



2019-2020

North Carolina Request for Grant Applications

NC Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service
Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699
919-814-2063, 919-814-2064



Key Dates

INTENT TO APPLY

It is **mandatory** that **all** State Formula applicants submit an Intent to Apply for funding to the NC Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (**Volunteer NC**) unless an exception is granted by Volunteer NC. Optional for new Competitive applicants.

Please submit the Intent to Apply Form 2019-2020 (Page 3) of this supplemental information and email it to volunteernc@nc.gov by **Monday, January 14, 2019**.

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL DUE DATES

AmeriCorps State Competitive (Invitation Only): November 16, 2018

AmeriCorps State Formula (New, Recompets, Continuations): March 7, 2019

NOTE: All applications are due in eGrants and hard copies in the Volunteer NC office by 12:00 midnight EST on the dates shown above. Please be sure to bind your hard copy applications. DO NOT USE: binders, binder clips, staples or folders with your application.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SESSIONS

*REQUIRED ATTENDANCE for NEW APPLICANTS

To ensure applicants are better equipped with the necessary information to prepare their application, Volunteer NC will host a series of training and technical assistance (TTA) conference calls. The sessions are identical and new applicants only need to participate in **one**. Please email megan.mcleod@nc.gov to register for the conference call. The deadline to sign-up is noon the day before the session.

December 3, 2018 (10am-11:30am)

December 10, 2018 (10am-11:30am)

Intent to Apply Form 2019-2020

This form is due in the Volunteer NC office by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time by the deadlines listed above.

Contact Person(s): _____

Organization Applying: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

What type of funds are you going to request? (Please check only one; see NOFO for more information)

Competitive (Invitation Only)

AmeriCorps Partnership Challenge

New or Recompete State Formula

Continuation State Formula

New Professional Corps Program

Which CNCS Focus Area does your program primarily address? (See NOFO and Glossary for more info)

Rural intermediaries

Healthy Futures

Economic Opportunity

Education

Veterans & Military Families

Safer Communities

Faith-based organizations

Other/Non-CNCS Focus Area (Please describe)

How many AmeriCorps members does your program plan to engage? _____

If you would like to hand deliver this form on or before the deadline, the address is:

North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service
ATTN: Megan McLeod
116 West Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27603

Please review the NOFO, Application Instructions, and cited Code of Federal Regulations that outline the requirements for AmeriCorps applications before submitting this Notification of Intent to Apply form.

Overview of the North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service

The mission of Volunteer NC is to promote and facilitate service and volunteering to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement in the state. The Commission encourages community service and volunteerism to solve unmet needs in the state and strives to enhance the quality of life for North Carolinians by promoting service as an integral part of the growth of North Carolina. Above all, the Volunteer NC supports national service members and volunteers who impact the lives of others and help meet critical community needs.

The Volunteer NC is located in the Office of the Governor. A Commission of appointed members guides Volunteer NC. Commission members are appointed by the Governor and serve three-year terms. They represent the geographic and demographic diversity of the state.

FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Estimated Available Funds: Volunteer NC reserves the right to prioritize funding of existing awards over new awards. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

Project and Award Period: The project period is generally one year with a start date proposed by the applicant. Start dates must occur BEFORE November 1 and cannot be longer than one calendar year.

Evidence Based Intervention Planning Grants: In some cases, Volunteer NC may award a Planning Grant to State Formula applicants. Planning Grants must be used to develop national service models that seek to integrate members in innovative ways into evidence-based interventions. Program can use the grant to improve their model and apply for State Formula grant the following year.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION-STATE FORMULA

New Applicants

Volunteer NC encourages applicants to request **at least 5 Member Service Years (MSYs)** to be considered for funding in North Carolina.

Recompete Applicants

Recompete Applicants for State Formula funding are organizations that have received AmeriCorps funding before and are ending their third year of a three-year grant.

Continuation Applicants

Continuation Applicants are organizations that are currently in year one or two of a three-year grant. Continuation Applicants must submit an application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. Please see the Application Instructions for these requirements. Requests by existing continuation applicants for increases in the level of funding or number of positions will be assessed using the criteria under this NOFO.

Types of Applicants

State and Territory Service Commissions (for Single-State Applicants)

Organizations that propose to operate only in North Carolina must apply through the North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service. Each state and territory commission administers its own selection process and submits to CNCS the applicants it selects to compete for funding. Single-State applicants must contact the North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service to learn about their state processes and deadlines which are earlier than the CNCS deadlines and have additional requirements.

Coordination among State Commissions and National Direct Applicants

CNCS expects State Commissions and National Direct applicants to consult and coordinate activities at the local level, as specified in Section 131 of the NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12583). This consultation is designed to ensure the most effective use of national service resources and lead to enhanced coordination.

To ensure coordination:

National Direct applicants who plan on operating in North Carolina, except federally-recognized Indian Tribes, must fill out the [National Direct Consultation Form](#). The link to this form can also be found on the [Volunteer NC website](#).

Threshold Issues

Volunteer NC will only review and consider applications that support programs with a **minimum of 5 MSYs**.

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Address to Request Application Package

*Please note that single-state applicants applying to the Volunteer NC through this RFGA have different deadlines, more required additional documents and different instructions than CNCS. Please ensure that you reference this North Carolina information to complete your proposal and not only the FY19 Notice of Funding Opportunity from CNCS.

Submission Dates and Times

Notification of Intent to Apply: Submitting a Notification of Intent to Apply by the deadline of 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time is mandatory for all State Formula applicants unless an exception is granted by Volunteer NC. Submitting an intent does not obligate the organization to apply for funding. The Commissions deadline for intent to apply is as follows: State Formula- Monday, January 14, 2019

Application Submission Deadline

Applications are due via eGrants by November 16, 2018 for Competitive Applicants, and March 7, 2019 for State Formula Applicants. An application is only complete if it includes all required documentation located in the Application Instructions and is received by the application due date. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Required documents that are not possible to attach in eGrants are due to Volunteer NC office in a bound hard copy by the application deadline. These documents are specified on pages 9-11. Do not submit any other supplementary materials such as videos, brochures, or any other item not requested in the application instructions. The Commission will not review or return them.

Submission of Additional Documents

Applicants must submit all required additional documents to each of the emails: megan.mcleod@nc.gov and Susan.Dean@nc.gov.

Cost Sharing or Matching

Alternative Match: Applicants that plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request directly to megan.mcleod@nc.gov by the application due date. The Volunteer NC must approve an alternative match schedule before submitting to CNCS on behalf of state applicants. See the Application Instructions for more information.

Other Submission Requirements

CNCS's web-based management system is [eGrants](#). Applicants will need to establish an account in order to start their application.

If technical issues 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. You must then submit a brief paragraph including your eGrants ticket number with your explanation of the technical issues that prevented you from submitting the application in eGrants by the deadline to the NC Commission via email to megan.mcleod@nc.gov before the 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time deadline.

In the event of prolonged unavailability of the eGrants system on the date of submission, Volunteer NC reserves the right to extend the eGrants submission deadline. Any notice of extension of the deadline will be sent to all organizations that submitted a Notification of Intent to Apply.

APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Criteria

Program Design: For the Volunteer NC Peer scoring criteria, please see 2018-2019 AmeriCorps Peer Reviewer Form on the [Volunteer NC Website](#).

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy: Having a low cost per Member Service Year (MSY) is a competitive advantage. New applicants that submit with a low cost per MSY and re-competing applicants that submit with a lower cost per MSY than previously funded may receive higher priority for funding. Applicants requesting a higher cost per MSY than funded in previous years must justify their requests. If an applicant requests above the maximum cost per MSY, it must justify its request. Please note that such requests are rarely approved.

Peer Review Process (*State Formula process): The Commission's review process involves identifying individuals who can review grant applications and provide feedback to the Commission. Qualifications for peer reviewers include knowledge or some familiarity of national service programs; willingness to read and provide feedback of grant applications; excellent oral and written skills. Reviewers must also submit a resume and sign a conflict of interest form.

Each new and re-compete application (3 year grant ending, submitting a new proposal) will be reviewed by a team of three peer reviewers. To ensure the integrity of the review process, no one who is directly involved in the planning and or submission of an AmeriCorps program proposal will be allowed to evaluate an application. Examples of direct or indirect involvement include; being a volunteer, staff or board member of an organization submitting a proposal; being a member of a planning group that developed a proposal.

Commission staff provides training on the application process, criteria of quality programs, and instruction on how to complete the ranking forms, prior to the scheduled peer review. Reviewers are required to read and individually rank proposals before the date of the peer review in-person session.

On the day of the review, reviewers are divided into teams and a lead facilitator is selected for each application. Peer reviewers each rank the proposal and provide a group score and written feedback. At the end of the day, Commission staff collects the written feedback and written scores.

Staff Review Process

Each new and recompetete (3 year grant ending, submitting a new proposal) application will be read by two or three staff members. The two or three scores are averaged to come up with an average score of the two or three staff scores. Also, while Commission staff members are reviewing each new and recompetete application, they request clarification from any applicant who wasn't entirely clear in the application.

Recompetete Applicants

Recompetete programs will be evaluated based on peer/staff reviews and program performance the past two or three years. If program performance is poor, the program may not be recommended for funding by the Program Committee.

Continuation Applicants

Legal applicants within a three-year funding cycle are required to submit a continuation AmeriCorps application each year. The legal applicant may be required to also include a copy of its most recent A-133 audit report or other audited financial statements. The Commission will conduct a staff review of continuation applications by reviewing the budget, performance measures and all continuation changes. Continuation programs will have continued funding for their three-year grant unless program performance is extremely poor. The Commission will also conduct a Program Performance Evaluation (Excel Sheet) and programs will be given a rating. The following factors will be considered when making funding recommendations for continuation applications: member recruitment and retention rates, progress towards meeting approved performance measurements, results of fiscal and programmatic site visits, ability to meet deadlines and submit quality work products, ability to meet required match, 30-day Enrollment and Exit Compliance. A funding recommendation report will be provided to the Program Management Committee. The Program Management Committee will use the funding recommendation report to make a funding recommendation to the full Commission. Programs that receive a poor or weak rating may be eliminated or receive cuts to their requested MSYs or budget.

New Applicants

Programs that have never received an AmeriCorps grant or that were not funded the previous year will be evaluated mainly by their peer and staff review scores, cost per MSY, AmeriCorps Readiness Assessment and focus area(s).

Federal Award Notices

CNCS will make awards following the grant selection announcement. CNCS anticipates announcing the State Formula awards by the end of July 2019 contingent on timely full year appropriations. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions via email by Volunteer NC. This notification is not an authorization to begin grant activities. The Notice of Grant Award signed by the Grant Officer is the authorizing document for grant activities. Unsuccessful applicants will also receive a notification that their application was not approved for funding.

National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such CNCS funding until National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is initiated.

REQUIRED COMPONENT CHECKLIST

The following components are **required** to be submitted with hard copy submissions for **all** Competitive and State Formula applications: Applications that are **missing any may not** be considered.

- SF 424 Face Sheet (Application Information and Applicant Information Sections)*
- Program Model, Design, Location and Focus (Applicant Information Section)*
- Narrative (Narratives Section)*
- Service Categories (Performance Measures Section)*
- Performance Measures (Performance Measures Section)*
- Evaluation Summary or Plan, applicable (Evaluation Section)*
- Additional Required Information (Documents Section)*
- Budget Worksheet, Budget Form and Budget Checklist (Attachments D and G **or** E, F and G)*

- Logic Model*
- Form A – Certifications and Assurances
- Form B – Organizational Capacity Survey
- Form C – Source of Matching Funds Chart and written confirmation of match commitment (if match is \$7,500 and over)

- Organizational Chart
- Significant community partners letter of support and commitment (if applicable)
- Labor Union concurrence (if applicable)
- Audit
- Evaluation (If applicable)
- Federally Approved Indirect Cost Agreement (if applicable)
- Tax Exempt Status Letter from IRS (if applicable)

* printed from eGrants

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

New applicants need to 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.”

In eGrants, before starting Section I you will need to:

- Start a new Grant Application
- Select a Program Area (AmeriCorps)
- Select a NOFA (see the NOFO for a listing)

The following **REQUIRED** application components must be submitted via eGrants <https://egrants.cns.gov> by the application deadline described above. See *Application Instructions* for submission instructions.

- Applicant Info
- Application Info
- Narratives
- Logic model
- Performance measures
- Program Information
- Documents
- Budget
- Funding/Demographics
- Operating Sites
- Review, Authorize, and Submit

Requirements for Application Submittal to NC Commission Office

In addition to an eGrants submittal, all **competitive and State formula** grant applicants must submit hard copies of their application as described below. **Hard copies must arrive (NOT be postmarked) at the Volunteer NC office by the deadlines described above.**

*Please review the information below carefully as there are different requirements depending on whether you are a new, recompetete or continuation applicant. If you have a question about what type of applicant you are, please contact the Volunteer NC.

COMPETITIVE SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

- One (1) unbound original (blue ink original signatures), single-sided
- Two (2) bound copies of the complete application (can be double-sided) (components listed below and in component checklist)

STATE FORMULA NEW AND RECOMPETE SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

In addition to an eGrants submittal, only **State formula** (***new and recompetete programs**) grant applicants must submit bound hard copies as described below:

- One (1) unbound original (blue ink signatures), single-sided
- Six (6) bound copies of the complete application (components listed below and in component checklist) Please do not submit binders, binder clips, or stapled applications.

STATE FORMULA CONTINUATION SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

In addition to an eGrants submittal, **State formula Continuation applicants** must submit hard copies as described below:

- One (1) unbound original (blue ink signatures), single-sided

- Three (3) bound copies of the complete application (can be double-sided) (components listed below and in component checklist) Please do not submit binders, binder clips, or stapled applications.

The following components are required to be submitted with hard copy submissions for all competitive and State Formula applications:

- SF 424 Face Sheet (Application Information and Applicant Information Sections)*
 - Required Component Checklist
 - Program Model, Design, Location and Focus (Applicant Information Section)*
 - Narrative (Narratives Section)*
 - Service Categories (Performance Measures Section)*
 - Performance Measures (Performance Measures Section)*
 - Evaluation Summary or Plan, if necessary (Evaluation Section)*
 - Additional Required Information (Documents Section)*
 - Budget Worksheet, Budget Form and Budget Checklist (Attachments D,E, F and G)
 - Logic Model*
 - Form A – Certifications and Assurances
 - Form B – Organizational Capacity Survey
 - Form C – Source of Matching Funds Chart (Required) and written confirmation of match commitment (If match is \$7,500 or over)
 - Organizational Chart
 - Significant community partners letter of support and commitment (if applicable)
 - Audit (North Carolina State agencies and universities do not need to provide copies)
 - Evaluation (if applicable)
 - Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate (if applicable)
 - Tax Exempt Status Letter from IRS
- *Submitted through eGrants**

GRANT TERMS AND REQUIREMENTS

Allowable Costs

For any cost to be allowable under a grant award based on an application for AmeriCorps program funding, the cost must be accorded consistent treatment using policies and procedures that apply uniformly to both the federal grant funded activities and to all other activities of the applicant. AmeriCorps funding can be used for member support costs (including the minimum living allowance, FICA, and health insurance) and for costs to operate the AmeriCorps program (including staff, evaluation, administration and other operating costs). Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and OMB circulars for grant management, allowable costs, and audits, including providing audits, as required in OMB Circular A-133.

Program Income

Revenue earned as a direct result of activities funded under the grant, or program income, is allowable, but programs must establish clear systems and tracking to demonstrate that program income is allocated back to the AmeriCorps program and used for the sole purpose of the work of the AmeriCorps program in the period in which it is earned.

Reimbursement Process

All expenses are reimbursed through the submission of expense reports to Volunteer NC. Reimbursement requests will not be paid until the executed contract between the Volunteer NC and the grantee is in place. Following the receipt of an executed contract, grantees may invoice for expenses on a monthly basis. Grantees must demonstrate documented matching funds with each invoice (not applicable for fixed amount

grants). On average, grantees will receive reimbursement within 15 days of submitting a properly completed monthly expense report by the 20th of the following month. Applicants should have at least 60 days of adequate cash flow to cover the costs of the AmeriCorps program.

Pre-Award Costs

Volunteer NC (through authorization from CNCS) may authorize grantees to incur amount for CNCS and Grantee share (cash as well as donated goods/space/services) before the start date of their grant. Authorization would not increase the overall budget amount awarded to an organization. Authorization would only affect Sections I and III of the budget, and accordingly, would not allow the organization to incur any Section II costs prior to the official start date of the grant from the Volunteer NC. Grantees must submit a request in writing to the Volunteer NC to consider an approval of pre-award expenses.

Point of Contact

The Volunteer NC requires that all programs designate appropriate staff members to serve as the primary and secondary program and fiscal staff contacts. The primary contact will have the primary responsibility to manage the AmeriCorps program from both a programmatic and fiscal perspective. These individuals will serve as the primary contacts between the organization and the Volunteer NC throughout the duration of the AmeriCorps program. Grant funds can be utilized for personnel expenses. Timely responsiveness throughout the project period is tracked as a grant performance criterion.

Monitoring and Management Responsibilities

Programs are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the grant and grant-supported activities to ensure compliance with applicable federal requirements and achievement of programmatic goals. Monitoring will cover each program, function, or activity. Programs are responsible for ensuring program quality and ensuring the program has an impact on the problems facing the communities in which it operates. This includes monitoring the service of members. Programs are responsible for the timely and accurate documentation of member eligibility and service hours. Each program will develop systems that closely track and monitor these requirements.

Records Retention

All financial records, supporting documentation, statistical records, evaluation and performance data, member information, and personnel records must be retained for three years after the close of the Volunteer NC AmeriCorps grant from CNCS under which your organization's application is funded.

Grant Compliance

The specific requirements for AmeriCorps grantees are set forth in regulations, provisions, application guidelines, and the Notice of Grant Award and Terms and Conditions. In addition to being thoroughly familiar with the regulations, AmeriCorps grantees should read application guidelines carefully, as well as the regulations published in the Federal Register on July 8, 2005 (45 C.F.R. §§ 2520-2550). As with all federally-funded programs, it is the responsibility of each AmeriCorps grantee to ensure appropriate stewardship of federal funds entrusted to them. It is important to make sure all staff, sites and partners are familiar with the rules and regulations.

NC Commission Sponsored Training

Each year, Volunteer NC hosts up to three mandated AmeriCorps training events for program staff (Program Directors, Program Assistants, Fiscal Staff) and members to provide tools and resources, as well as review program requirements or updates. These trainings will include Program Director/CFO start up training, a Member Launch, and an additional member training. Trainings are generally one-two days in length. **Applicants must budget sufficient funds to cover transportation and lodging (if necessary) for the trainings.** Attendance at Volunteer NC mandatory training events is tracked as a grant performance criterion.

Days of Service

Programs will participate in one or more days of service and any statewide service projects designated by Volunteer NC. National days of service include Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday, Global Youth Service Day, National Volunteer Week, 9/11 Day of Remembrance, and Make a Difference Day.

OnCorps Reports

Applicants **must** include **\$1,000 in CNCS funds** for required use of OnCorps Reports costs for member timesheets, fiscal drawdowns and progress reporting.

ASC Membership

Applicants **must** include **\$250 in CNCS funds** for required membership to America's Service Commission (ASC) in the budget under the Staff Training Budget Line Item. Successful applicants will be invoiced and will be required to sign-up for ASC membership.

Other Operation Costs

Applicants **must** include \$54 plus the cost of the state check for criminal history checks for each covered position in the CNCS share of the budget. Continuation applicants may apply for expansions – dollars, MSY, and/or members. Any person that is used as in-kind salary match or any person drawing a salary from the CNCS grant must have at least a two-part background check.

Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery

AmeriCorps State Programs in NC are required to provide disaster preparedness and response training for members. Members can receive American Red Cross shelter management training, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training or other disaster preparedness and response training. The trained members become a resource and force multiplier for local Emergency Management officials in the event of disasters or emergencies.

Non-Duplication

Grant funds may not be used to duplicate services that are available in the locality of the program or project. The grantee may not conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a state or local government agency in which the grantee entity resides.

Non-Displacement

The grantee may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages or employment benefits, as a result of a member serving in a program or project.

Supplementation

AmeriCorps funding cannot be used to supplant or replace existing funds.

Technology Requirements

Grantees are required to secure and/or maintain reliable access to electronic mail and the internet as part of their grant. The majority of reporting requirements and communications to grantees are completed through the internet and electronic mail. Applicants without sufficient access to computers and related hardware may budget for such items in their funding request. The Volunteer NC uses many web-based tools to administer AmeriCorps grants, such as eGrants, My AmeriCorps, OnCorps Reports, etc.

If you have any questions which pertain to the Application Instructions or the Notice of Opportunity Funding, please email Megan McLeod, Volunteer NC at megan.mcleod@nc.gov or Susan Dean, Volunteer NC at susan.dean@nc.gov.