NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Federal Agency Name: **Corporation for National and Community Service**
Funding Opportunity Title: FY 2020 AmeriCorps State and National Grants
Announcement Type: Initial Announcement
CFDA Number: 94.006

Disclosure: Publication of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (Notice) does not obligate the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to award any specific number of grants or to commit any particular amount of funding. The 2020 President's Budget proposed the elimination of CNCS. The actual level and timing of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

Important 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. Please submit the Intent to Apply Form 2020-2021 (on website) via email to megan.mcleod@nc.gov by **Monday, January 31, 2020.**

AmeriCorps Competitive *(Invitation Only)***: November 22, 2019**

AmeriCorps State Formula *(New, Recompetes, Continuations)***: March 5, 2020**

I. Table of Contents

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

The mission of CNCS is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, CNCS has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations (see *Eligible Applicants* section) proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions/practices to strengthen communities. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust that members can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

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.

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.

2. Funding Priorities

CNCS seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in the following areas:

1) Economic Opportunity
   -evidence-based interventions on the CNCS Evidence Exchange.
   In order to qualify for this priority, the applicant must be assessed as having:
   - moderate or strong evidence by the reviewers.
     https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/CNCS_Economic_Opportunity_Evidence_Brief_2019_508.pdf   OR
   - increasing economic opportunities for communities by preparing people for the workforce.
2) Education
   - evidence-based interventions on the CNCS Evidence Exchange. In order to qualify for this priority, the applicant must be assessed as having Moderate or Strong

evidence by the reviewers.
https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/CNCS_Education_Evidence_Brief_112318_508.pdf

3) Healthy Futures
- evidence-based interventions on the CNCS Evidence Exchange. In order to qualify for this priority, the applicant must be assessed as having:
  - Moderate or Strong evidence by the reviewers.
    https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/HF_Evidence_Brief_FINAL_v2_508.pdf OR
  - reducing and/or preventing prescription drug and opioid abuse.

4) Veterans and Military Families
- positively impacting the quality of life of veterans and improving military family strength.

5) Rural intermediaries
- organizations that demonstrate measurable impact and primarily serve rural communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.

6) Faith-based organizations

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

Volunteer NC in alignment with the North Carolina 2019-2022 State Service Plan seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in the above areas and in:
Economic Development
Healthy Futures
Education & Literacy
Environmental Concerns
Disaster Services

3. National Performance Measures

All applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (output and outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. This may be a National Performance Measure or an applicant-determined measure. Additional performance measures, including output-only National Performance Measures, may also be included if desired; however, all performance measures must be consistent with the program's Theory of Change and represent significant program activities. CNCS does not expect applicants to select performance measures to correspond to each and every potential member activity or community impact. CNCS **and Volunteer NC** value the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures.

CNCS **and Volunteer NC** expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance management strategy if the National Performance Measures are part of the applicant's theory of change. Applicants should use both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work as well as make tactical and strategic adjustments to

achieve their goals. For more information, please refer to the National Performance Measure Instructions.

4. Program Authority

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

B.   FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimated Available Funds

CNCS and Volunteer NC expect a highly competitive AmeriCorps grant competition. CNCS reserves the right to prioritize providing funding to existing awards over making new awards. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

2. Estimated Award Amount

Award amounts will vary, as determined by the scope of the projects.

3. Project Period

The project period is generally one year with a start date proposed by the applicant. The grant award covers a three-year project period unless otherwise specified. The application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding for subsequent years is not guaranteed and shall be dependent upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance.

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

4. Type of Award

AmeriCorps Operating Grants: CNCS may award a Cost Reimbursement or a Fixed Amount grant to any successful applicant, but the availability of a Full-Cost Fixed Amount grant is limited to certain applicants. Professional Corps are not eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement grants. See the *Eligible Applicants* section and the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for more information. CNCS will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year.

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement	Fixed Amount			
Available Subtypes	Traditional	Full-Cost	Education Award Program (EAP)	Professional Corps See Sec. D.6.a.2 for further requirements	No Cost Slots

Maximum Cost per MSY	$15,479	$15,479	$800	$1,000	$0
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time	Full-time only	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time
Budget Submission Required	Yes	No		Yes, if requesting operating funds	No
Availability of Funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSYs	No	Yes			No
Special Requirements	N/A	N/A		Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries and benefits must be paid entirely by organization where member serves and not included in budget.	N/A
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes	No			
Available to new Applicants	Yes	No	Yes		

5. 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. Programs can use the grant to improve their model and apply for a State Formula grant the following year.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following non-federal entities (as defined in 2 CFR §200.69) that have DUNS numbers and are registered in System for Award Management (SAM) are eligible to apply:
- Indian Tribes (2 CFR §200.54)

- Institutions of higher education (2 CFR §200.55)
- Local governments (2 CFR §200.64)
- Nonprofit organizations (2 CFR §200.70)
- States (2 CFR §200.90)

New Applicants

Volunteer NC encourages organizations that have not received prior funding from Volunteer NC or CNCS to apply. Volunteer NC requires applicants to request **at least 8 Member Service Years (MSYs)** to be considered for funding in North Carolina.

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

Types of Applicants

Single-State Applicant

Organizations that propose to operate in only in North Carolina must apply through Volunteer NC. A Single-State application that is submitted directly to CNCS by the applicant rather than Volunteer NC will be considered noncompliant and will not be reviewed.

National Direct Applicants[1]

Multi-State: Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one State or Territory apply directly to CNCS. 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.

2. Threshold Issues

Applications should reflect that they meet the following threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying.

- Professional Corps applicants and/or applicants determined to be a Professional Corps by Volunteer NC and CNCS must demonstrate that the community in which it will place AmeriCorps members serving as professionals has an inadequate number of said professionals.
- If the proposed service activities require specialized member qualifications and/or training (for example, tutoring programs: 45 CFR §2522.910-.940), the applicant must describe how the program will meet these requirements.
- All applicants must propose program designs that are either evidence-based or evidence-informed. Applicants assessed as lower than the Preliminary evidence tier (i.e., Pre-Preliminary) must provide adequate responses to the Evidence Quality review criteria in order to be considered for funding.

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[1] Although National Direct applicants do not have to apply to Commissions, there are substantial requirements to coordinate with the Commissions for states in which national service programs will operate. See the *Coordination among State Commission & National Direct Applicants* section for information on these important requirements.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

Under Section 132A(b) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this Notice.

Applications that propose to engage in activities that are prohibited under CNCS's statutes, regulations, or the terms and conditions of its awards are not eligible to receive CNCS funding.

Note that under appropriations provisions annually enacted by Congress, if CNCS is aware that any corporation has any unpaid federal tax liability—
- that has been assessed
- for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed
- that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability—

that corporation is not eligible for an award under this Notice. However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation which a federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the federal government.

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501 (c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply for CNCS funding.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

This *Notice* should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550, the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, Application Instructions, and the National Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. These documents can be found on https://www.nc.gov/agencies/volunteer/americorps. The full Regulations are available online at www.ecfr.gov.

1. Content and Form of Application Submission

a) Application Content

In CNCS's web-based management system, applicants will enter the following components of a complete application:
- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet: This is automatically generated when applicants complete the data elements in the system
- Narratives
  - Executive Summary
  - Program Design
  - Organizational Capability
  - Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

- o   Evaluation Plan (if applicable)
- Logic Model
- Standard Form 424 Budget
- Performance Measures
- Authorization, Assurances, and Certification (https://espan.cns.gov/cnsmisc/ECERTS.HTM, and https://espan.cns.gov/cnsmisc/EASSUR.HTM)

b)   Page Limits

There are page limits for the Narrative and Logic Model.

(1)   *Narrative*

Applications must not exceed **10 double-spaced pages** for the Narratives or 12 pages for Rural Intermediaries and Multi-State applications with more than five operating sites as the pages print out from eGrants.

The application sections that count towards the page limit are the:
- SF-424 Face Sheet
- Executive Summary
- Program Design, Organizational Capability, and Cost-Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy narratives.

The application page limit does not include the Budget, narrative portion of the Evaluation Plan, the Logic Model, performance measures, or the supplementary materials, if applicable.

Volunteer NC will consider the number of pages only as they print out from the "Review" tab in eGrants (where you will see the "View/Print your application" heading) when determining compliance for page limits. Volunteer NC will not consider the results of any alternative printing methods in determining whether an application complies with the applicable page limits.

CNCS and **Volunteer NC** strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the "Review" tab prior to submission to check that the application does not exceed the page limit.

(2)   *Logic Model*

The Logic Model may not exceed **three pages** when printed with the application from the "Review" tab in eGrants.

Please note the length of a document in word processing software may be different than what will print out in eGrants. Reviewers will not consider any submitted material that exceeds the page limits in the printed report, also, note that the system will not prevent an applicant from entering text that will exceed page limitations. This applies to both the Narrative page limit and the Logic Model page limit.

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

Applications must include a DUNS number **and** an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. Applicants can obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at the DUNS Request Service. CNCS recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date.

After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants **must** register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at www.sam.gov/SAM/ and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If an applicant is awarded a grant, it must maintain an active SAM registration throughout the life of the award. Please note SAM.gov has a new login process. Please go to the General Services Administration (GSA) SAM Update page for more information: https://www.sam.gov/SAM/. SAM registration must be renewed annually. CNCS suggests that applicants finalize a new registration or renew an existing one at least three weeks before the application deadline, to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. **Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and address on all grant applications to Volunteer NC.**

Applicants that do not comply with these requirements may become ineligible to receive an award. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at: https://sam.gov/sam/transcript/Quick_Guide_for_Grants_Registrations.pdf

3. Submission Dates and Times

a)   Notification of Intent to Apply

Submission of the Notice of Intent to Apply form is REQUIRED for all State Formula applicants unless an exception is granted by Volunteer NC. The form is due by Friday, January 31, 2020. The Notice of Intent to Apply can be found at https://www.nc.gov/agencies/volunteer/americorps and should be submitted to volunteernc@nc.gov and megan.mcleod@nc.gov by the deadline. All Notifications of Intent to Apply will receive an email response acknowledging receipt. The form is optional for new Competitive applicants.

b)   Application Submission Deadline

o   **AmeriCorps Competitive** *(Invitation Only)*: November 22, 2019

o   **AmeriCorps State Formula** *(New, Recompetes, Continuations)*: March 5, 2020

c)   Additional Documents Deadline

Additional documents are due by the application submission deadline. Applicants must submit all required additional documents to: megan.mcleod@nc.gov and volunteernc@nc.gov.

d)   Late Applications

All applications received after the submission deadline published in this Notice are presumed to be non-compliant.

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

Applicant must then submit a brief paragraph including eGrants ticket number with your explanation of the technical issues that prevented you from submitting the application in eGrants by the deadline to **VolunteerNC** 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.

4. Intergovernmental Review

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

5. Funding Restrictions

a)   Member Living Allowance

A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. Programs are not required to provide a living allowance for members serving in less than full-time terms of service. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to a less than full-time member, it must comply with the maximum limits in the table below. For Cost Reimbursement grants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either CNCS or grantee share. Exceptions are noted below.

While Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance to members that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements. Exceptions are noted below. Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to indicate that amount in the application and should request those positions as "without living allowance" in the budget.

Table: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Member Service Year (MSY) Value	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1,700	1.0	$14,279	$28,558
Three Quarter-time	1,200	.70000000	n/a	$20,159
Half-time	900	.500	n/a	$15,119

Reduced Half-time	675	.3809524	n/a	$11,339
Quarter-time	450	.26455027	n/a	$7,559
Minimum-time	300	.21164022	n/a	$5,040

Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements

- *Programs existing prior to September 21, 1993* are not required to offer a living allowance. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement, but not the maximum requirement.

- *EAP Grantees* are not required to provide a living allowance, but if a living allowance is provided, it must comply with the maximum requirements set forth in the Living Allowance Table above.

- *Professional Corps Grantees* must provide members a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance set in the Living Allowance Table above. Professional Corps member salaries and benefits including child care are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget request to CNCS (federal or matching share.)

b)   Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

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.

New and recompeting Commission sub-grantees/applicants will be held to the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type.

Table: Maximum Cost per MSY

Grant Program	Maximum
State Formula Cost Reimbursement	$15,479*
Professional Corps Fixed Amount Applicants/Grantees	$1,000**
Education Award Program Fixed Amount Grant	$800
Full-cost Fixed Amount Grant	$15,479

*Cost reimbursement programs operating in rural communities (as defined in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) and cost reimbursement programs that recruit opportunity youth as AmeriCorps members may request up to $15,647 cost per MSY for the AmeriCorps members who will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth.

CNCS requires **Professional Corps programs to cover the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non CNCS resources. CNCS will only consider operating funds of up to $1,000 per MSY if an applicant is able to demonstrate significant organizational financial need based on the materials reviewed by the Office of Grant Management/Grant Administration.

c)   Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will be eligible for an Education Award from the National Service Trust. The amount of the Education Award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant. A member has up to seven years after his or her term of service to use the Education Award. CNCS will provide the updated Education Award amounts at the time of grant award.

d)   Cost Sharing or Matching

(1)   Fixed Amount Grants

There is no match requirement for Fixed Amount grants. CNCS does not provide all the funds necessary to operate the program, therefore organizations should raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.

(2)   Cost Reimbursement Grants

Applicants are required to match funds based on the chart below. The applicant's match can be federal or non-federal cash and/or in-kind contributions. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet the match requirement at the time of application submission. 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 and below.

AmeriCorps Funding Year	1, 2, 3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Grantee Share Requirements	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

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

The living allowance or salary provided to AmeriCorps members in Professional Corps programs (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) does not count toward the matching requirement.

(3)   Alternative Match

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

(4)   Indirect Costs

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants may either use a federally-approved indirect cost rate, a 10 percent *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly, as outlined in 2 CFR § 200.413. States, local governments, and Indian Tribes may use previously-approved indirect cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across all federal awards. Applicants that have a federal negotiated indirect cost rate or that will be using the 10 percent *de minimis* rate must enter that information in the Organization section in eGrants. However, under section 121(d) of the NCSA and CNCS's regulations at 45 CFR 2521.95 and 2540.110, no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants.

(5)   *Pre-Award Costs*

Pre-award costs, where authorized, are allowed after receiving written approval from Volunteer NC. Please notify Volunteer NC if you plan to request approval for pre-award costs.

6. Other Submission Requirements

a)   Electronic Application Submission in eGrants

Applicants must submit applications electronically via eGrants, CNCS's web-based application system. Volunteer NC recommends 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 document, then copy and paste the text into the appropriate eGrants field no later than 10 days before the deadline.

The applicant's authorized representative must be the person who submits the application. The authorized representative must use his or her own eGrants account to sign and submit the application. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Applicants should contact the National Service Hotline at (800) 942-2677 or via eGrants Questions if they have a problem when they create an account, prepare, or submit the application. The general public hours for the National Service Hotline are as follows:
- Mon - Fri, 9 am – 7 pm ET (Jan, May, June, July, Aug, Sept)
- Mon - Thu, 9 am – 7 pm ET (Feb, Mar, Apr, Oct, Nov, Dec)

Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the competition to which the organization is applying. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, applicants must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants.

b)   Submission of Additional Documents

Applicants are required to submit the following additional documents to volunteernc@nc.gov and megan.mcleod@nc.gov by the application submission deadline:

All applicants (New, Recompete, and Continuation)
- ❒ Evaluation briefs, reports, studies. Please refer to the *Evidence Base* section and Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for detailed instructions by evidence tier.

- ❑ 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 (most recent available)
- ❑ Federally Approved Indirect Cost Agreement (if applicable)

Rural Intermediaries (New and recompeting)
- Letters of support from the consortium members

New and Recompeting applications ONLY
- New and recompeting applicants requesting over $75,000 and All New to CNCS applicants regardless of funding level are required to submit a Financial Management Survey (FMS) and supporting documents located at: http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/financial management- select Financial Management Survey under the Application Certification Forms Section.

Failure to submit the required additional documents by the deadline will have a negative effect on the assessment of your application and/or on the determination of the application's eligibility to advance for review.

Do not submit any items that are not requested in this Notice and Guidance. Volunteer NC will not review or return them.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Review Criteria

Each applicant must describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to solve a significant community problem. Volunteer NC urges applicants to submit high quality applications that carefully follow the guidance in this Notice and in the Application Instructions. The quality of an application will be an important factor in determining whether an organization will receive funding.

Categories/Subcategories	Percentage
Executive Summary	**0**
Program Design	**50**
Theory of Change and Logic Model	24
Evidence Tier	12
Evidence Quality	8
Notice Priority	0
Member Experience	6
Organizational Capacity	**25**
Organizational Background and Staffing	9

Compliance and Accountability	8
Culture That Values Learning	4
Member Supervision	4
Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	**25**

2. Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. Do not deviate from the template below:

> The [*Name of the organization*] proposes to have [*Number of*] AmeriCorps members who will [*service activities the members will be doing*] in [*the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve*]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [*anticipated outcome of project*]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage [*number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable*] who will be engaged in [*what the leveraged volunteers will be doing*.]
>
> This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [*Focus Area(s)*].* The CNCS investment of $[*amount of request*] will be matched with $[*amount of projected match*], $[*amount of local, state, and federal funds*] in public funding and $[*amount of non-governmental funds*] in private funding.
>
> *If the program is not operating in a CNCS focus area, omit this sentence.

Fixed-Amount grant applicants (EAP, Full-cost Fixed, No Cost Slots) should list their Other Revenue (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still raise significant additional resources to operate the program.

3. Program Design (50 percent)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

a) Theory of Change and Logic Model (24 points)

The Theory of Change shall address:
1) The proposed intervention is responsive to the identified community problem.
2) The applicant's proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, dosage, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) leveraged volunteers.
3) The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's theory of change.
4) The expected outcomes articulated in the application narrative and logic model represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem identified by the applicant.
5) The rationale for utilizing AmeriCorps members to deliver the intervention(s) is reasonable.

6) The service role of AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.

The Logic Model shall depict:
1) A summary of the community problem.
2) The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
    o Locations or sites in which members will provide services
    o Number of AmeriCorps members who will deliver the intervention

3) The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
    o The duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention)
    o The dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)
    o The target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level)

4) The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served, types and number of activities conducted.) If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as output indicators
5) Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur as a result of the intervention. If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators.

Note: The logic model is a visual representation of the applicant's theory of change. Programs may include short, medium or long-term outcomes in the logic model. Applicants are not required to measure all components of their theory of change. The applicant's performance measures should be consistent with the program's theory of change and should represent significant program activities.

In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets for their performance measures.

Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization's performance data (e.g., program data observed over time that suggests targets are reasonable), relevant research (e.g. targets documented by organizations running similar programs with similar populations), or prior program evaluation findings.

Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention. Logic model content that exceeds three pages will not be reviewed.

b)   Evidence Base (20 points)

The assessment of an applicant's evidence base has two parts. First, the applicant will be assigned to an evidence tier (see the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.) Second, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the degree to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

(1)   Evidence Tier (12 points):

An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of understanding the relative strength of each applicant's evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the logic model.

In 2019, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 20%, Moderate 15%, Preliminary 30%, and Pre-Preliminary 35%. As these figures indicate, CNCS values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. Thus, do not be deterred from applying for funding due to your current evidence level.

Applicants who have outcome or impact evaluation reports of the same intervention described in the application (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for a definition of "same intervention") may submit up to 2 of those reports, plus (if applicable) the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle, to qualify for the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tier. In order to qualify for consideration, the intervention evaluated in the submitted report(s) must match the intervention proposed by the applicant in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Program Design and Logic Model sections of the application:

   • Characteristics of the beneficiary population
   • Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention
   • Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention, including all key components and activities
   • The context in which the intervention is delivered
   • Outcomes of the intervention

Submitted reports that do not sufficiently match the intervention proposed by the applicant in all of these areas will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points. Submission of additional documents that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements described in the *Notice* (e.g., advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives that are not research studies or program evaluations) will not be reviewed.

In the Evidence Tier section of the application narrative, applicants must (1) summarize the study design and key findings of any outcome or impact evaluation report(s) submitted and (2) describe any other evidence that supports their program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform their program design. Applicants who submit evaluation reports for consideration must also describe in the Evidence Base section of the application narrative how the intervention described in the submitted reports is the same as the intervention described in the application (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance).

Applicants should provide citations for the studies they describe, if applicable; however, reviewers will not review any documents external to the application other than evaluation report(s) submitted in accordance with the *Notice* instructions.

Applicants must meet all requirements of an evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier.

If the evaluation reports submitted by the applicant do not meet the definitions in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier.

(2) *Evidence Quality (8 points)*

After the applicant's evidence tier has been assessed, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the extent to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tiers, reviewers will score the submitted evaluation reports using the following standards:
- The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.);
- The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years;
- The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier, reviewers will score the narrative provided in the Evidence Base section of the application using the following standards:
- The applicant uses relevant evidence, including past performance measure data and/or cited research studies, to inform their proposed program design;
- The described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years;
- The evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

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

All applicants, including new grantees, are required to provide additional information in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field of the application (See Section E. Evaluation Plan); however, information provided in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

c) **Notice Priority (0 points)**

The applicant proposed program fits within one or more of the AmeriCorps funding priorities as outlined in the *Funding Priorities* section and more fully described in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance and the proposed program meets all of the requirements detailed in the *Funding Priorities* section and in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.

d) Member Experience (6 points)

- AmeriCorps members will gain skills as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.
- The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate.
- The applicant will foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds, talents, and capabilities are welcomed and leveraged for learning and effective service delivery.

4. Organizational Capability (25 percent)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the following criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

a) Organizational Background and Staffing (9 points)

The organization details the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing the AmeriCorps program as well as providing oversight and monitoring for the program.

b) Compliance and Accountability (8 points)

- The organization has a monitoring and oversight plan to prevent and detect non-compliance and enforce compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities and criminal history checks at the grantee, subgrantee (if applicable), and service site locations.
- The CNCS-required evaluation report meets CNCS requirements (if applicable).
- The CNCS-required evaluation report is of satisfactory quality (if applicable).

c) Culture that Values Learning (4 points)

The applicant's board, management, and staff collect and use information, including performance data, for learning and decision making.

d) Member Supervision (4 points)

- AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service.
- AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations.

5. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

Reviewers will assess the quality of the application's budget to the following criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

This criteria will be assessed based on the budget submitted. No narrative should be entered in the narrative box except for "See budget".

1) Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
2) Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
3) Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
4) Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.
5) Budgeted match is equal to or more than the required match for the given program year.
6) The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum cost per MSY.

Proposed budgets that contain MSY costs that exceed the maximum cost per MSY and/or less than required match will be considered unresponsive to the application criteria.

Applicants must complete the budget and ensure the following information is in the budget screens:
- o   Current indirect rate cost rate information if used to claim indirect/administrative costs.
- o   Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project, including for Fixed Amount applicants.
- o   Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash), the sources of these commitments, and if the commitments are proposed or secured.

6. Evaluation Plan (Required for recompeting grantees - 0 percent)

If the applicant is competing for the first time, please provide a data collection plan in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field that includes the following:
- A description of the applicant's data collection system and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data during the first three years of the grant. If the applicant does not yet have a data collection system, describe the plan and timeline for developing a high quality system.
- A description of how the applicant will use performance data (including CNCS performance measures and other process and outcome measures if applicable) to improve its program in the first three years of funding.

First-time applicants should be aware that CNCS may require submission of data collection instruments if a grant is approved for funding. For more information about how to develop a high-quality data collection plan, visit the CNCS Knowledge Network. https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/americorps/building-effective-data-collection-plans-presented-october-12-2017

If the applicant is recompeting for AmeriCorps funds for the first time (see definition of "recompeting" below) the program must submit its evaluation plan in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" section of the Narratives field in CNCS's web-based management system. If the applicant is recompeting for a subsequent time, the program must submit its evaluation report as an attachment (see the *Submission of Additional Documents* section for more information), and must also submit an evaluation plan for the next three-year period in the "Evaluation Summary

or Plan" field in the system. Evaluations plans submitted outside of the system will not be reviewed.

Evaluation plans must include as much information as possible for each of the following (see Frequently Asked Questions: Evaluation, available at http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/cncs-evaluation-policies):

- A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results
- Outcome(s) of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation
- Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes
- Proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the design selected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components;
- Description of the data sources, sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures that will be used in the evaluation
- Analysis plan that clearly describes the methodology/ies that will be used to analyze the collected data
- A timeline for the evaluation that describes how the evaluation will cover at least one year of CNCS-funded activity and will be completed within the three-year timeframe of the grant
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator
- The proposed budget

Information provided in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

For more information about evaluation plans visit the CNCS Knowledge Network's Evaluation Resources: http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation.

The evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of the grant, as described in 45 CFR §2522.700-710:

- If the applicant's average annual CNCS program grant is $500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external impact evaluation of the program (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance), and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in 45 CFR §2522.730.
- If the applicant's average annual CNCS program grant is less than $500,000, or an Education Award Program Grantee, it must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in 45 CFR §2522.730.

For purposes of compliance with evaluation plan and report requirements, an application will be considered a recompeting application if it satisfies the CNCS definition of "same project" (*see* Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) and has been funded competitively for at least three years.

- If the applicant has received competitive funding for the same project for at least three years, it will be required to submit an evaluation plan.

- If the applicant has received at least six years of competitive funding for the same project, the applicant will be required to submit an evaluation report as well as an evaluation plan for the upcoming 3-year grant. If the applicant does not satisfy the definition of recompeting, it will not be required to submit an evaluation plan or completed evaluation report.

The "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field of the Narrative does not count toward the page limit of the application; however, it does have a set character limit of 20,000 characters.

Grantees that are recompeting for funds may be eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. Grantees requesting approval of an alternative evaluation approach should submit a request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach along with their evaluation plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system. The request should clearly explain: (a) the evaluation constraints faced by the program, (b) why the proposed approach is the most rigorous option feasible, and (c) how the proposed alternative approach will help the grantee build their evidence base. Evaluation plans should include, at a minimum, the required elements listed in this *Notice*. The evaluation plan must be consistent with the information submitted in the competitive funding application and in the request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. CNCS guidance on alternative evaluation approaches can be found on the CNCS website. https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Alternative-Evaluation-Approach-Guidance-FINAL5.17.17.pdf.

If the request for the alternative evaluation approach plus the Evaluation Plan itself will exceed the character limit of the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system, the applicant should do the following:
- Enter the Evaluation Plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system.
- Include a note in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field stating that the applicant is requesting an alternative evaluation approach.
- Include the alternative evaluation approach at the END of the application narrative with the heading "REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPROACH." This section of the application narrative will not count against the page limit.

7. Amendment Justification (0 percent)

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

8. Clarification Information (0 percent)

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

9. Continuation Changes (0 percent)

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

F.   REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

1. Compliance and Eligibility Review

Volunteer NC will conduct a Compliance Review to determine if an application meets the compliance requirements published in this Notice and advances to the next stage of the review process.

An application is compliant if the applicant:
1) is an eligible organization
2) submits a Notice of Intent to Apply Form by submission deadline
3) submitted an application by the submission deadline
4) submits an application that is complete in that it contains all required elements and follows the instructions provided in this Notice
5) submits an application with a minimum of eight (8) AmeriCorps Member Service Years (MSYs)
6) submits an application with a Cost per MSY that does not exceed the maximum for the application type as outlined in this Notice

Reviewing for eligibility is intended to ensure that only those applications that are eligible for award are further reviewed. Applicants that are determined to be ineligible will not receive an award.

2. Application Review

Internal Review
Each new and recompete (3-year grant ending, submitting a new proposal) application will be read by Volunteer NC staff members. The scores are averaged to come up with an average staff score for each application.

External Review
Volunteer NC'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 recompete 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.

Peer Reviewers are provided 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.

3. Applicant Clarification

Volunteer NC may ask an applicant for clarifying information. Volunteer NC and/or CNCS staff will use this information to make funding recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee an award. Applicants may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked for clarifying information. An applicant's failure to respond to a request for clarification adequately and in a timely manner may result in the removal of its application from consideration.

4. Risk Assessment

Volunteer NC staff, Volunteer NC Commission members and CNCS staff (if applicable) will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds. This evaluation is in addition to the assessment of the applicant's eligibility and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If Volunteer NC or CNCS determines that an award will be made to an applicant with assessed risks, special conditions that correspond to the degree of assessed risk may be applied to the award. Additionally, if Volunteer NC or CNCS concludes that the reasons for applicants having poor risk assessment are not likely to be mitigated, those applications may not be selected for funding.

In evaluating risks, Volunteer NC and CNCS may consider some of the following criteria:
- financial stability
- financial capability and capacity to manage Federal funds
- quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- applicant's record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
    - timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements
    - accuracy of data reported
    - validity of performance measure data reported
    - conformance to the terms and conditions of the previous federal awards
    - meeting matching requirements
    - the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- information available through OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
    - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)
    - U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
    - Dun and Bradstreet
    - SAM, and/or

- o "Do Not Pay"
- reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance and finding of any other available audits or investigations
- IRS Tax Form 990
- applicant organization's annual report
- publicly available information, including information from the applicant organization's website or social media pages
- responses to the Financial Management Survey and supporting documentation
- verification of funding
- amount of funding requested by the organization

Volunteer NC will assess their recompeting subgrantees' past performance and, for Competitive applicants, will submit those assessments to CNCS. CNCS will assess its recompeting direct grantees related to past performance. This assessment is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding or the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this assessment will inform funding decisions. In evaluating programmatic performance, Volunteer NC and CNCS may consider the following for applicants that are current formula and competitive grantees:

- Grant progress reports – attainment of Performance Measures
- Enrollment and retention
- Compliance with 8-day enrollment and 30-day exit requirements in the AmeriCorps portal
- Site visits or other monitoring findings
- OIG findings (if applicable)
- Significant opportunities and/or risks of the grantee related to national service

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

5. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information

Prior to making any award that exceeds $150,000, CNCS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM and FAPIIS (see 41 U.S.C. 2313). Additionally, CNCS may expand upon these requirements and use its discretion to review and consider information about any applicant receiving an award, including those under $150,000.

Any applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through FAPIIS.

CNCS may consider comments by any applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing its review of risk posed by the applicant under the Risk Assessment Evaluation section of this Notice.

6. Selection for Funding

The review and selection process is designed to:

- identify how well eligible applications are aligned with the application review criteria
- build a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
  - meaningful representation of
    - geographic diversity
    - rural communities
    - single and multi-state programs
    - faith-based organizations
  - Volunteer NC and/or CNCS Priorities
  - Focus area representation
  - Moderate and Strong evidence levels
  - Program models that demonstrate a new approach to solving a community problem based on a thorough review of exiting research and evaluation about existing approaches to the problem

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

Volunteer NC and CNCS reserves the right to prioritize funding existing awards over making new awards.

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

Volunteer NC and CNCS reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, if unforeseen challenges or urgent circumstances make it impossible, impracticable, or inefficient to conduct the review process as planned. Any such adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria that will be used to assess applications.

7. Feedback to Applicants

Following grant awards, each applicant will receive summary comments 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 in response to clarification questions, if any.

8. Transparency in Grant-making

CNCS is committed to transparency in grant-making. The following information for new and re-competing applications will be published on CNCS Results of Grant Competitions within 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

- a list of all compliant applications submitted
- executive summaries of all compliant applications
- data extracted from the SF-424 Face Sheet
- a blank template of the external review worksheet
- a list of all external reviewers who completed the review process
- a summary of external reviewer comments for successful applications.

G.   FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

CNCS will make awards following the grant selection announcement. CNCS anticipates announcing the results of the Competitive competition by notifying Volunteer NC by **May 1, 2020** contingent on the availability of congressional appropriations. All applicants, successful or not, will be notified of funding decisions via email. Notification will be sent to the individual listed in the eGrants Application Face Sheet as the person with whom communication regarding this application may be shared. This notification is not an authorization to begin grant activities. The Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) signed by Volunteer NC is the only document authorizing awardees to commence grant activities. Unsuccessful applicants will also receive notification that their application was not approved for funding. An awardee may not obligate or expend federal funds until the start of the Budget Period identified on the Notice of Grant Award. Volunteer NC will make an award for one year of operation.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

a)   Uniform Guidance

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

b)   Requests for Improper Payment Information

CNCS may, from time to time, request documentation from recipients in order to monitor the award or to comply with other legal requirements, such as the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002, as amended. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on temporary manual hold, reimbursement only status, or other remedies may be applied as appropriate.

c)   CNCS Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this Notice will be subject to the FY 2020 CNCS General Terms and Conditions, FY 2020 AmeriCorps Program Specific Terms and Conditions and the 2020 North Carolina Grant Agreement. The Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance

and reporting requirements. Current versions of the CNCS General and Program Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cncs-grants.

d) National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a specific screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires grantees to conduct and document NSCHCs on persons (including award-funded staff, national service participants, or volunteers) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving CNCS funds. This includes staff that receive part of their salary through a subgrant. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such CNCS funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award. Volunteer NC requires grantees to utilize TrueScreen and FieldPrint to conduct the required NSCHCs. Failure to conduct an NSCHC may result in significant disallowed costs.

Unless CNCS has provided a grant recipient with a written exemption or written approval of an alternative search procedure, recipients _**must**_ perform the following checks:

All award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers must undergo NSCHCs that include:
- A nationwide name-based search of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) through TrueScreen; *and*
- Either
    - A name- or finger-print based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work through TrueScreen *or*
    - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check through Fieldprint.

Special Rule for Persons Serving Vulnerable Populations. Award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers *with recurring access to vulnerable populations* (i.e., children age 17 or younger, individuals age 60 or older, or individuals with disabilities) must undergo NSCHCs that include:
- A nationwide name-based check of the NSOPW through TrueScreen; and
- Both
    - A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work through TrueScreen; *and*
    - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check through Fieldprint.

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

As of December 31, 2019, many pre-approved Alternative Search Procedures (ASPs) and any existing, individual ASP/Exemption requests will expire and will no longer be available for use.

Recipients are required to have at least one person complete the NSCHC online course each year.

e)   Audits

A Subrecipient that expends a total of **$750,000** or more of federal awards in a fiscal year is required to obtain a single audit for that year conducted by an independent auditor in accordance with the Single Audit Act, as amended, 31 U.S.C. § 7501, *et seq.*, and 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F. (If the Subrecipient expends federal awards under only one federal program, it may, if it is eligible, elect to have a program specific audit.) A Subrecipient that does not expend **$750,000** in federal awards is exempt from the single audit requirements of 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F for that year.

In addition, North Carolina law requires that "if the entity received, held, used, or expended State financial assistance (which includes federal funds passed through the State) of **$500,000** or more within its fiscal year, it's required to complete a single or program-specific audit following the Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards, also known as the Yellow Book". A Subrecipient with total state and/or federal funding below this level is not required to obtain such an audit, but is nonetheless required to conduct financial management reviews of its programs. All audited financial statements and reports (including management letters if issued) shall be submitted to the Commission within thirty (30) days of the completed report.

It is hereby agreed that federal auditors (CNCS) or North Carolina state auditors (Office of the State Auditor, Office of the Governor, NC Department of Administration, or the Commission) shall have the option of auditing all accounts of the Subrecipient that relate to the Agreement.

3. Use of Material

To ensure that materials generated with CNCS funding are available to the public and readily accessible to recipients and non-recipients, CNCS reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so (2 CFR §200.315).

4. Reporting

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

Cost reimbursement grantees are required to provide mid-year, and end of year progress reports, semi-annual financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740.

Fixed Amount grantees are required to provide annual and final progress reports and an internal or external evaluation report.

Once the grant is awarded, recipients will be expected to have data collection and data management policies, processes, and practices that provide reasonable assurance that they are reporting high quality performance measure data. At a minimum, recipients should have policies,

processes, and practices that address the following five aspects of data quality for themselves and for subrecipients (if applicable):

- the data measures what it intends to measure
- the data reported is complete
- the recipient collects data in a consistent manner
- the recipient takes steps to correct data errors
- the recipient actively reviews data for accuracy prior to submission.

Progress Report Data

In addition to semi-annual reporting of progress toward the grant's approved performance measure outputs and outcomes, additional demographic and narrative data must be reported annually (as applicable), including the number of applicants for AmeriCorps positions and the number of volunteers recruited and/or supported by AmeriCorps members. The full list of required and optional demographic indicators for AmeriCorps programs can be found on the AmeriCorps Grantee Progress Report webpage.

Failure to submit accurate, complete, and timely required reports may affect the recipient's ability to secure future CNCS funding.

5. Continuation Funding Information and Requirements

Organizations that have current awards that continue beyond FY 2020 must submit an application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. Please see the Application Instructions, if applicable. Requests by existing continuation applicants for increases in the level of funding or number of positions will be assessed using the review criteria published in this Notice.

H.   Other Information

1.   Technical Assistance, Monitoring and Compliance

In addition to consulting the Application Instructions, Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, Performance Measure Instructions, and AmeriCorps regulations as directed in this Notice, applicants are encouraged also to consult the Volunteer NC website for a schedule of technical assistance webinar calls. All new applicants and new program directors are required to attend a TTA session hosted by Volunteer NC.

VolunteerNC and CNCS reserve the right to make site visits and/or conduct desk reviews to review and evaluate Subrecipient records, accomplishments, organizational procedures, and financial control systems, conduct interviews, and provide technical assistance as necessary. The Subrecipient shall respond in a timely manner and take corrective action to remedy any compliance-related findings and shall reimburse the Commission for disallowed costs.

2. Re-Focusing of Funding

VolunteerNC and CNCS reserve the right to re-focus program dollars for this competition in the event of disaster or other compelling needs.

3. Liability Insurance, Fidelity Bond and Safety Issues

The Subrecipient must maintain at all times adequate liability insurance coverage for the organization, its employees and Members, including coverage of Members engaged in on- and off-site projects. In addition, the Subrecipient shall obtain a Fidelity Bond equal to the amount of the total grant award as indicated in Paragraph 3 of this Agreement. The Subrecipient shall ensure safe work conditions and implement safeguards as necessary and appropriate to ensure the safety of Members. Members may not participate in projects that pose undue safety risks.

Contact Information

All communication relating to this Notice must be directed to the contact person named below.
For questions regarding an AmeriCorps North Carolina application, contact:

Megan McLeod
AmeriCorps Program Officer and Training Officer
Megan.Mcleod@nc.gov