oregonvolunteers!

2021-22 AmeriCorps State Competitive & Formula Operating Grants

Multiple Award Grant Opportunity

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

RFA Issue Date:
October 16, 2020

Competitive Application Due Date:
November 20, 2020, 11:59PM PST

Formula Application Due Date:
February 19, 2021, 11:59PM PST

Contact: oregon.volunteers@hecc.oregon.gov

AMERICORPS OREGON

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION
Office of Workforce Investments
3225 25th Street SE, Salem, OR 97302
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www.oregon.gov/HigherEd/OWI

OVERVIEW

State Entity:	Oregon Volunteers
Federal Agency:	Corporation for National and Community Service
Federal Funding Opportunity:	2021-22 AmeriCorps State Grants
Announcement Type:	Request for Grant Applications
Federal Announcement:	2021-22 CNCS NOFO, found here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/defaul t/files/documents/ASN_FY2021_NOFO_FINAL _508.pdf
CFDA Number:	94.006

Important Notice to Applicants: This Request for Applications ("RFA") uses an abridged version of the Corporation for National and Community Service Notice of Funding Opportunity ("NOFO") so that it is tailored to the sub-grantee level of Oregon's local statewide competition.

The State of Oregon, acting by and through its Higher Education Coordinating Commission ("Agency") on behalf of the Oregon Volunteers Commission for Voluntary Action and Service, is pleased to announce a multiple award Request for Applications for funding AmeriCorps programs designed to engage AmeriCorps members in service to meet critical community needs in Oregon.

Oregon Volunteers

The mission of the Oregon Volunteers Commission for Voluntary Action and Service ("OV" or "Commission") is to promote and support AmeriCorps, volunteerism, and civic engagement to strengthen Oregon communities.

Corporation for National and Community Service

The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service ("CNCS") is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic participation through service and volunteering. 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.

Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions or 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.

CNCS Focus Areas

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended by the Serve America Act, emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on a core set of issue areas. In order to carry out Congress' intent and to maximize the impact of investment in national service, CNCS has the following focus areas:

Disaster Services
Grant activities will provide support to increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters, improve individuals' readiness to respond to disasters, help individuals recover from disasters, and/or help individuals mitigate disasters.

Economic Opportunity
Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people; help economically disadvantaged people to have improved access to services that enhance financial literacy; transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable housing; and/or have improved employability leading to increased employment.

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

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

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

Veterans and Military Families
Grants will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength; increase the number of veterans, wounded warriors, military service members, and their families served by CNCS-supported programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS-supported programs.

2021 CNCS Funding Priorities

CNCS seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in the areas or through the organizations listed below:

- Efforts to help local communities **recover from the COVID-19 pandemic**. Applicants may propose programming in any CNCS focus area to aid communities as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Programs that actively engage **in removing structural racial inequities**, advancing racial equality, and increasing opportunity in order to achieve sustainable change in communities.
- **Economic Opportunity** – evidence-based interventions on the CNCS Evidence Exchange. In order to qualify for this priority, the applicant must be assessed as:
  - o   Having Moderate evidence by the reviewers;
  - o   Having Strong evidence by the reviewers; or
  - o   Increasing economic opportunities for communities by preparing people for the workforce.

    Link: (https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/CNCS_Economic_Opportunity_Evidence_Brief_2019_508.pdf.)
- **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. *Link:* (https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/CNCS_Education_Evidence_Brief_112318_508.pdf.)
- **Healthy Futures** - evidence-based interventions on the CNCS Evidence Exchange. In order to qualify for this priority, the applicant must be assessed as:
  - o   Having Moderate evidence by the reviewers;
  - o   Having Strong evidence by the reviewers; or
  - o   Reducing and/or preventing prescription drug and opioid abuse.

    Link: (https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/HF_Evidence_Brief_FINAL_v2_508.pdf.)
- **Veterans and Military Families** - positively impacting the quality of life of veterans and improving military family strength.
- **Rural intermediaries** - organizations that demonstrate measurable impact and primarily serve rural communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.
- **Faith-based organizations**
- **Programs that reduce child poverty.**
- **Environmental stewardship.**
- **Economic Mobility Corps** – a joint initiative with the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund to place national service members at Certified Community Development Financial Institutions to enhance their capacity to provide financial literacy, financial planning, budgeting, saving, and other financial counseling activities in distressed and underserved areas.

Program Authority:

CNCS' legal authority to award these grants is found in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 12501 et seq.). To receive priority consideration by CNCS, 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.

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 (Full-Cost)**
Maximum Cost per Member Service Year ("MSY")	$16,300	$16,300
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time, Abbreviated-Time.	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time, Abbreviated-Time.
Budget Submission Required	Yes	No
Availability of Funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSYs	No	Yes
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes	No
Available to new Applicants	Yes	No

Federal Award Information:

    A. Estimated Available Funds

        OV and CNCS 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.

    B. Estimated Award Amount

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

Eligibility Information

The following Non-Federal entities (as defined in 2 C.F.R. §200.69) who have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System ("DUNS") number and are registered in System for Award Management ("SAM") are eligible to apply:

- Indian Tribes (2 C.F.R. §200.54)
- Institutions of higher education (2 C. F.R. §200.55)
- Local governments (2 C.F.R. §200.64)
- Nonprofit organizations (2 C.F.R. §200.70)
- States (2 C.F.R. §200.90)

Organizations that propose to operate an AmeriCorps program serving only Oregon may be eligible to apply if they meet the criteria specified below.

Organizations that propose to operate an AmeriCorps program serving more than one; state, territory, or federally-recognized Indian Tribes are not eligible to apply to OV and must apply directly to CNCS. More information can be found at http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities.

Organizations that have been convicted of a Federal crime are automatically disqualified. Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501 (c)(4) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. § 501 (c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

Previously receiving funds from CNCS or OV to operate an AmeriCorps program in Oregon is a prerequisite to apply for competitive grant funding through OV under this RFA. Applicants who have not previously received funding from CNCS or OV as previously stated, may apply for grant funding directly through CNCS only if they propose to operate a program across multiple states.

2021 Oregon Volunteers Funding Priorities

OV continues to promote service priorities for Oregon that support thriving communities throughout the state. Within the CNCS focus areas and funding priorities described above, Oregon Volunteers emphasizes the following:

1. To continue funding for successful, compliant programs that are demonstrating impact in communities within the six focus areas described above under "CNCS Focus Areas".
2. To grow AmeriCorps in Oregon by providing access to AmeriCorps members for small

organizations and rural communities through intermediary programs.

A. **New AmeriCorps State Competitive and Formula Operating Grant Applicants**
OV will not be accepting any new Formula applications for the 2021-2022 program year. New Competitive applications will be accepted from programs who have previously administered AmeriCorps programs in Oregon.

B. **Continuation AmeriCorps State Competitive and Formula Operating Grant Applicants**
Organizations that have current AmeriCorps awards that continue beyond the 2020-21 program year must submit a continuation application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. Continuation applications must make adjustments to meet all CNCS requirements, such as increase to the minimum living allowance. OV may consider minor program design change, especially those intended to address racial justice or impacts of COVID-19 or both. OV does not intend to approve program expansion requests for continuation applicants; OV will assess such requests based on performance, justification, and availability of funds.

C. **Recompeting AmeriCorps State Competitive and Formula Operating Grant Applicants**
Current OV-funded programs with a 3-year funding cycle that ends in the 2020-21 program year are considered to be in "recompete" status. These applicants may apply for a new 3-year award.

D. **Unfunded AmeriCorps State Competitive Grant Applicants**
Organizations proposing programs that operate only in Oregon and who apply to OV in the competitive funding cycle and are not awarded competitive funding by CNCS may be invited by OV to apply for funding as a recompeting applicant in the Oregon formula funding cycle.

E. **New Planning Grant Applicants**
At this time, Oregon Volunteers is not accepting planning grant applications. OV intends to issue a separate Request for Applications for Planning Grants in the 2021 grant cycle. Full eligibility criteria and instructions for the 2021 Planning Grant application process will be issued at a later date. OV intends to focus the 2021 Planning Grant process on programming that increases equity and access for underserved and underrepresented populations.

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

APPLICATION & PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

In addition to requirements stated in the CNCS NOFO, from which this RFA is abridged, applicants and applications are required to adhere to the following requirements:

Mandatory Information Session(s): RFA Review and Requirements

OV will provide an informational session for the RFA requirements. Each applicant program is required to have one staff member in attendance. The Competitive and Formula application processes will be addressed in separate information sessions.

Notice of Intent to Apply

<u>All applicants</u> must submit a Notice of Intent to Apply to OV by **November 10th, 2020 at 11:59pm**. Submissions must be sent via email to oregon.volunteers@hecc.oregon.gov. For new and recompete applicants, the Notice of Intent to Apply should include a brief program overview and the size of the request (Member Service Years and total funds requested).

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 values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures. CNCS 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.

Project and Award Period

The AmeriCorps program year in Oregon typically runs from August – July. Programs may request no-cost extensions to conclude their programs up to three months later than the program end date stipulated in the grant award. AmeriCorps members are limited to serving a 12-month or shorter term within the program year. The grant award covers a three-year project period unless otherwise specified. In most cases, 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 <u>not</u> occur prior to the date CNCS awards the grant. AmeriCorps members may <u>not</u> enroll prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps members may <u>not</u> begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award. A program may <u>not</u> certify

any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.

Days of Service

OV strives to create a strong platform for promoting volunteerism and convey to event volunteers – including AmeriCorps members – that they are participants in a larger movement that extends beyond their local community by participating in National Days of Service.

AmeriCorps programs must conduct both a swearing-in and year-end-service ceremony for all cohorts/classes of members. Programs are expected to participate in at least two service projects per program year. At least one of those service projects must coincide with Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service or Cesar Chavez Day. One of the following may be chosen, if not participating in both: September 11th, National Day of Service and Remembrance; Make a Difference Day; Global Youth Service Day; or AmeriCorps Week.

Threshold Issues

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

OV strongly encourages applicants to create and maintain the most intensive and personally meaningful term of service for members in their program designs. AmeriCorps is designed to enable members to commit a significant amount of time per week in service.

- If 300-hour minimum-time and 450-hour quarter-time positions are included in the program design, preference is given to those completed over the summer or a short time period rather than over a school or calendar year.
- If the proposed service activities require specialized member qualifications and/or training (for example, tutoring programs: 45 C.F.R. §2522.910-.940), the applicant must describe how the program will meet these requirements.
- A funded program must have a well-defined partnership with at least three independent entities, including at least one public and one private (nonprofit or for-profit). The Commission prefers partners to have an ongoing role in planning, operating, and sustaining the program (e.g. match contribution, training, assessment, quarterly meetings, etc.) to ensure the success of the program.
- 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.
- Applicant's program design must have a minimum of 10 AmeriCorps members.
- Grantee shall follow all state and local COVID-19 guidance requirements.

Required Meetings

Oregon Volunteers hosts multiple training events for program directors and/or members throughout the program year. Some events are required for Oregon recipients of Oregon AmeriCorps State funds, while others are optional attendance. These meetings and events may be hosted virtually or in-person; in-person events are typically scheduled to occur in Salem, Oregon. Applicants should include travel costs and/or registration fees (*as applicable*) in their application budget.

- **Life-After AmeriCorps Event** *(required)*: An annual event and training for program directors and members focused on how to leverage the service experience into next steps. OV may host this event as a virtual series, in-person event, or other format depending on statewide conditions and other factors.
- **Program Director Meetings** *(required)*: Staff of AmeriCorps State programs meet every-other month for up to one day, either in-person or as a virtual meeting. These extended meetings are to share information, provide training and receive updates on CNCS directives and requirements. OV may include a 2-day retreat in the required meeting schedule.
- **Pacific-Northwest Regional Training Conference** *(required)*: An annual regional conference hosted by the national association for Commissions, America's Service Commissions. Location and date varies annually. Programs are required to send one staff member.

National Service Criminal History Checks

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 AmeriCorps programs to conduct and document NSCHC on all "covered positions." A "covered position" is one in which an individual serving or employed receives a living allowance, stipend, education award, or salary, through either the federal share or grantee share of a national service program. This includes staff that receive all or part of their salary through an AmeriCorps grant. 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. **OV requires applicants to utilize the two vendors (Fieldprint and Truescreen)** that CNCS has engaged 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.

Programs must complete the following checks for all covered positions:
1. A nationwide name-based search of the National Sex Offender Public Website ("NSOPW"); and
2. A name- or finger-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence <u>and</u> in the state where the person will serve/work (Oregon); and
3. A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

Note: As stated above, Oregon Volunteers policy requires that subgrantees complete <u>all three</u> checks for all individuals in covered positions, regardless of whether or not the individuals have recurring access to vulnerable populations. This requirement is more stringent than the CNCS policy.

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 Alternate Search Procedures ("ASP") and

individual ASP/Exemption requests expired. Visit the CNCS website for updated ASP guidance: https://www.nationalservice.gov/ASPExemptionsGuidance.

Applicants' budgets should account for costs of all background checks required to meet required federal and state requirements (*as applicable*). If the applicant does not include the cost of background checks in its budget, the application must contain an explanation for this omission.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

General Information
Applicants are required to complete applications for funding in accordance with:
- This Oregon Volunteers 2021-22 RFA.
- CNCS NOFO for FY 2021 AmeriCorps State and National Grants, found here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ASN_FY2021_NOFO_FINAL_50 8.pdf
- CNCS 2021 Mandatory Supplemental Instructions found here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2_ASN_FY2021_MandatorySu pplementalInstructions_FINAL_508_0.pdf
- CNCS 2021 Application Instructions, found here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/4%20ASN_ApplicationInstructi ons_FINAL.pdf
- CNCS 2021 Performance Measures Instructions, found here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/3%20ASN_FY2021_Performan ceMeasuresInstructions_FINAL_508.pdf

Additional Information for the CNCS 2020 NOFO can be found here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities/2021/americorps-state-and-national-grants-fy-2021

This RFA is for two application processes:
1. AmeriCorps State Competitive Applications that will compete nationally to serve only in Oregon.
2. AmeriCorps State Formula and Formula-Fixed applications that will compete state-wide to serve only in Oregon.

Application Deadline
All Competitive application materials must be completed and submitted in eGrants to Oregon Volunteers by **11:59PM** (PST) on **November 20, 2020**. Additionally, all required additional documents must be submitted to oregon.volunteers@hecc.oregon.gov by the same deadline.

All Formula application materials must be completed and submitted in eGrants to Oregon Volunteers by **11:59PM** (PST) on **February 19, 2021**. Additionally, all required additional documents must be submitted to oregon.volunteers@hecc.oregon.gov by the same deadline.

Submission Instructions: eGrants

New and Recompeting Applicants

Submission instructions will be released by early November 2020 in a separate document, when all eGrants details are available. Visit the Oregon Volunteers website for the submission instructions: https://www.oregon.gov/highered/institutions-programs/workforce/Pages/oregon-volunteers.aspx

Continuation Applicants

- Start a **Continuation** Grant Application. *(Bottom left of the eGrants home page under Creating an Application.)* You will be shown a list of grants that are eligible to be continued. Select the grant you wish to continue. **Make sure you select the correct one. Do not start a new application.** The system will copy your most recently awarded application.

- Edit your continuation application as directed in the continuation request instructions found here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/4%20ASN_ApplicationInstructions_FINAL.pdf

Content and Form of Application Submission

A.   Application Content

Recompeting applicants will enter the following components of a complete application in CNCS' web-based management system:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet: This is automatically generated when applicants complete the data elements in the system
- Narratives
    - o Executive Summary
    - o Program Design
    - o Organizational Capability
    - o Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
    - o Evaluation Summary or Plan
- Logic Model
- Standard Form 424 Budget
- Performance Measures
- Authorization, Assurances, and Certification

B.   Page Limits

There are page limits for the Narrative and Logic Model, as detailed below.

Narrative

Applications must not exceed 10 double-spaced pages for the Narratives or 12 pages for Rural Intermediaries, 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 Evaluation section, Budget, Performance Measures, or any required additional documents.

The following are required sections, criteria, and point allocations for the narrative:

A. 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 nongovernmental 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 Information) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still raise significant additional resources to operate the program.

B. 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.

1. Theory of Change and Logic Model (24 points)

The Theory of Change shall address:
- The proposed intervention is responsive to the identified community problem.
- The applicant's proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, dosage, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) leveraged

volunteers.

- The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's Theory of Change.
- The expected outcomes articulated in the application narrative and logic model represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem identified by the applicant.
- The rationale for utilizing AmeriCorps members to deliver the intervention(s) is reasonable.
- The service role of AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.

The Logic Model shall depict:
- A summary of the community problem.
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
  - Locations or sites in which members will provide services
  - Number of AmeriCorps members who will deliver the intervention
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
  - The duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention)
  - The dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)
  - The target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level)
- 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
- 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 should 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.

2. ***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 Information.) Second, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the degree to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

    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 2020, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 26%, Moderate 18%, Preliminary 24%, and Pre-Preliminary 32%. 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 Intervention 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 Information).

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 Information, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier.

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.

3. *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 Information and the proposed program meets all of the requirements detailed in the Funding Priorities section and in the Mandatory Supplemental Information.

4. *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.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (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.

1. 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.

2. 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).

3. 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.

4. 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.

D. 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.

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

1. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 points)
- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
  • Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.
- The budgeted match is equal to or more than the required match for the given program year.
- 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:
- Current indirect rate cost rate information if used to claim indirect/administrative costs.
- Include the State Commission indirect/administrative rate of 1% of the CNCS total, for Cost Reimbursement programs only.
- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project, including Fixed Amount applicants.
- 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.

E. EVALUATION PLAN (Required for recompeting grantees - 0 percent)

Competitive Applicants
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 how to write a high-quality evaluation plan, 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 is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee (other than an Education Award Program grantee), and its average annual CNCS program grant is $500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external impact evaluation of the program (see Mandatory Supplemental Information), 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 is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee whose 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 has previously been funded competitively for at least three years for the same project (see Mandatory Supplemental Information for the CNCS definition of "same project").

- 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.

State/Territory subgrantees and/or National Direct Grantees that are recompeting for funds may be eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach (AEA). Grantees requesting approval of an alternative evaluation approach should submit this request along with their evaluation plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system. CNCS guidance on alternative evaluation approaches can be found on the CNCS website: https://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/2019/ASN-alternative-evaluation-approachguidance.

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.

Formula Applicants
For Formula Recompete applicants, please write a narrative that includes the following elements:

1. **Description of how you are or will strive to be an evidence informed program**. Evidence informed programs are ones that use the best available knowledge and data collection to guide program design and implementation, but do not have scientific research or rigorous evaluation of the intervention described in the application. Applicants may be evidence-informed if they have incorporated research from other evidence-based programs into their program designs and/or have collected performance measurement data and other data on the intervention described in the application.

2. **Description of your data collection plan** that includes the following:
   a) Steps you will take to ensure the data you collect on your performance measures are good and of high quality;
   b) A description of the applicant's data collection plan and systems and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data during the next three years;
   c) Other data you may collect alongside your performance measures to build a foundation for evidence informed programming so that you can determine if your member interventions are likely having an impact;
   d) A description of how the applicant will use performance measure data and other data to learn from what is happening and improve the program in the next three years of funding.

   Please note that Oregon Volunteers intends to work with grantees in the coming years to improve upon data collection plans and strategies with an expectation that all AmeriCorps programs are at a strong evidence informed or pre-preliminary level in the next three years.

F. Amendment Justification (0 percent)
Enter N/A. This field will be used if the applicant is awarded a grant and needs to amend it.

G. Clarification Information (0 percent)
Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter information that requires clarification in the postreview period.

H. Continuation Changes (0 percent)
Enter N/A, unless you are a continuation applicant. This field is used to enter changes in the application narratives in continuation requests.

Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System and System for Award Management
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 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 SAM Update page for more information: https://www.sam.gov/SAM/.

SAM registration must be renewed annually. OV and 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 CNCS. 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

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

CNCS requires Commissions to collect the following documents from applicants:

All applicants:
- Evaluation briefs, reports, studies. Please refer to the Evidence Base section and Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for detailed instructions by evidence tier.
- *Attachment A: OV Supplemental Information*, which asks applicants to indicate their Emergency/Disaster preparedness and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts.

Recompeting applications:
- Evaluation report. Please see the Evidence Tiers definitions in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance and Section E. Evaluation Plan for further information.
- Labor union concurrence (if applicable)
- Federal debt delinquency (if applicable)

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

Entities applying on behalf of a Federally Recognized Tribe (New and recompeting):
- Tribal organization eligibility documentation. (See the Eligible Applicants section.)

New and Recompeting applications:
New and recompeting applicants requesting over $75,000 and all New-to-CNCS applicants regardless of funding level are required to submit an Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS) and supporting documents, found at the following website:
https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/OFMS-Control-Number-3045_0102_FY20.docx. Applicants must submit the OFMS as a Word document.

In addition to the items above, OV requests the following from all applicants (including continuation):
- Organizational Chart (Program Structure) – which should include details of titles, programs, FTE, supervision level, service sites and member placements (# of members).
- Most recent audit or audited financial statement

All additional required documents should include the applicant organization name and Application ID number and are due by the application deadline to oregon.volunteers@hecc.oregon.gov. Emails should include in the Subject line, the applicant organization name, and Application ID number. The body of the message should only include a listing of attached document(s).

Failure to submit all of the required additional documents to OV on or before the application 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.

FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Member Living Allowance & Education Award

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 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.

Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Except as noted below, AmeriCorps programs must establish a living allowance for members that falls within these minimum and maximum amounts:

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1,700	$15,100	$30,200
Three Quarter-time	1,200	n/a	$21,318
Half-time	900	n/a	$15,988
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	$11,991
Quarter-time	450	n/a	$7,994
Minimum-time	300	n/a	$5,329
Abbreviated-time	100	n/a	$1,776

> *Note: 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.

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.

Maximum Cost per Member Service Year

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 childcare 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 State Commission programs/applicants will be held to the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type.

Type of Grant Program	Maximum Cost per MSY
Competitive State Cost-Reimbursement	$16,300
Full-time Fixed Amount Grant	$16,300
Formula State Cost-Reimbursement	$16,500
State/Territory Commission Average (of all subgrantees)	$16,300

AmeriCorps State Competitive cost-reimbursement programs operating in rural communities (as defined in the Mandatory Supplemental Information) and cost reimbursement programs that recruit opportunity youth as AmeriCorps members **may request up to $16,800 cost per MSY** for the AmeriCorps members that will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth**.**

Match and Cost Requirements

Fixed Amount Grants
There is no specific 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.

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 C.F.R. §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. Programs must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout.

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. Programs applying through State Service Commissions must submit requests for alternative match to the Commission, who will submit it to CNCS on their behalf.

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.

The instructions for how to enter the organization's indirect cost rate are located here: eGrants Indirect Cost Rate User Instructions. Applicants should not submit documentation addressing the indirect cost rate agreement via email.

Please note: To request a Federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, when CNCS is the applicable cognizant agency for an organization's indirect costs, the applicant must submit a request to IndirectCostRate@cns.gov. The applicant may also obtain instructions and additional information by contacting the email address above.

Pre-Award Costs
Pre-award costs, where authorized, are allowed after receiving written approval from the federal Office of Grants Management and/or Office of Grants Administration.

OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Electronic Application Submission in CNCS's web-based management system
Applicants must submit final applications to OV electronically via CNCS's web-based management system, eGrants. CNCS recommends that applicants create a CNCS's web-based management system account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Continuation applicants will submit their application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the text into the appropriate CNCS's web-based management system 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 be using CNCS's web-based management system under his or her own account in order 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.

Contact the National Service Hotline at (800) 942-2677 or here:
https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask_eg .

If a problem arises when creating an account, preparing or submitting the application, be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the *Notice* 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 their application via CNCS's web-based management system.

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 CNCS's web-based management system and communicate with OV as far in advance as possible about any submission delays caused by technical issues. OV may allow an applicant to use an alternative submission method if the situation warrants it.

All applicants must contact OV at oregon.volunteers@hecc.oregon.gov to discuss alternative submission methods in advance of the submission deadline.

RFA Questions and Responsibility
All inquiries relating to the RFA process, administration, deadline or award, or to the substantive technical portions of the RFA, must be submitted via email to oregon.volunteers@hecc.oregon.gov. When appropriate, revisions, substitutions, or clarifications shall be issued as addenda to this RFA. Changes/modifications to the RFA requirements shall ONLY be recognized if in the form of written addenda issued by OV. Agency shall provide copies of any addenda to all known RFA applicants via email as well as by posting on the OV website at www.oregon.gov/highered/oregonvolunteers.

Agency will not be held responsible for any error or omissions from downloading the RFA. The official solicitation document is the one held at the Agency. Those applications that are substantially incomplete or fail to meet the substantive requirements of the RFA will be deemed by OV and/or CNCS to be "non-responsive" and will be rejected. Applications considered complete, or "responsive," will be evaluated to

determine if they comply with the administrative, contractual, and technical requirements of the RFA. If the application is unclear or has an omission, OV may in its discretion waive an omission or the applicant may be asked to provide the missing information or provide written clarification to assist OV and/or CNCS in determining the issue of the application's responsiveness or to render the application "responsive" and eligible for further review.

APPLICATION & AWARD TIMELINE

The application and award process will be conducted according to the following tentative timeline:

Timeline	Activity
Mid-October 2020	OV releases this Request for Applications
October – November 2020	Informational Webinar for Competitive Applicants See website for details: https://www.oregon.gov/highered/institutions-programs/workforce/Pages/oregon-volunteers.aspx
November 10, 2020	Notice of Intent to Apply due to OV for all applicants
November 20, 2020	**All Competitive Applications Due to OV in eGrants** *Estimated Review and Scoring Period: Nov. 21 – December 7* *Estimated Clarification Period: December 8 – December 18*
January 6, 2021	OV submits AmeriCorps State Competitive Portfolio to CNCS
January - February 2021	Informational Webinar for Formula Applicants See website for details: https://www.oregon.gov/highered/institutions-programs/workforce/Pages/oregon-volunteers.aspx
February 19, 2021	**All Formula Applications Due to OV in eGrants** *Estimated Review and Scoring Period: Feb. 20 – March 15* *Estimated Clarification Period: March 16 – April 30*
May 2021	OV submits AmeriCorps State Formula Portfolio to CNCS

Mid-May 2021	Estimated Date of Notification of <u>Competitive</u> Award by CNCS
June 2021	Estimated Date of Notification of <u>Formula</u> Award by CNCS

OV APPLICATION REVIEW

The OV application review described is for all applicants desiring to receive funding for a program that operates only in Oregon.

A. Compliance Review

OV staff will review all applications submitted to OV to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completeness requirements. To be considered compliant, an applicant must satisfy all the following requirements:

- Submit a Notice of Intent to Apply to OV by the deadline.
- Submit an application and all required additional documents by the application submission deadline.
- Submit an application that is responsive, in that it contains all required elements and additional documents and follows the instructions provided in this *RFA and the CNCS 2021 NOFO and Supplemental Materials: Mandatory Supplemental Instructions, Performance Measure Instructions, and Application Instructions*. OV may in its discretion waive an omission or the applicant may be asked to provide missing information or provide written clarification to render an application responsive.

B. Scoring and Clarification

New and Recompete applications that score at least 75% of the maximum score in the initial review will continue in the review process and will work closely with OV staff to improve their applications prior to final application submission to CNCS. Final applications receiving an average score less than 75% of the maximum score will be eliminated from consideration in the OV 2021-22 AmeriCorps State grant application review process. OV staff will provide feedback to applicants after the review process concludes.

C. Submittal to CNCS

Upon grantee completion and OV approval, OV staff will submit the final approved applications to CNCS for further review.

Risk Assessment

OV staff will assess recompeting programs' 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 OV decisions on submitting applications to CNCS for further review.

OV 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 OV decisions on submitting applications to CNCS for further review. If 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 OV 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, OV and CNCS may consider 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
- 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
- Responses to the Financial Management Survey and supporting documentation amount of funding requested by the organization
- Responses to the Financial Management Survey and supporting documentation.
- Past Performance.
- 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
  - "Do Not Pay" status with the U.S. Department of the Treasury

OV staff will assess their recompeting subgrantee's past performance and 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, OV will consider the following for applicants that are current AmeriCorps State Formula and Competitive grantees:

a.   Grant progress reports – attainment of Performance Measures
b.   Enrollment and retention

c. Site visit or other monitoring findings (if applicable)
d. Office of Inspector General findings (if applicable)
e. Significant opportunities and/or risks of the program related to national service
f. Ranking by the Commission for receipt of funding

Additionally, CNCS may use the results of the review of the risk assessment evaluation in determining which applications to fund. If 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.

Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information
Prior to making any award that exceeds $250,000, 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.

OV and/or CNCS will consider any 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 RFA.

Applicant Clarification
Some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information and/or make changes to their application including changes to the budget. This information is used at both the state and federal level in making funding recommendations. Applications may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked clarification questions. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to requests for clarification adequately and in a timely manner may result in the removal of applications from consideration.

Selection for Funding
The assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. OV staff will apply their experience and expertise in evaluating and recommending applications. OV will engage external reviewers to provide insight and input with respect to the narrative portion of the applications. In the end, the review and selection process will produce a diversified set of high-quality programs that reflect the priorities and strategic consideration described in this RFA.

Specifically, the review and selection process will:

o Identify how well eligible applications are aligned with application review criteria and/or

represent relative risk and/or opportunity.

- o Yield a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
  - o CNCS Funding Priorities (*see Funding Priorities*)
  - o Meaningful representation of:
    - Geographic diversity
    - Rural communities (see definition in Mandatory Supplemental Instructions)
    - Single and multi-state programs
    - Faith-based organizations
    - Focus area representation

Based on the evaluation of these strategic considerations, applications may be selected for funding over applications with a greater degree of alignment with the review criteria. In selecting applicants to receive awards under this RFA, OV will endeavor to include a diverse portfolio of applications based on staff evaluations, recommendations, priorities, and strategic considerations.

OV reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, in the event that unforeseen challenges or exigent circumstances make it impossible, impractical or inefficient to execute the review process as planned. Any such adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria that will be used to assess applications submitted to OV in response to this RFA*.*

GENERAL RFA TERMS

- **Agency may require clarification to understand any of the applicant's scored criteria**. Any necessary clarifications or modifications will be made before executing any award and may become part of the final Agreement.

- **Submission of an Application does not constitute an agreement** between Agency and applicant, nor does it secure or imply that applicant will be selected.

- **All costs associated with applicant's submission** of an application are the sole responsibility of the applicant and shall not be borne by Agency or the State of Oregon.

- **Successful applicants may be required to maintain appropriate levels** of Workers Compensation, General Liability, and Automobile Liability insurance.

- **By submitting an application, applicant accepts** all of the terms and conditions of this RFA and any terms and conditions imposed by the requirements of the funding source, CNCS, and the Agency including, but not limited to execution of applicable funding agreements (and ancillary documents, if any, required by Agency) satisfactory to Agency. No funds will be released prior to all program conditions being met and funding agreements executed.

- **Agency reserves all rights** including, but not limited to the right, at its sole discretion: (1) to amend the RFA prior to the closing date; (2) to amend the deadline for submitting applications;

(3) to determine whether an application does or does not substantially comply with the requirements of this RFA; (4) to waive any minor irregularity, informality, or nonconformance with this RFA as so determined by Agency in its sole discretion; (5) to obtain from and/or provide to other public agencies, upon request, references, regarding the applicant's performance; (6) at any time prior to applicable funding agreement and ancillary documents (collectively, the "Agreement") execution: (a) to reject any application that fails to substantially comply with all prescribed RFA procedures and requirements; (b) to reject all applications received and cancel this RFA upon a finding by Agency that there is good cause and that such cancellation would be in the best interests of the State; and (c) to reject any application of an Applicant who refuses to execute the Agreement as determined to be satisfactory to the Agency in its sole discretion (7) to make funding awards outside of this RFA process as it deems necessary; and (8) seek clarification on or further information about any or all applications.

- **This RFA and one copy of each original response received**, together with copies of all documents pertaining to the award of an Agreement, shall be kept by Agency and made a part of a file or records, which shall be open to public inspection.

- If an **application contains any information that is considered a trade secret** under ORS 192.345(2), each sheet of such information must be marked with the following legend:
  - o "This application constitutes a trade secret under ORS 192.345(2), and shall not be disclosed except in accordance with the Oregon Public Records Law, ORS Chapter 192." The Oregon Public Records Law exempts from disclosure only bona fide trade secrets, and the exemption from disclosure applies only "unless the public interest requires disclosure in the particular instance" ORS 192.345(2). Therefore, non-disclosure of documents or any portion of a document submitted as part of a proposal may depend upon official or judicial determination made pursuant to the Public Records Law.

- If an application contains any information that may be considered exempt from disclosure under the various grounds specified in Oregon Public Records Law, ORS 192.311 through 192.478, applicant must clearly designate any portion of its application as exempt, along with a citation to the authority relied upon. Application of the Oregon Public Records Law shall determine whether any information is actually exempt from disclosure. Identifying an application in whole as exempt from disclosure is not acceptable. Failure to identify a portion of the application as exempt from disclosure, and the authority used, shall be deemed a waiver of any future claim of non-disclosure of that information.

- **The successful applicant will be required** to assume responsibility for all services outlined and finalized in the Agreement, whether the contractor, a representative or subcontractor produces them. Agency considers the awardee responsible for any and all contractual matters, including performance of work and the stated deliverables.

ATTACHMENT A:
Oregon Volunteers Supplemental Information

All 2021-22 AmeriCorps applicants must complete this form and submit to
oregon.volunteers@hecc.oregon.gov by their application deadline, according to the Oregon Volunteers
(OV) Request for Applications.

Program Name:

Staff Contact Person:

Staff Email:

EMERGENCY/DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

1. Do you have an emergency operational plan or a continuity of operations plan?

   ☐ Yes, we have plan(s) in place. Please attach a copy.
   ☐ No
   ☐ This is in development. Please describe:

2. Do you have a member safety plan in place, that addresses crisis and disasters?

   ☐ Yes, we have plan(s) in place. Please attach a copy.
   ☐ No
   ☐ This is in development. Please describe:

3. Do you have policies and procedures for alternative member service activities?

☐ Yes, we have plan(s) in place. Please attach a copy.
☐ No
☐ This is in development. Please describe:

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

1. Describe your plans to recruit and retain a diverse representation of AmeriCorps members in 2021-22, including inclusion and support services that you will provide to members who belong to underrepresented groups. Please provide specific examples.

2. Describe your plans to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion principles into the AmeriCorps member experience for the 2021-22 year. Include specific examples of training, resources, and support for members and supervisors.

3. If your program and/or organization has an equity statement or similar guiding document, please attach to this form.