



AmeriCorps
North Carolina

VOLUNTEER GENERATION FUND

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY



A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. PURPOSE OF VOLUNTEER GENERATION FUNDING

This grant is funded by AmeriCorps (Formerly known as the Corporation for National and Community Service or CNCS). The mission of is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, AmeriCorps has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

VGF grants will be used to develop and/or support community-based entities to recruit, manage, and support volunteers. AmeriCorps seeks to fund effective approaches that expand volunteering, strengthen the capacity of volunteer connector organizations to recruit and retain skill-based volunteers, and develop strategies to use volunteers effectively to solve problems. Specifically, the VGF grants will support efforts that expand the capacity of volunteer connector organizations to recruit, manage, support and retain individuals to serve in high quality volunteer assignments.

Applicants that receive funding under this Notice may directly carry out the activities supported under the award.

Subgrants to community-based entities must include one or more of the following:

- Address activities consistent with the priorities set by the state's national service plan
- Recruit, manage, or support volunteers to a community-based entity such as a volunteer coordinating agency, a nonprofit resource center, a volunteer training clearinghouse, an institution of higher education, or a collaborative partnership of faith-based and community-based organizations

- Provide technical assistance and support to strengthen the capacity of local infrastructure organizations, address areas of national need, and expand the number of volunteers nationally.

2. FUNDING PRIORITIES

AmeriCorps priorities for this grant competition are:

- Programs that are likely to generate significant, measurable improvements in the number of volunteers generated and retained from specific demographic groups such as youth service, generational/family volunteering, skill-based volunteering or senior volunteering
- Initiatives that specifically recruit, train and deploy volunteers as a strategy to address a clearly identified pressing community need or to address education
- Activities that specifically recruit skill-based and pro-bono volunteers.

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.

VolunteerNC is accepting applications for the following initiatives on a rolling basis. Funds will be awarded based on availability.

- COVID-19 pandemic response-** Funding is available to support Volunteer Coordinator positions. Volunteer Coordinators are expected to identify community needs arising from the pandemic, and should plan and implement programs to address these needs. Performance Measures include either the number of volunteer hours recruited and served as a result of the Volunteer Coordinator's efforts or the number of individuals or families served as a result of the Volunteer Coordinator's efforts. Programs should focus on basic needs, such as food insecurity, education challenges or health care, and must be a result of the pandemic. Individuals serving in funded positions must pass a three-part National Service Criminal History check. Funding opportunity opens October 1 and is available until funds have been expended.
- Disaster response- This funding is by invitation only.** Funding is available for Volunteer Generator positions. Volunteer Generators will work closely with LTRGs and state VOADs to recruit volunteers to assist with rebuilding homes damaged by disasters. Performance measures must include the number of volunteer hours served as a result of the Volunteer Generator's efforts. Individuals serving in funded positions must pass a three-part National Service Criminal History check. Funding opportunity opens October 1 and is available until funds have been expended.
- Youth Engagement-** Funding is available to provide scholarships for youth who participate in service-oriented leadership and training programs. Performance measures include the number of underserved youth who complete leadership and training programs under scholarships, and the number of individuals served as a result of programs planned

and implemented by youth, if applicable. At least one individual from applicant's organization must pass a three-part National Service Criminal History check. Funding opportunity opens November 1 and is available until funds have been expended.

- d. **Corporate Engagement-** Funding is available to encourage corporate volunteerism, train corporate leaders for disaster response and partner with human resources departments to provide volunteer opportunity information to retiring employees. Performance measures include the number of individuals receiving training, the number of employee volunteer hours or the number of retiring employees who receive volunteerism information, depending on the focus of the program. At least one individual from applicant's organization must pass a three-part National Service Criminal History check. Funding opportunity opens November 1 and is available until funds have been expended.
- e. **Nonprofit Trainings-** Funding is available for organizations to offer trainings in the areas of volunteer recruitment and management, board development, social media and marketing, fundraising, financial policies, human resources basics and other areas that help nonprofits to be more efficient and build capacity. Trainings should be open to nonprofits, educational institutions, and state and local government entities or programs focused on volunteerism. Performance measures includes the number of individuals who complete training. Funding opportunity opens November 1 and is available until funds have been expended.
- f. **Volunteer Expos-** Funding is available for organizations to plan and implement local volunteer expos in partnership with VolunteerNC. A volunteer expo is like a job fair where potential volunteers are exposed to organizations in need of volunteers such as food banks, and are given the opportunity to interact with representatives of the service organization. Volunteer Expos may be held in a virtual format. Funding is available for advertising, printing or other approved expenses. At least one individual from applicant's organization must pass a three-part National Service Criminal History check. Funding opportunity opens October 1 and is available until funds have been expended.
- g. **Service Enterprise Initiative-** Funding is available for SEI training and certification through HandsOn Northwest NC and the Triangle Nonprofit & Volunteer Leadership Center. Organizations wishing to participate in SEI programs should contact either HandsOn NWNS or TNVLC for more information. Funding opportunity opens December 1 and is available until funds have been expended.

3. NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

AmeriCorps and VolunteerNC may require applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of a comprehensive performance measurement strategy that relies on both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work and make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals. Refer to the Notice of Grant Award or Memorandum of Agreement for specific funding requirements.

If applicable, award recipients will be required to use the following National Performance Measures:

- G3-3.4 (output): Number of organizations that received capacity building services AND
- G3-3.10A (outcome): Number of organizations that increased their effectiveness, efficiency, and/or program scale/reach.

4. PROGRAM AUTHORITY

AmeriCorps' legal authority to award these grants is the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 12653p).

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. ESTIMATED AVAILABLE FUNDS

VolunteerNC was awarded \$270,875 for VGF 2020 awards.

2. ESTIMATED AWARD AMOUNT

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

3. PROJECT PERIOD

VolunteerNC anticipates making awards on a rolling basis beginning October 1, 2020. Award periods must end on or before September 30, 2021.

4. TYPE OF AWARD

VGF grants will be awarded on a cost reimbursement basis.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Funding may be awarded to the following types of entities:

- Nonprofit organizations
- Churches or religious organizations
- State or local governments
- Schools or institutions of higher learning

Under no circumstances will a for-profit business be awarded VGF funds, nor should VGF funds provide a direct benefit to a for-profit business.

2. OTHER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

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.

B. UNPAID FEDERAL TAX LIABILITY

Under appropriations provisions annually enacted by Congress, if VolunteerNC is aware that any entity 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 entity is not eligible for an award under this Notice. However, this exclusion will not apply to an entity which a federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the federal government.

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.

C. SUSPENSION OF FUNDING LIST

VolunteerNC shall not disburse financial assistance to any entity that is on the Suspension of Funding List. <https://www.osbm.nc.gov/management/grants/suspension-funding-memos>

D. COST SHARING

Cost Sharing or Matching funds requirements have been waived for the 2020-2021 VGF program year.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applications shall be made through google forms. All supporting documentation must be either uploaded and included at the time the application is submitted or emailed to volunteernc@nc.gov with “VGF application” in the subject line, within 24 hours. Incomplete applications may be rejected.

2. CONTENT

- Complete the online portion of the application
- Submit a proposed budget for the project

- Provide any supporting documentation including proof of nonprofit status, the most recently filed form 990 or 990EZ, and source of matching funds.

3. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

A. AWARD FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Awards under this Notice are subject to cost share or matching requirements. The amount of federal funding provided will be limited to the required percent of the total allowable costs for the funded activity, as determined under 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E-Cost Principles and described in Section C.2. For the 2020-2021 Program Year, CNCS has relieved Commissions of the burden of matching federal funds, however entities should attempt to provide evidence of 20% matching funds. Matching funds for future program years may not be waived.

B. 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 AmeriCorps' regulations at 45 CFR 2517.710, no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on VGF grants.

4. OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applicants are required to submit applications electronically via Google forms.

If circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit in Google forms, applicants should contact VolunteerNC for further guidance. Applicants should be prepared to submit a written explanation and any other documentation or evidence that support their inability to submit their application electronically.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications shall be evaluated by VolunteerNC staff. Programs meeting funding criteria as determined by staff reviewers will be submitted to the Commission for funding approval. Funding shall be determined by the following criteria:

A. EVIDENCE OF NEED-

- Evidence of an unmet need within a community
- The extent to which the need satisfies either AmeriCorps or VolunteerNC funding priorities

B. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY-

- The extent to which the organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan, implement, and evaluate the proposed project.
- The extent to which the organization has the necessary plans and infrastructure to provide programmatic and fiscal oversight, day-to-day operational support, and data collection
- The applicant's track record raising funds to support service activities and initiatives
- Likelihood of effectiveness of the applicant's plan for securing partners and community support for, and involvement in, the proposed project.

C. COST-EFFECTIVENESS-

- The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.
- The extent to which the budget is clear and in alignment with the program narrative.
- The extent to which the budget includes adequate resources to carry out the program effectively.
- The extent to which the program demonstrates that financial and in-kind resources will be obtained to support program implementation.
- Whether the applicant adequately budgets for its required share of costs.

D. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES-

- The extent to which the applicant convincingly links the identified need, proposed interventions, and the anticipated outputs and outcomes.
- The extent to which the program design aligns with the purpose of the VGF.
- Whether the proposed interventions and activities are evidence-informed.

E. PROGRAM IMPACT-

- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the proposed project is likely to have a notable, positive impact as measured by the magnitude of the effect on the need(s).
- The extent to which the objectives and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable
- The applicant's plan to measure and collect data on National Performance Measures outcomes and outputs.

2. APPLICATION REVIEW

A. INTERNAL REVIEW

VolunteerNC Staff Reviewers will assess applications based on the Evidence of Need, Organizational Capability, Cost-Effectiveness, Goals and Objectives and Program Impact Criteria. Staff Reviewers will also consider the priorities and strategic considerations detailed in this Notice. All Staff Reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

B. POST-REVIEW QUALITY CONTROL

After the initial review process is complete, VolunteerNC staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review may be used to assess applications for which there are significant reviewer anomalies.

C. APPLICANT CLARIFICATION

VolunteerNC may ask an applicant for clarifying information. VolunteerNC 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. Clarification responses should be complete and correct upon submission.

D. RISK ASSESSMENT

VolunteerNC staff 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 VolunteerNC 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 VolunteerNC 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, VolunteerNC may consider some of the following criteria:

- financial stability
- financial 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 AmeriCorps awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
 - timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements
 - accuracy of data reported
 - validity of performance measure data reported

- o conformance to the terms and conditions of previous federal awards
- o meeting matching requirements
- o 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:
 - o Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)
 - o U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
 - o Dun and Bradstreet
 - o SAM
 - o “Do Not Pay”
- reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance and findings of any other available audits or investigations
- IRS Tax Form 990
- applicant organization’s annual report
- publicly available information, including information from the applicant organization's website
- applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. FEDERAL AWARD NOTICES

VolunteerNC will make awards following the grant selection announcement. Results of this competition will be announced on a rolling basis, beginning October 26, 2020. All applicants, successful or not, will be notified of funding decisions via email. Notification of an award is not an authorization to begin grant activities. A Notice of Grant Award or Memorandum of Agreement signed by the Executive Director of VolunteerNC is the authorizing document for grant activities. An awardee may not expend federal funds until the start of the Project Period identified on the Notice of Grant Award or Memorandum of Agreement.

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

AmeriCorps 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. AMERICORPS TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All awards made under this Notice will be subject to the FY 2020 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, and the FY 2020 Program Specific Terms and Conditions for the particular program (when applicable). These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the AmeriCorps General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at [/www.nationalservice.gov/resources/termsand-conditions-cnsc-grants](http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/termsand-conditions-cnsc-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 participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving AmeriCorps 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 AmeriCorps 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.

VolunteerNC shall utilize two vendors AmeriCorps has engaged to conduct the required NSCHCs. Failure to conduct an NSCHC may result in significant disallowed costs.

Any individual employed or serving in a covered position must consent to the following checks, which will be conducted by VolunteerNC.

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);
- A name- or finger-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; and
- A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

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

3. USE OF MATERIAL

To ensure that materials generated with AmeriCorps funding are available to the public and readily accessible to recipients and non-recipients, AmeriCorps 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. At a minimum, recipients must track the number of volunteer hours generated by positions supported with VGF funds or the number of families or citizens receiving assistance as a result of VGF funded activities unless otherwise agreed to in recipient's Notice of Grant Award or Memorandum of Agreement.

At the end of the award period, recipients must submit final financial and progress reports that are consistent with the close-out requirements. The final reports are due 90 days after the end of the agreement.

Award recipients will be required to report at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over \$25,000, and may be required to report on executive compensation for the recipient organization and its subrecipients. Recipients and subrecipients must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 CFR Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

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.

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

For further guidance and training resources, see the AmeriCorps Performance Measurement page on the Knowledge Network.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

For more information or a printed copy of related material, email AmeriCorpsGrants@cns.gov. AmeriCorps also offers live text chat at www.NationalService.gov/contact-us.

For a list of all funding opportunities offered by AmeriCorps, visit

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/grants-funding/funding-resources/cncs-funding-opportunities-resources>.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

1. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Recipients should contact VolunteerNC if they require assistance applying for or administering VGF grants.

2. RE-FOCUSING OF FUNDING

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

I. IMPORTANT NOTICES

1. PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT:

Public reporting burden for collection of information under this Notice of Funding is estimated to average six hours per submission, including reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing the application and reporting forms. AmeriCorps informs people who may respond to this Notice of Funding that they are not required to respond unless the OMB control number and expiration date are current valid. (See 5 C.F.R. 1320.5(b)(2)(i).) The OMB Control Number for the information collection is 3045- 0187. It expires on 9/30/2020.

2. PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT:

The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C § 552a) requires that we notify you that the information requested under this Notice of Funding is collected pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 12592 and 12615 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended, and 42 U.S.C. 4953 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 as amended. Purposes and Uses - The information requested is collected for the purposes of reviewing grant applications and granting funding requests. Routine uses may include disclosure of the information to federal, state, or local agencies pursuant to lawfully authorized requests. In some programs, the information may also be provided to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to determine the existence of any prior criminal convictions. The information may also be provided to appropriate federal agencies and contractors that have a need to know the information for the purpose of assisting the government to respond to a suspected or confirmed breach of the security or confidentiality

or information maintained in this system of records, and the information disclosed is relevant and unnecessary for the assistance. Effects of Nondisclosure - The information requested is voluntary; however, to be a recipient of this grant program, disclosure of personal or sensitive information is required to receive federal benefits.