Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity

PART I: OVERVIEW

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service
Funding Opportunity Title: AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY 2012
Announcement Type: Amended announcement. Initially issued 8.29.11
CFDA Number: 94.006

Dates: Applications are **due January 18, 2012** at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Successful applicants will be notified by May 31, 2012.

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

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

In alignment with the Serve America Act, this AmeriCorps State and National (AmeriCorps) *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity* will focus AmeriCorps grantmaking in six Focus Areas identified by the Act:
- Disaster Services
- Economic Opportunity
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Healthy Futures
- Veterans and Military Families

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

In the AmeriCorps competition this year, CNCS especially seeks to prioritize investment in three areas of its work. CNCS will continue to focus on national service programs that improve academic outcomes for children, youth, and young adults. This focus reflects the extensive experience and past success of national service programs in education, and aligns with the efforts of the Department of Education. In addition, CNCS seeks to increase its investment in programs that serve veterans and military families or engage veterans in service. CNCS will also focus

investment in programs that increase community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation.

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

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

The following information pertaining to this competition for new and recompete applications will be published on the CNCS website at (http://nationalservice.gov/about/open/grants.asp), within a period not to exceed 90 business days after all grants are awarded:
- Blank external review template.
- List of all compliant applications submitted.
- Executive summaries of all compliant applications prepared by the applicants as part of the application.
- Copies of the SF424 and Program Narrative submitted by applicants for successful applicants.
- Summary of external reviewer's comments for successful applications.

PART II: DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

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

CNCS is carrying out Congress's intent by targeting AmeriCorps funding in these six focus areas. In accordance with the Act, through this *Notice* and its other activities, CNCS seeks to:
- Direct the power of national service to solve a common set of challenges.
- Expand opportunities for all Americans to serve.
- Build the enduring capacity of individuals, organizations and communities to effectively use service and volunteering to solve community problems.
- Embrace innovative solutions that work.

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

Upon successful completion of their service members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust.

Brief descriptions of the six Focus Areas follow.

Disaster Services:
Grants will help individuals and communities prepare, respond, recover, and mitigate disasters and increase community resiliency. Grant activities will:
- increase the preparedness of individuals,
- increase individuals' readiness to respond,
- help individuals recover from disasters, and
- help individuals mitigate disasters.

Economic Opportunity:
Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people. Grant activities will help economically disadvantaged people to:
- have improved access to services and benefits aimed at contributing to their enhanced financial literacy,
- transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable housing, and
- have improved employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.

Education:
Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged people, especially children. CNCS is particularly interested in program designs that support youth engagement and service-learning as strategies to achieve high educational outcomes. Grant activities will improve:
- school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children,
- educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools, and
- the preparation for and prospects of success in post-secondary education institutions for economically disadvantaged students.

Environmental Stewardship:
Grants will provide direct services that contribute to increased energy and water efficiency, renewable energy use, or improving at-risk ecosystems, and support increased citizen behavioral change leading to increased efficiency, renewable energy use, and ecosystem improvements particularly for economically disadvantaged households and economically disadvantaged communities. Grant activities will:
- decrease energy and water consumption,
- improve at-risk ecosystems,
- increase behavioral changes that lead directly to decreased energy and water consumption or improve at-risk ecosystems, and
- increase green training opportunities that may lead to decreased energy and water consumption or improve at-risk ecosystems.

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

Veterans and Military Families:
Grants will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength. Grant activities will increase:
- the number of veterans and military service members and their families served by CNCS-supported programs, and
- the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service provision through CNCS-supported programs.

Brief description of Capacity Building follows.

Capacity Building:
In addition to the six Focus Areas described above, grants also will provide support for capacity building activities provided by national service participants. As a general rule, CNCS considers capacity building activities to be *indirect services* that enable CNCS-supported organizations to provide more, better and sustained *direct services*. Capacity building activities cannot be solely intended to support the administration or operations of the organization. Examples of capacity building activities include:
- Recruiting and/or managing community volunteers.
- Implementing effective volunteer management practices.
- Completing community assessments that identify goals and recommendations.
- Developing new systems and business processes (technology, performance management, training, etc.) or enhancing existing systems and business processes.

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

Our National Performance Measures are split into two groups: Priority Measures and Pilot Measures.
- Priority Measures are a subset of the original National Performance Measures Pilot with the addition of capacity building measures.

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

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

Encore Programs

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

B. What are the 2012 AmeriCorps funding priorities?

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

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

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

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

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

II. AWARD INFORMATION

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

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

III. ELIGIBILITY

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

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

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

2. States and Territories without Commissions
Applicants in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, South Dakota, and the U.S. Virgin Islands apply directly to CNCS due to the lack of a State Commission in these areas. Applicants are eligible to apply for funds for member support and program costs. State or Territory government entities are not eligible to apply. Successful applicants will be funded out of the applicable state or territory's formula funding.

3. Indian Tribes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. Cost Reimbursement Grants (non-fixed-amount)
A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR 2521.60.

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

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

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

4. Alternative Match
Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at §2521.60(b). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed program is either located

in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined in the Application Instructions. Applicants that plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request at least 60 days prior to the application deadline.

D. Other Requirements

1. What are the requirements regarding member living allowance?
The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members that is between $12,100 (minimum) and $24,200 (maximum) per member except as noted below.

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

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

Table 1: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

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

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

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

Professional Corps Grantees
Professional Corps members must receive a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance set forth in the Living Allowance

section above. Professional Corps member salaries are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget.

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

CNCS considers comparative costs per MSY in making funding decisions. One MSY is equivalent to at least 1700 service hours, a full-time AmeriCorps position. The CNCS cost per MSY is determined by dividing the CNCS share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum amount an applicant may request from CNCS per MSY is determined on an annual basis. Continuation and recompeting grantees requesting a higher cost per MSY than in the previous year must include a compelling rationale for this increased cost. This applies even if the increased cost per MSY is less than the maximum. Beginning in 2012, new and recompeting state commission sub-grantees/applicants will be held to the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type. This does not affect continuation programs currently funded at a higher cost per MSY.

CNCS will consider higher cost per MSY for Indian Tribes programs that include a justification for the higher cost in their application. This explanation should detail the lack of local resources that make a higher cost per MSY necessary. Please include this request as part of the response to the Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy section of the selection criteria.

Table 2: 2012 Maximum Cost per MSY

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

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

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

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

We expect grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible. Retention rates will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and re-compete processes. Applicants that do not retain members are likely to receive a decrease in funding in subsequent years. We recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective

programs depending on the program model. Continuation or Recompeting grantees that have not achieved full retention in the most recently completed program year must provide an explanation and a corrective action plan in the application.

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

Table 3: Term of Service and FY12 Education Award

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	FY12 Education Award
Full Time	1700	$5,550
One-Year Half Time	900	$2,775
Two-Year Half Time	900	$2,775
Reduced Half Time	675	$2,114
Quarter Time	450	$1,468
Minimum Time	300	$1,175

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

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

B. Notice of Intent to Apply
State commissions and multi-state applicants and Indian Tribes are encouraged to send an e-mail by December 15, 2011 to americorpsgrants@cns.gov, stating intent to apply. Commission sub-applicants should not provide this information.

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

C. Universal Identifier
Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and register with the Central Contractor's Registry (CCR). The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number.

DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.

The website indicates a 24-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by following instructions found here: http://smallbusiness.dnb.com/establish-your-business/12334338-1.html.

CCR is the primary registrant database for the U.S. Federal Government. CCR collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid registration, which must be renewed annually.

We urge applicants that are not already registered with the CCR to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a DUNS number in order to register with the CCR. It typically takes 3-5 days to finalize CCR registration. To register online go to www.bpn.gov/CCR.

D. Content and Form of Application Submission
1. Submitting in eGrants
CNCS requires that all applicants submit applications electronically via the CNCS web-based application system, eGrants. Applications must arrive at CNCS by January 18, 2012 at 5 p.m. ET in order to be considered. This requirement applies to continuation grantees, as well as new and recompeting applicants. CNCS reserves the right to extend the submission deadline. Any notice of such extended deadline will be posted in eGrants.

We recommend that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the document into eGrants no later than 10 days before the deadline.

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

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

2. Page Limits
In eGrants, applicants will enter text for

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

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

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

3. Late Applications
CNCS may consider an application after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter explaining the extenuating circumstance which caused the delay. The letter must be sent to LateApplications@cns.gov within the 24-hour period following the deadline. Late applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

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

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

Multi-state applicants and grantees must:
- Consult in a timely manner with the State Commission of each state in which the organization knows it will operate prior to application submission and describe this consultation in their applications.
- Provide the State Commission with contact information for multi-state programs in their state after grants are awarded, and update these lists on an annual basis.

- Participate in the State Commission's annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state service plan, as well as appropriate training and other events.
- Include the State Commission on the multi-state grantee's mailing list and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

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

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

F. Submission Dates and Times
Applications are due January 18, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

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

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

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

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

1. Program Design (50 percent)
In assessing Program Design, reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant demonstrates how AmeriCorps members are particularly well-suited to solving the identified community needs.

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

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

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

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

2. *Organizational Capability (25 percent)*
Reviewers will assess the extent to which:
- The organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan, implement and evaluate the proposed program.
- The organization has secured, or describes an effective plan for securing, the financial and in-kind resources necessary to support program implementation and to demonstrate community stakeholder support.
- The organization has the ability and structure to ensure its and its subgrantees and/or service locations' compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including prohibited activities.
- Multi-state applicants have consulted with state and territory service commissions to ensure non-duplication and coordination of CNCS resources.
- Current or previous AmeriCorps grantees filled the member positions they were awarded and retained the AmeriCorps members they enrolled or have provided an explanation for less than 100% enrollment and retention.
- Current or previous AmeriCorps grantees have met performance targets and demonstrated compliance with grant terms and conditions.

3. *Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)*
For cost-reimbursement grants, reviewers will assess the extent to which:

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

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

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

Specifically, the review and selection process is designed to:

1. Identify eligible applications that satisfy the following considerations:
- High alignment with criteria.
- Priorities, in the order of preference outlined in Section I.B., above.

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

2. Compile a balanced portfolio based on the following characteristics:
- Geographic representation.
- Equitable treatment of
    - Rural and urban communities.
    - Small and large programs.
    - Single and multi-state programs.
- Focus area representation.
- Strategic Characteristics:
    - Organizations that build capacity for individuals, nonprofits and communities to solve problems.
    - Organizations and/or program models that recruit and engage traditionally underrepresented populations in service and expand opportunities for both youth and adults to serve; particularly for new Americans, low-income individuals, rural

residents, older Americans, veterans, members of faith-based organizations, communities of color, Native Americans, and people with disabilities.
- o Organizations that embrace innovative approaches to solving problems.

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

1. Compliance Review

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

2. External Review

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

3. Post Review Quality Control (Quality Control)

After the external reviewers complete their assessment, staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review may be used for:
- Applicants with identified discrepancies during external review.
- Applications ranked first by a State Commission that received low scores in External Review.
- Applications for which there are significant panel anomalies.
- Applications submitted by high-performing current grantees that received a low score in external review.

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

4. Selection of Applications for Internal Review

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

5. Internal Review

CNCS staff will assess Program Design, particularly focusing on evidence-basis for the proposed solution(s) to the identified community problem(s), appropriateness of national service as a solution, and potential quality of the member experience; Organizational Capability; and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy. Submitted program evaluations will be considered at this stage. Following staff assessment, some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information. Clarification information is used by CNCS staff in making

final recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to requests for information in a timely fashion will result in the removal of applications from consideration.

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

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

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

E. Will the priorities also be used in making decisions regarding continuation expansion requests?
Yes. Requests for continuation expansions will be assessed using the same priorities as the new and recompete applications.

F. How long will the selection and review process take?
Processing and selecting applications for funding will require approximately four months from the date of the Application Deadline.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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

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

C. What is the Project/Award Period?
CNCS generally makes grant awards for three years, with funding in annual increments. Grantees will be eligible for non-competitive continuation funding in the second and third year contingent on the availability of appropriations, compliance, and satisfactory performance. The project start date may not occur prior to the date CNCS awards the grant. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.

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

D. What are the reporting requirements for these grants?
Grantees other than fixed-amount grantees and Professional Corps are required to provide annual progress reports, bi-annual financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740. Professional Corps programs are required to provide annual program and financial reports only. Fixed-amount grantees are required to provide annual performance reports only. All grantees provide quarterly expense reports through the Payment Management System at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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

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

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

VII. AGENCY CONTACT

This Notice is available at www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp. The TTY number is 202–606-3472. For further information or for a printed copy of this Notice, call (202) 606-7508. For questions regarding multi-state or Indian Tribes applications submitted directly to CNCS, please call (202) 606-7508 or send an e-mail to americorpsgrants@cns.gov . A list of all State Commissions can be found here: http://www.americorps.gov/about/contact/statecommission.asp. The mailing address is:

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

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION TO KNOW BEFORE APPLYING

In addition to consulting the Notice and AmeriCorps regulations as directed in these instructions, multi-state applicants may also consult the CNCS web site for a schedule of technical assistance

conference calls, Frequently Asked Questions, and other resources targeted to multi-state applicants. Applicants in a single state should consult with their State Commission.

IX. NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

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

Disaster Services
(new) D1: Number of individuals that received CNCS-supported services in disaster preparedness
(new) D2: Number of individuals that received CNCS-supported services in disaster response
(new) D3: Number of individuals that received CNCS-supported services in disaster recovery
(new) D4: Number of individuals that received CNCS-supported services in disaster mitigation
Education
ED21: Number of children that completed participation in CNCS-supported early childhood education programs
ED23: Number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of social and/or emotional development
ED24: Number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of literacy skills
ED25: Number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of numeracy (math) skills
ED2: Number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs
ED4A: Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that were sustained by the CNCS-supported program for at least the required time period
ED5: Number of students with improved academic performance in literacy and/or math
(new) ED27: Number of students in grades K-12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring or other education program, including CNCS-supported service learning, who demonstrated improved academic engagement
ED6: Number of students that improved their school attendance over the course of the CNCS-supported program's involvement with the student
Veterans and Military Families
V1: Number of veterans that received CNCS-supported assistance
(new) V8: Number of veterans' family members that received CNCS-supported assistance
V7: Number of family members of active duty military service members that received CNCS-supported assistance
(new) V9: Number of active duty military service members that received CNCS-supported assistance
V2: Number of veterans engaged in service opportunities as a National Service Participant or volunteer.
V10: Number of military family members engaged in service opportunities as a National Service Participant or volunteer.

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

Economic Opportunity[1]
O5: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless individuals, receiving housing services
O11: Number of economically disadvantaged individuals, including homeless individuals, transitioned into safe, healthy, affordable housing
Environmental Stewardship[2]
EN4: Number of acres of national parks, state parks, city parks, county parks, or other public and tribal lands that are improved
EN5: Number of miles of trails or waterways (owned/maintained by national, state, county, city or tribal governments) that are improved and/or created
Healthy Futures[3]
H8: Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food, transportation, or other services that allow them to live independently
(new) H9: Number of homebound OR older adults and individuals with disabilities who reported having increased social ties/perceived social support
H10 (formerly O6): Number of individuals receiving emergency food from food banks, food pantries, or other nonprofit organizations
H11 (formerly O7): Number of individuals receiving support, services, education and/or referrals to alleviate long-term hunger
(new) H12: Number of individuals that reported increased food security of themselves and their children (household food security) as a result of CNCS-supported services
Capacity Building
(new) G3-3.1: Number of community volunteers recruited by CNCS-supported organizations or National Service Participants
(new) G3-3.2: Number of community volunteers managed by CNCS-supported organizations or National Service Participants
(new) G3-3.3: Number of organizations implementing three or more effective volunteer management practices as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or National Service Participants

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

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

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

Tier 3: Pilot Measures

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

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

Environmental Stewardship

EN1: Number of housing units of low-income households and structures weatherized or retrofitted to significantly improve energy efficiency

EN2: Number of low-income households home and public building energy audits conducted

EN3: Number of individuals receiving education or training in energy-efficient and environmentally-conscious practices, including but not limited to sustainable energy and other natural resources, and sustainable agriculture

EN6: Number of tons of materials collected and recycled

Healthy Futures

H1: Number of individuals who are uninsured, economically disadvantaged, medically underserved, or living in rural areas utilizing preventive and primary health care services and programs

H2: Number of clients to whom information on health insurance, health care access and health benefits programs is delivered

H3: Number of clients enrolled in health insurance, health services, and health benefits programs

H4: Number of clients participating in health education programs

H5: Number of children and youth engaged in in-school or afterschool physical education activities with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity

H6: Number of children and youth receiving nutrition education with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity

H7: Number of clients receiving language translation services at clinics and in emergency rooms

Veterans and Military Families

V3: Number of veterans assisted in pursuing educational opportunities

V4: Number of veterans assisted in receiving professional certification, licensure, or credentials

V6: Number of housing units developed, repaired, or otherwise made available for veterans

Capacity Building

(new) G3-3.4 Number of organizations that received capacity building services from CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants

(new) G3-3.5: Number of staff and community volunteers that received training (of one or more types) as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants

(new) G3-3.6: Number of organizations that completed a community assessment identifying goals and recommendations with the assistance of CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants

(new) G3-3.7: Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were recruited by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants

(new) G3-3.8: Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were managed by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants

(new) G3-3.9: Number of organizations reporting that capacity building activities provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants have helped to make the organization more efficient

(new) G3-3.10: Number of organizations reporting that capacity building activities provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants have helped to make the organization more effective

(new) G3-3.11: Number of new systems and business processes (technology, performance management, training, etc.) or enhancements to existing systems and business processes put in place as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants

(new) G3-3.12: Number of organizations that monitored their progress towards the goals identified in their community assessment with the assistance of CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants

(new) G3-3.13: Number of additional activities completed and/or program outputs produced by the program as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants in a) Disaster Services, b) Economic Opportunity, c) Education, d) Environmental Stewardship, e) Healthy Futures and/or f) Veterans and Military Families

(new) G3-3.14: Number of organizations that have experienced an increase in requests for their programs and services as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants

(new) G3-3.15: Number of additional types of services offered by organizations as a result of capacity building services provided by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants in a) Disaster Services, b) Economic Opportunity, c) Education, d) Environmental Stewardship, e) Healthy Futures and/or f) Veterans and Military Families
(new) G3-3.16: Dollar value of cash resources leveraged by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants
(new) G3-3.17: Dollar value of in-kind resources leveraged by CNCS-supported organizations or national service participants
(new) G3-3.18: Number of new beneficiaries that received services as a result of capacity building efforts in: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and/or Veterans and Military Families
(new) G3-3.19: Number of new beneficiaries from one or more targeted or underserved populations (counts by target population, e.g., racial or ethnic group) that received services as a result of capacity building efforts in: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and/or Veterans and Military Families