development, including additional staff time or subcontracts, use of qualified consultants, purchase of instruments, and other costs specifically for this activity not budgeted in Personnel Expenses.

**I. Other Program Operating Costs**  
National Service Criminal History Checks should be budgeted in this Section.
Section II. Member Costs

A. Living Allowance
Leave blank, not appliable to planning grants.

B. Member Support Costs
Leave blank, not appliable to planning grants.

Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs

Definitions
Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives AmeriCorps funds and do not include particular project costs. These costs may include administrative staff positions. For organizations that have an established indirect cost rate for federal awards, administrative costs mean those costs that are included in the organization’s indirect cost rate agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the organization’s overall operation and are further described in Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance.

Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs (choose either A, B, OR C)
Applicants choose one of three methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a CNCS-fixed percentage rate method, a federally approved indirect cost rate method, or a de minimis method. Regardless of the option chosen, the CNCS share of administrative costs is limited to 5% of the total CNCS funds actually expended under this grant. Do not create additional lines in this category.

A. CNCS-Fixed Percentage Method: Five/Ten Percent Fixed Administrative Costs Option
The CNCS-fixed percentage rate method allows you to charge administrative costs up to a cap without a federally approved indirect cost rate and without documentation supporting the allocation. If you choose the CNCS-fixed percentage rate method (Section IIIA in eGrants), you may charge, for administrative costs, a fixed 5% of the total of the CNCS funds expended. In order to charge this fixed 5%, the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10% of all direct cost expenditures.

To determine the maximum CNCS share for Section III: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding shares of Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can request as Corporation share. The factor 0.0526 is used to calculate the 5% maximum amount of federal funds that may be budgeted for administrative (indirect) costs, rather than 0.0500, as a way to mathematically compensate for determining Section III costs when the total budget (Sections I + II + III) is not yet established. Enter this amount as the CNCS share for Section III A.
To determine the Grantee share for Section III: Multiply the total (both CNCS and grantee share) of Sections I and II by 10% (0.10) and enter this amount as the grantee share for Section III A.
Enter the sum of the CNCS and grantee shares under Total Amount.
B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate
If you have a federally approved indirect cost rate, this method must be used and the rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs, not to exceed the 5% maximum federal share payable by AmeriCorps. Specify the Cost Type for which your organization has current documentation on file, i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost rate. Supply your approved IDC rate (percentage) and the base upon which this rate is calculated (direct salaries, salaries and fringe benefits, etc.). AmeriCorps does not restrict the overall indirect cost rate claimed. It is at your discretion whether or not to claim your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate in the Rate Claimed field.

Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both the CNCS and Grantee shares, as prescribed by your established rate agreement (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other). Then multiply the appropriate direct costs by the rate being claimed. This will determine the total amount of indirect costs allowable under the grant.

To determine the CNCS share: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as the CNCS share of indirect costs.

To determine the Grantee share: Subtract the amount calculated in step 2 (the CNCS share) from the amount calculated in step 1 (the Indirect Cost total). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for administrative costs.

C. De Minimis Rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs
Organizations who have never, at any point in time, held a federally negotiated indirect cost rate (except for those non-Federal entities described in Appendix VII to Part 200—States and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, paragraph (d)(1)(B)) and who receive less than $35 million in direct federal funding, may indefinitely use a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Additional information regarding what is included in MTDC and use of this option can be found at 2 CFR 200.414(f) and 200.68. If this option is elected, it must be used consistently across all federal awards.

Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal) for your entire match. The total amount in the Source of Funds field should match the total amount in the budget narrative exactly.

Define all acronyms the first time they are used. The total amount of Source of Match should equal the Grantee Share amount.

Note: the value of the Segal Education Awards that members earn for their service is not identified in the budget. Also, the childcare reimbursements provided to eligible members is not included in the budget.
C. Source of Match
In the “Source of Funds” field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the match. Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal) for your entire match. (The total amount in the Source of Funds field should match the total amount in the budget narrative exactly.) Define all acronyms the first time they are used. The total amount of Source of Match must equal the Grantee Share amount.

ATTACHMENT C: EGRANTS INDIRECT COST RATE (ICDR) USER INSTRUCTIONS
Applicants claiming indirect costs on AmeriCorps awards are required to enter the following indirect cost rates in eGrants: federally negotiated rates, state negotiated rates, and the use of de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Recipients of AmeriCorps State and National awards may only charge 5% of their negotiated rate to the federal share of the award, with the remaining balance being charged to match (See 45 CFR §§ 2521.95 and 2540.110).

Once a rate is entered and saved in eGrants, it cannot be edited. If users inadvertently enter incorrect information, a new entry must be submitted with the correct information.

Entry for the IDCR screen can be accessed using the following steps:

1) From the eGrants Home screen, in the lower panel under Managing My Account, click on My Account

2) From the My Account screen, under Edit My Organization Info, click on Add and View Indirect Cost Rate
3) From the **Add and View Indirect Cost Rate** screen, select **add a new** to add a rate or **cancel** to back out of the screen.

Field by field instructions can be found by clicking the “?” located next to Indirect Cost Rate or Indirect Cost Rate Record.

If **add a new** is selected, the screen below will pop up.
4) **Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate to record?** Respond Yes or No. If **NO** is selected, users cannot go any further and nothing will be recorded. If **Yes** is selected, users can continue.

If your organization will be claiming a current, approved indirect cost rate on any AmeriCorps award, it must be reported on this page. The rate information you record will be used in all award negotiation and reviews until it is superseded by a new approved rate, or expires. Applicants will have the opportunity to identify, in application submissions, if they elect to use a lesser percentage of an approved rate.

5) **Rate Type:**
   - **Federally Negotiated** – select if your rate has been negotiated by your cognizant federal agency. Cognizance is determined by the agency which provides the highest amount of direct federal funding;
   - **State Negotiated** – select if your rate has been negotiated by a state agency or other pass through entity; or
   - **10% of MTDC** – select if your organization qualifies for and elects to use the 10% *de minimus* rate of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). Organizations qualify for this rate if they have NEVER had a federally negotiated rate. State entities must also not receive more than $35 million in direct federal funding.

   **Rates must be used consistently across ALL federal awards.**

6) **Issuing Agency.** Respond by selecting the federal agency that approved your rate, or if the federal agency who issued your rate is not listed, select **Other**, or if your rate is issued by a state agency select **Other**. Identify federal agencies using the drop-down list. If your rate is approved by a federal agency other than the ones listed, notify your portfolio manager. Other federal agencies may be added as needed.

7) **Acceptance Date.** Enter a valid date. The acceptance date is usually identified where the rate was signed by the issuing state or federal agency.

8) **Rate Status.** Select one of the following options: **Final, Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, Other, or Other – 10%.**

   Rates issued by federal agencies will almost always be final or provisional. However, if your organization has formally notified a federal or state agency of your eligibility and intent to use the 10-percent of MTDC rate, select **Other – 10%**. If your organization has a **predetermined** or **fixed rate**, select those options accordingly. If a state rate indicates a term that is not listed here select **Other**. Additional rate status options may be added as needed.

9) **Effective From.** Enter a valid date. The effective from date is found on your indirect cost rate document. If using the 10-percent of MTDC rate, enter today’s date or the date your organization formally started charging costs under the 10-percent of MTDC rate.

10) **Effective To.** Enter a valid date. The effective to date is found on your indirect cost rate document. If your organization has received approval to extend your rate, enter the end date of the extension.

11) **No Expiration.** Check or leave unchecked.
If your rate does not have an expiration date, as is the case with the use of the 10 percent of MTDC rate, check this box, otherwise, leave unchecked.

12) **Extended?** Respond Yes or No.
   If the rate “effective to” date has been extended with approval of the federal cognizant agency under authority of the 2014 Omni Circular, respond **Yes**. If it is not an extended rate effective to date, respond **No**.

13) **Rate Base.** Enter up to 500 characters including spaces.
   Enter the text as found on your indirect cost rate approval document. For rates issued by state agencies, enter either the rate base used to determine the indirect cost pool as stated on your indirect cost rate approval document or “State Rate N/A.” If you need more than 500 characters, indicate “Summary” and record the most important content.

14) **Treatment of Fringe Benefits.** Enter up to 500 characters including spaces.
   Enter the text as found on your indirect cost rate approval document. For rates issued by state agencies, enter either the how fringe benefits were treated in determining the indirect cost rate as stated on your indirect cost rate approval document or “State Rate N/A.” If you need more than 500 characters, indicate “Summary” and record the most important content.

15) **Treatment of Paid Absences.** Enter up to 500 characters including spaces.
   Enter the text as found on your indirect cost rate approval document. For rates issued by state agencies, enter either the how paid absences were treated in determining the indirect cost rate as stated on your indirect cost rate approval document or “State Rate N/A.” If you need more than 500 characters, indicate “Summary” and record the most important content.

16) When you have completed all of the above entries, click the **save & close** button at the bottom of the page.

- If you would like to cancel your entry, click the **cancel** button and the entry will be cancelled. All entry information will be lost and no entry will be shown.
- **Once a rate is saved it cannot be modified.**
- If users inadvertently enter incorrect information, a new entry must be submitted with the correct information.

17) **Order of Rates** - Once an entry is saved, users will be able to see the rates they have entered. Rates will display in the order of entry. Entry of rates will provide users and AmeriCorps with a historical record which can be used to clarify indirect cost rate inquiries for monitoring, consistent record maintenance, and audits.

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

*Thank you for your interest in an AmeriCorps Planning Grant!*

*End of AmeriCorps State Grant Formula Request for Proposal (RFP)*