

## Notices of Federal Funding Opportunity

For: Applications to Volunteer NH for AmeriCorps State Grants FY 2017

### AmeriCorps in NH

AmeriCorps provides support to nonprofits, faith-based and community organizations, and public agencies committed to meeting critical needs in education, disaster services, economic opportunity, healthy futures, veterans and military families and environmental stewardship. AmeriCorps is a federal program overseen by Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations (see *Eligible Applicants* section) proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions 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.

Volunteer NH is a nonprofit organization with a mission to promote the tradition of service in New Hampshire. Building on that strong volunteer spirit, we support and sponsor national service initiatives and provide training, recognition, and a central site for volunteers and volunteer programs to help them strengthen their communities. Volunteer NH administers AmeriCorps State Programs for New Hampshire and is the designated State Commission for the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Applicants to the State Competitive NOFO must comply with **CNCS 2017 NOFO, Application Instructions and Performance Measure Instructions in addition to following the VNH timeline.** Volunteer NH supports service categories which will serve as CNCS funding priority areas for the grant process. The areas and goals associated with each are as follows:

#### **CNCS Focus 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**

#### **Economic Opportunity**

#### **Education**

#### **Environmental Stewardship**

#### **Healthy Futures**

#### **Veterans and Military Families**

#### **2017 AmeriCorps Funding Priorities**

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

**Disaster Services** - improving community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation

**Economic Opportunity** - increasing economic opportunities for communities, specifically opportunity youth both as the population served and as AmeriCorps members

**Education** - improving student academic performance in Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Mathematics (STEM)

**Environment** - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Service Corps

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

**Governor and Mayor Initiatives**

**Programming that supports My Brother's Keeper**

**Multi-focus intermediaries** that demonstrate measureable impact and primarily serve communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure. i.e. rural and other underserved communities

**Safer communities**

**Evidence Based Intervention Planning Grants**

**Encore Programs**

In order to receive priority consideration, applicants must demonstrate that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes and must include a high quality program design. Responses that propose programs for the purpose of receiving priority consideration are not guaranteed funding.

## **National Performance Measures**

CNCS expects organizations to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance measurement strategy that relies on 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 [<http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/fundingopportunities>].

All applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (output and outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. 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. As described in the Application Instructions, applicants must include all their information about their proposed performance measure in the Performance Measure section of the applications in eGrants (CNCS's web-based grants management system). All information requested in the National Performance Measure Instructions must be included in the text of the performance measures themselves, and it must be evident in the performance measure text that all definitions and requirements outlined in the National Performance Measures Instructions are met. Providing performance measures information elsewhere in the narrative cannot be in lieu of providing full information in the Performance Measures section of the application in eGrants.

## **Program Authority**

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

## **Federal Award Information**

### **Estimated Available Funds**

CNCS expects a highly competitive AmeriCorps FY 2017 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. Grant awards have two components: operating funds and AmeriCorps

member positions. Grant award amounts vary – both in the level of operating funds and in the type and amount of AmeriCorps member positions.

### **Award Period**

Unless otherwise specified, the grant generally covers a three-year project period. In approving a multi-year project period, CNCS generally makes an initial award for the first year of operation. In most cases, the application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding is not guaranteed. Factors considered in awarding continuation grants include satisfactory performance, demonstrated capacity to manage the grant, compliance with grant requirements, agency priorities, and the availability of appropriated funds. CNCS reserves the right to adjust the amount of a grant or elect not to continue funding for subsequent years.

### **Project/Award Period**

The project start date is generally one year with a start date proposed by the applicant. The project start date may not occur prior to the date CNCS awards the grant. AmeriCorps members may not enroll prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.

### **Eligible Applicants**

The following Non-Federal entities (as defined in 2 C.F.R. §200.69) who have DUNS numbers 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. §200.54)
- Local governments (2 C.F.R. §200.64)
- Nonprofit organizations (2 C.F.R. §200.70)
- States (2 C.F.R. §200.90)

Previously receiving funds from CNCS or another federal agency is not a prerequisite to apply to this *Notice*.

### **New Applicants**

CNCS encourages organizations that have never received funding from CNCS to apply. The general practice is to award no more than 50 member positions (slots) and at least 20 member positions (slots) to organizations receiving an AmeriCorps grant for the first time.

New applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants but are not eligible to apply for Full Time Fixed Amount grants. Existing sub grantees/operating sites of Fixed Amount and Cost Reimbursement grantees that can demonstrate a successful history and current capacity to manage a Fixed Amount grant are considered to have AmeriCorps experience and therefore can apply for Fixed Amount grants. See Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for more information.

### **Continuation Applicants**

Organizations that have current AmeriCorps awards that do not end in FY17 must submit an application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. Requests by existing continuation applicants for increases in the level of funding or number of positions will be assessed using the criteria under this *Notice*.

## **Operating Grants**

VNH funds operating grants that support fully-developed plans to establish a New Hampshire AmeriCorps program or to support, expand, or replicate an existing program. Grant awards are renewed annually for a total of three years subject to annual review and availability of federal appropriations. Programs seeking funding beyond three years must reapply as a re-competing applicant.

## **Program Size**

Applicants must apply for a minimum of 20 members. AmeriCorps programs should be large enough to make a significant difference in communities. Applications requesting fewer than 20 members will not be reviewed.

## **Statewide Member Training Conference**

Programs need to include in the budget \$55 per member for attendance to Annual Governor's Conference on Volunteerism under member training.

## **Type of Applicants**

### Single-State Applicants

Organizations that propose to operate in only one state must apply through the Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions (Volunteer NH).

### National Direct Applicants

*Multi-state:* Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state or territory apply directly to CNCS. CNCS expects State Commissions and National Direct applicants to consult and coordinate activities at the local level, as specified in Section 131 of the NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12583). This consultation is designed to ensure the most effective use of national service resources and lead to enhanced coordination. Please email [andrea@volunteernh.org](mailto:andrea@volunteernh.org) for a National Direct Consultation form.

## **Intent to Apply**

Applicants are required to submit intent to apply to Volunteer NH for AmeriCorps funding, however continuations for existing programs are not required to. Include the following information in an email; the name of the applicant organization, address, contact person, e-mail address, and phone number. Applicants should state the type of grant for which they intend to apply and the focus area the anticipated application will address. Send to [andrea@volunteernh.org](mailto:andrea@volunteernh.org) by **October 14, 2016**. Failure to submit a Notice of Intent to Apply will render an applicant ineligible to apply.

## **Technical Assistance**

VNH will host a technical assistance conference call and an AmeriCorps grant training for new applicants and currently funded programs. The training is required for applicants. Registration is required by email to [andrea@volunteernh.org](mailto:andrea@volunteernh.org) no later than October 14, 2015.

## **Resources**

**Link to complete NOFO & CNCS Resources:** <http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities/2017/amicorps-state-and-national-grants-fy-2017>

## **Volunteer NH Application Timeline**

September 28, 2016 – Info & technical assistance conference call at 3 pm

October 14, 2016 – Intent to apply due and registration for AmeriCorps technical assistance training (required for applicants)

October 19, 2016 – AmeriCorps technical assistance training (required for all applicants) at Volunteer NH at 2 pm

November 11, 2016 – Applications due in eGrants by 5 pm

November 23, 2016 - Review committee feedback delivered to applicants

December 7, 2016- Applicants final application due on eGrants by 5 p.m.

January 18, 2017 - Final Submission from Volunteer NH to CNCS of applications

May 13, 2016 - State Commissions (VNH) notified of grant awards

For more information, please contact Volunteer NH Programs Officer Andrea Johnston at [andrea@volunteernh.org](mailto:andrea@volunteernh.org).