

## 2017-18 AmeriCorps\*State 'Formula' Grant

### Special Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for Planning Grants

This packet contains information on the process for applying for 2017-18 AmeriCorps\*State **Planning Grants** only. *Nevada Volunteers, a nonprofit 501(c) (3), is the Governor's Commission on Service and is charged with reviewing, selecting, awarding and administering the AmeriCorps\*State funds throughout Nevada. It is the state's resource for volunteer service information.*

**Planning Grant Overview:** Special funds are presently available to **new applicants** to develop an AmeriCorps program by applying for a planning grant. **Planning grants do NOT provide AmeriCorps members.** Planning grants provide initial funding to support current staff or hire additional staff who can plan the proposed AmeriCorps program, negotiate collaborations with partners, develop meaningful performance measures, and develop systems for successful implementation of the AmeriCorps operational grant application that is submitted for the following grant year. This additional funding is available to be granted for ONE YEAR only. There is no guarantee that allocations will be available to fund future years although Nevada Volunteers expects that agency's receiving planning grants will apply for an AmeriCorps operational grant for the 2018-2019 grant year.

While Planning Grants do not provide AmeriCorps members and the costs associated thereto are not included in planning grant applications, it is critical to consider AmeriCorps members costs in the development of your program design and budget. For example, while the matching requirement of 24 percent for a new planning grant with a total budget of \$50,000 is \$12,000, the future budget for operational funding, considering the costs of members, will increase significantly. A total operational program budget of \$500,000 has a match of \$120,000. To facilitate this process Nevada Volunteers is providing detailed budget instructions (Appendix A, Appendix B) as part of this Special Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for Planning Grants and budget worksheets for planning and operational grants (Excel attachments). These documents will help to inform the prospective grant applicant whether your organization has the capacity to become an AmeriCorps\*State grantee.

Nevada Volunteers expects that planning grantees will develop complete and thorough benchmarks over the grant term, typically one year. The Peer Review Committee reserves the right to work with a planning grantee to move into an operational program earlier (i.e., a grantee could have a six month planning grant and move into an operational grant in grant year 2017-2018).

Nevada Volunteers AmeriCorps team works closely with planning grantees to provide guidance with the development of these benchmarks. Planning grant applicants are encouraged to include a budget item to contract with a consultant to assist in the development of these benchmarks unless the applicant has dedicated staff to manage these requirements. Below is a partial listing of the required benchmarks:

- Develop AmeriCorps Member Handbook, recruitment and marketing materials, accommodation plan, training and on-boarding plan, plan for securing all match resources (cash and in-kind), financial/accounting plan, criminal history process and checklist, member position descriptions, member performance evaluations, performance measures and data collection instruments,

AmeriCorps branding and public awareness standards (web, social media, traditional media, host site branding), financial and organizational policies/procedures (if not already available as an organization)

- Participate in on-line training for both program and financial staff; National Service Criminal History Check; eGrants and OnCorps, platforms for program and financial reporting
- Review the Terms and Conditions for AmeriCorps State and National, General Terms and Conditions, Federal Code of Regulations (45 CFR §§ 2520 to 2550), AmeriCorps State and National FAQs
- Intermediary programs develop host site agreements, orientation plans, and policies and procedures.

In addition to the CNCS Focus Areas, Funding Priorities, and Nevada Volunteers specific priority areas outlined on pages 5-7 of this Special NOFO for Planning Grants, Nevada Volunteers has expanded its specific priorities to include those programs serving beneficiaries in southern Nevada and those that address the opioid issue. Programs addressing other CNCS focus areas, funding priorities, and Nevada specific priority areas are also encouraged to apply.

**Nevada Volunteers has scheduled a conference call with prospective planning grant applicants on Thursday, January 12, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** The purpose of this call is to answer questions regarding this NOFO from prospective planning grant applicants; questions and answers will be posted to Nevada Volunteers website. To register for this conference call please email [grants@nevadavolunteers.org](mailto:grants@nevadavolunteers.org). The call-in information will be forwarded to you with your registration.

**This special Notice is being released separately and contains full instructions for applying but should be read in conjunction with the following documents that provide details of what an AmeriCorps Operational Grant Application will entail:**

- [Nevada Volunteers 2017-2018 AmeriCorps State Formula NOFO](#)
- [AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550](#)

**Eligible Applicants:** Public or private nonprofit organizations; Faith-based and other community organizations; Institutions of higher education; Government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); Indian Tribes; Labor organizations; Partnerships or consortia; Intermediaries planning to subgrant funds.

Organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in this NOFO. Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Action 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.

## AmeriCorps Programming in Nevada

**All programs operating in Nevada must address each of the Nevada Volunteers expectations identified below in their application:**

- Inclusive in the design and delivery making the program accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- Planning grant applicants should consider that Nevada Volunteers expects that an operational AmeriCorps program will support at least 10 members managed by a full-time Program Director.
- Programs can demonstrate community impact and solve community problems using an evidence-based or evidence-informed approach (e.g. performance data, research, theory of change).
- Nevada Volunteers elects to retain a share of 30 percent of the 5 percent of federal funds available to programs for administrative costs (or 1.5 percent of the overall CNCS share). Sub-grantees are required to allocate this Administrative Cost to be retained by Nevada Volunteers for administrative oversight.
- Progress Reports are submitted quarterly NOT semiannually as noted in Federal Notice of Funding.
- Programs are required to budget for staff to attend one CNCS-sponsored technical assistance meeting each year. There are typically two to three such opportunities per year and Nevada Volunteers will determine which meeting(s) are applicable on an annual basis after review of the planned events.

For more information about starting an AmeriCorps\*State program or AmeriCorps\*National program, please visit [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov), [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov), and [Learning Pathways for Program Startup](#).

***Interested parties should read all application materials, including attachments, and linked documents prior to submitting any questions or documents to the Nevada Volunteers Director of AmeriCorps.***

## Nevada AmeriCorps\*State Planning Grant Process

To be eligible for consideration, an applicant must meet the intent of all the requirements listed in this packet and the corresponding documents referenced.

The deadline for submission of planning grant applications is **5:00 pm PST on Friday, March 10, 2017**. Nevada Volunteers will not consider applications received after the deadline, except when noted below. Nevada Volunteers reserves the right to extend the submission deadline and any notice of such extended deadline will be posted in eGrants and the Nevada Volunteers Website.

### ***Late Applications***

Nevada Volunteers may, at its discretion, consider an application received after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter to [grants@nevadavolunteers.org](mailto:grants@nevadavolunteers.org) explaining the extenuating circumstance(s) which caused the delay. The letter must be received no later than 5:00 pm PST on Friday, March 10, 2017. Nevada Volunteers determines whether or not to accept a late application for review on a case-by-case basis. Not having an eGrants account is NOT sufficient reason for a late application.

If technical issues will prevent an applicant from submitting an application on time, please contact the National Service Hotline prior to the deadline at 800-942-2677 or <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask>. National Service Hotline hours are Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization’s name, and the NOFO to which your organization is applying. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, the applicant must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants.

**Technical Assistance:**

Questions concerning this NOFO and application process **can be submitted via email** to [grants@nevadavolunteers.org](mailto:grants@nevadavolunteers.org). Please check the [FAQ](#) on the Nevada Volunteers website before submitting additional questions.

In addition to consulting the Application Instructions, Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, 2017 Performance Measure Instructions, and AmeriCorps regulations as directed in this NOFO, applicants are encouraged also to consult Nevada Volunteers website for pre-recorded technical assistance webinars regarding organization fit, budget development, narrative, and performance development. This information can be found at: <http://nevadavolunteers.org/ameriCorps/ameriCorps-funding/notice-of-funding-opportunities/>.

**2017-18 AmeriCorps State Planning Grant NOFO Application Timeline**

Tuesday, December 20, 2016	Release of AmeriCorps State Planning Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to stakeholders
<b>Friday, March 10, 2017 - 5pm PST</b>	<b>Application due in eGrants</b> <b>All additional documents due by email to <a href="mailto:grants@nevadavolunteers.org">grants@nevadavolunteers.org</a></b>
Monday, March 13 – Friday, April 14, 2017	Review period by review team (Staff and Peer Review Committee)
Monday, April 17 - Friday, May 17, 2017	Clarification Period
Thursday, June 8, 2017	Commission Meeting
Saturday, June 10, 2017	Successful applicants will be notified no later than June 10, 2017

## Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

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

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

### A. 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. Grantees also have the ability to respond to national disasters under CNCS cooperative agreements and FEMA mission assignments.

#### ***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, including youth identified in My Brother's Keeper (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) 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 success in becoming employed.

#### ***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 provide support for increased individual behavioral change leading to increased energy efficiency, renewable energy use, and ecosystem improvements particularly for economically disadvantaged households and communities. Grant activities will decrease energy and water consumption; improve at-risk ecosystems; increase behavioral changes that lead directly to decreased energy and water consumption or improved at-risk ecosystems; and/or increase green training opportunities that may lead to decreased energy and water consumption or improved at-risk ecosystems.

### ***Healthy Futures***

Grants will provide support for activities that will improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities served by CNCS-supported programs; 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 in youth with the purpose of reducing childhood 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, 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.

**B. Funding Priorities** (See [Mandatory Supplemental Guidance](#) for further information about some of the 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 by engaging opportunity youth, either as the population served and/or as AmeriCorps members
- Education - improving student academic performance in Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Mathematics (STEM)
- Environment - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Service Corps
- Healthy Futures – Reducing and/or Preventing Prescription Drug and Opioid Abuse
- 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

**Nevada Volunteers, in alignment with the Nevada State Service Plan**, has identified specific priority areas that we are interested in supporting. Programs that have models targeting one of the following focus areas may be given special consideration based on the needs of our state and a lack of existing program models that meet these focus areas:

- **Programs serving and/or engaging Veterans and Military Families**
- **Programs focused on education including those that will improve school readiness, improve educational outcomes, and prepare students for success in post-secondary institutions**
- **Programs that have a primary member duty of direct service and capacity building activities in the area of volunteer recruitment, management and effective volunteer practices and apply an intermediary program design**
- **Programs serving beneficiaries in southern Nevada**
- **Programs focused on targeting the opioid issue in Nevada**

In order to receive priority consideration and three points for submitting an application within a NOFO priority (ies), 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. Programs addressing other priority areas are encouraged to apply.

### **C. 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.).

## **Award Information**

### **A. Funding Available**

The 2017-18 AmeriCorps\*State *Planning Grant* competition is expected to be highly competitive. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations. In awarding funds, continuation grants are considered first, followed by new and re-competing grants.

### **B. Award Amount**

**Awards for planning grants may be awarded up to \$75,000** and will be used to support development of an AmeriCorps program (no AmeriCorps member positions). Nevada Volunteers will review applications and determine the appropriate award amount, if any.

### **C. Types of Grants/Funding**

AmeriCorps planning grants will only be awarded on a cost reimbursement basis. Cost reimbursement grants fund a portion of program operating costs.

### **D. Match Requirements**

**Successful applicants are required to match at 24 percent** for the first three years of funding. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year 10. Section 121(e)(5) of the National Community Service Act requires programs that use other federal funds as

match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to Nevada Volunteers and CNCS on the Federal Financial Report.

### **1. 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 that plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request at least 60 days prior to the application deadline.

### **E. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)**

Applications must include a DUNS number and an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. The website indicates a 48-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants must be registered with the Systems for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.

SAM collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid SAM registration, which must be renewed annually. Applicants that are not already registered with SAM are urged to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a DUNS number in order to register with SAM. To register online go to <https://www.sam.gov/portal/pulbic/SAM/>.

## **AmeriCorps Planning Grant Application Instructions**

### **A. How to Apply**

Nevada Volunteers requires all applicants to submit their applications electronically via the CNCS web-based system, eGrants. It is recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the eGrants application creation process at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline. Please note the length of a document in your word processing software likely will be different than what will appear in eGrants.

An application is only complete if it includes all required documentation and is received by the application due date. All additional required documents noted below that are not possible to attach in eGrants are due by the application deadline and should be sent to [grants@nevadavolunteers.org](mailto:grants@nevadavolunteers.org). Your email subject should include your organization name and Application ID number.

### **B. Required Additional Documents:**

- Current indirect rate cost agreement, if used to claim indirect/administrative costs.
- Evaluation briefs, reports, studies. Please refer to the *Evidence Base* section for detailed instructions by evidence tier.



- Organizational readiness assessment found at:  
<https://nevadavolunteers.wufoo.com/forms/qyi8gay0kiwuz7/>.
- Organizational Chart: The organizational must clearly show where the AmeriCorps program would be within the Organization.
- Independent Financial Statement Audit form 2014 or 2015 (Submit the most recent completed) Single Audit from 2014 or 2015.

### **C. Page Limits**

Applications may not exceed 12 pages for the Narratives, including the Executive Summary and SF 424 Facesheet, as the pages print out from eGrants. Nevada Volunteers strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the “Review and Submit” page prior to submitting it to check that the application does not exceed the page limit. This limit does not include the budget, performance measures, evaluation plan or required additional documents noted above.

Reviewers will not consider submitted material that is over the page limit, even if eGrants allows an applicant to enter and submit text over the limit. Do not submit non-required supplemental materials such as videos, DVDs, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested in the NOFO or application instructions. Nevada Volunteers will not review or return them.

### **D. Funding Restrictions**

Grants under this program are subject to the applicable Cost Principles under the National Service Uniform Guidance Resources, Omni Circular or Super Circular, and the Uniform Administrative Requirements for grants under A-102 (45 CFR Part 2541) or A-110 (45 CFR 2543 or 2 CFR Part 21).

### **E. Submitting Your Application in eGrants**

New applicants need to establish an eGrants account by accessing this link:

<https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp> and selecting “Don’t have an eGrants account? Create an account.”

## **Content and Form of Application Submission**

### **Criteria for Evidence-Based Intervention Planning Grants**

#### **1. Executive Summary (fill in the blanks) (0 percent):**

The [Name of the organization] proposes to develop an AmeriCorps program serving in [the location(s) the AmeriCorps program will serve] that 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, tribal, and federal funds] in public funding and \$[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding. No AmeriCorps members will be needed to execute this plan.

#### **2. Program Design (50 percent)**

##### **a. Need (10 points):**

- The community need is prevalent and severe in communities where the program plans to serve and the need has been documented with relevant data.

##### **b. Evidence-Based Intervention (30 points):**

Resources are available on the CNCS website at [www.nationalservice.org](http://www.nationalservice.org) to learn more about evidence-based interventions and on the webinar sponsored by Nevada Volunteers titled, "Program Design and Logic Models", found at <http://nevadavolunteers.org/ameriCorps/ameriCorps-funding/notice-of-funding-opportunities/>.

- The evidence-based intervention has successfully addressed the need in other communities. The applicant must describe the evidence for the intervention in the application narrative and must submit at least one, and no more than two, randomized controlled trials (RCT) or quasi-experimental design (QED) evaluations of the intervention. If applicable, cite the clearinghouse and rating where the intervention is rated (if applicable). The studies must be well-designed and well-implemented, must have been conducted by an independent, external evaluator, and must demonstrate, at minimum, evidence of effectiveness (positive findings) on one or more key outcomes that address the community problem/need.
- The key elements of the intervention will be implemented with fidelity to the evidence-based model (e.g., context, target population, content or curriculum, delivery process, training for members).
- AmeriCorps members are well-suited to deliver the evidence-based intervention.

**c. Planning Process/Timeline (10 points):**

- The applicant describes a clear and logical planning process, including:
  - A detailed description of the planning process and who is leading it.
  - A well-developed timeline for planning activities.
  - A clear description of how the planning period will be used to develop the necessary components to effectively manage an AmeriCorps operational program in the future.
- The applicant includes development of the following program elements in the planning process/timeline:
  - Theory of Change/Logic Model that describes implementation of the evidence-based intervention with fidelity and why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed outcomes
  - Member selection and training plan
  - Member supervision plan
  - Commitment to AmeriCorps Identity
  - Compliance and Accountability
  - Securing Match Support for the Program
  - The applicant includes development of the following evaluation elements in the planning process/timeline:
    - Assessing fidelity to the evidence-based intervention being replicated, including a detailed accounting of which core components were modified as a result of integrating AmeriCorps members, how they were modified, and which core components were implemented with fidelity without adaptation
    - Assessing outcomes achieved in previous evaluations of the evidence-based intervention

- Assessing any new outcomes anticipated as a result of integrating AmeriCorps members into the evidence-based intervention

### 3. Organizational Capability (25 percent)

#### **a. Organizational Background and Staffing(25 points)**

- The applicant has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan the proposed program.
- The applicant has prior experience in the proposed area of programming.
- The applicant has conducted high-quality process and outcome evaluations and has used evaluation results for organizational learning and continuous improvement.

### 4. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

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

#### **a. Cost Effectiveness (18 points)**

- The budget is sufficient to carry out the program effectively.\*
- The budget aligns with the applicant's narrative.\*
- The applicant has raised or describes an adequate plan to raise non-CNCS resources to fully support the program.

\*Program costs not included in the formal budget must be described in this section in sufficient detail to allow reviewers to assess their sufficiency and alignment. Failure to provide adequate information in this section may result in a lower score.

#### **b. Budget Adequacy (7 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.

Applicants must complete the budget and ensure the following information is in the budget narrative (requested information in the budget screens):

- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project, including for Fixed Price applicants.
- Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash) and the sources of these commitments.

### 5. Evaluation Plan (0 percent)

Evaluating the implementation and outcomes of proposed models will be critical to determining whether or not it is feasible to integrate national service into evidence-based interventions and achieve the same kinds of programmatic outcomes and impacts. As such, applicants should

understand that they will be required to submit an evaluation plan with the completion of a three year operational cycle, or when the applicant re-competes for an AmeriCorps grant.

- Theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results
- Outcome 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
- Study components – a) a 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; b) description of the sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures, and c) an analysis plan
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator
- The estimated budget

### Overview of Key Budget Requirements

Program requirements, including requirements on match, are located in the AmeriCorps regulations and summarized below. The acceptable sources of matching funds are federal, state, local, private sector, and/or other funds in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements.

Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as the minimum match of 24 percent for the first three years, and the increasing minimums in years thereafter, are maintained. You must match with cash or in-kind contributions at least 24 percent of the planning grant total Operating Costs (Section I) plus Administrative Costs (Section III).

**Table 3: Match Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Minimum overall share	24%	24%	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

In Section III of the budget, enter a brief description of the source of match. Identify each match source separately. Include dollar amount, the match classification (Cash, In-Kind, or Not Available) and the source type (Private, State/Local, Federal, Other or Not Available). Define all acronyms the first time they are used.

***i. Preparing Your Budget***

Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your proposal narrative. Reviewers will consider the information you provide in this section in their assessment of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criteria.

Follow the detailed budget instructions below to prepare your budget. We highly recommend preparing your budget using Attachment A – Detailed Budget Instructions for Cost-Reimbursement and

Attachment B – Budget Checklist for Cost-Reimbursement Grants. As noted on page one of this NOFO Nevada Volunteers expects that your organization has the capacity to move from a planning grant match to an operational grant match. The eGrants system will create the budget and the budget narrative automatically from the detailed budget information you enter. Once you have entered your budget information in eGrants, you will be asked to validate your budget, and eGrants will check your submission for errors. Please be prepared to spend several hours correcting errors and re-validating your eGrants submission; this can be a lengthy process.

As you prepare your budget:

- All the amounts you request must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.
- Itemize each cost and present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.
- Do not include unallowable expenses, e.g., entertainment costs (which include food and beverage costs) unless they are justified as an essential component of an activity.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).

Please refer to <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/uniform-guidance> for information on allowable costs. Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and the National Service Uniform Guidance Resources, Omni Circular or Super Circular, for grant management, allowable costs, and audits, including providing audits to the A-133 clearinghouse if expending over \$500,000 in federal funds.

## Review and Selection Process

### 1. Compliance and Eligibility Review

Nevada Volunteers staff will review all applications submitted to determine compliance with eligibility, the submission deadline, and completeness. Applications determined non-compliant will not be Considered for funding. An application is compliant if the applicant:

- Is an eligible organization
- Submits an application by the submission deadline
- Submit an application that is complete, in that it contains all required elements and follows the instructions provided in this NOFO.

Nevada Volunteers will screen applications in accordance with the requirements in this NOFO to determine if the applicant has met all eligibility and submission requirements. The screening may occur at various stages of the grant-making process. Applicants determined to be ineligible will not receive an award.

### 2. Review

Each application will be assessed by Nevada Volunteers staff. External reviewers (Peer Review Committee) will evaluate the formula application using the application review criteria and will consider the comprehensiveness and feasibility of the application. Internal reviewers (Nevada Volunteers staff) will evaluate applications that are selected by the peer review committee to go forward for recommended for funding to the commission using the application review criteria and will consider the

comprehensiveness and feasibility of the applications as well as the priorities and strategic considerations as detailed in this NOFO. All reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

### **3. Risk Assessment Evaluation**

Nevada Volunteers 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 and the applicant's past performance (if applicable.) This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If Nevada Volunteers determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. In evaluating risks, Nevada Volunteers may consider the following, but not limited to:

- Financial stability
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards prescribed in the National Service Uniform Guidance Resources, the Omni Circular or Super Circular, A. The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements in 2 CFR §200 and CNCS regulations issued to implement are applicable to these grants.
- Information available through any National Service Uniform Guidance Resources-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as—
  - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS),
  - Dun and Bradstreet, or
  - “Do Not Pay”
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under the National Service Uniform Guidance Resources (Omni Circular or Super Circular) and findings of any other available audits are applicable to these grants.
- IRS Tax Form 990
- An applicant organization's annual report
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website
- Any other information listed in 45 C.F.R. § 2522.140
- The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements
- Past Performance

### **4. Clarification Process**

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 by Nevada Volunteers and CNCS in making final 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 additional information in response to clarification questions in a timely fashion may result in the removal of applications from consideration.

### **5. Selection for Funding**

The assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. Nevada Volunteers staff will apply their experience and expertise in evaluating and recommending 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 NOFO.

Specifically, the review and selection process will:

a. Identify how well eligible applications are aligned with application review criteria and/or represent relative risk and/or opportunity.

b. Yield a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:

- Meaningful representation of
  - Geographic diversity
  - Rural communities (see definition in Mandatory Supplemental Guidance)
  - Small and medium programs
  - Single and multi-state programs
  - Faith- based organizations
- Nevada Volunteers and/or CNCS NOFO Priorities representation
- Focus area representation
- Organizations and/or program models that recruit and engage traditionally underrepresented populations as AmeriCorps members (e.g.; people with disabilities, low-income individuals, older Americans, etc.) and expand opportunities to serve as AmeriCorps members
- High ratio of match and/or other revenue to CNCS investment
- Moderate and Strong evidence levels

In selecting applicants to receive awards under this NOFO, the Nevada Volunteers Commission will endeavor to include a diverse portfolio of applications based on staff evaluations, recommendations, priorities, and strategic considerations.

***Nevada Volunteers and CNCS 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 in response to this NOFO.***

#### **C. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information**

Prior to making any award under this NOFO that exceeds \$150,000, CNCS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);

Any applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM 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 SAM;

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 NOFO.

#### **D. Feedback to Applicants**

Following grant awards, each applicant will receive summary comments pertaining to their application. Feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect any information that may have been provided in response to clarification questions, if any. All compliant applications will receive feedback from the Peer Review Committee and staff review of the application.

### **5. Transparency in Grant-making**

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

- a list of all compliant applications submitted
- Executive Summaries of all compliant applications submitted by the applicants
- data extracted from the SF-424 Face Sheet and the submitted program narratives for successful applications
- a blank template of the Peer Review Committee review worksheet
- a list of all Peer Review Committee members that completed the review process
- a summary of Peer Review Committee members' comments for successful applications.

## **Agency Contact**

This NOFO is available at [www.nevadavolunteers.org](http://www.nevadavolunteers.org). For further Information or for a printed copy of the NOFO call 775.825.1900 or send an email to [grants@nevadavolunteers.org](mailto:grants@nevadavolunteers.org).

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## Attachment A: Detailed Budget Instructions

*These instructions below have been edited for AmeriCorps Planning Grant Applicants.*

### Section I. Program Operating Costs

Complete Section I, Program Operating Costs of the Budget Worksheet by entering the “Total Amount,” “CNCS Share,” and “Grantee Share” for Parts A-I, as follows:

#### A. Personnel Expenses

Under “Position/Title Description,” list each staff position separately and provide salary and percentage of effort as percentage of FTE devoted to this award. Each staff person’s role listed in the budget must be described in the application narrative and each staff person mentioned in the narrative must be listed in the budget as either CNCS or Grantee share. Because the purpose of this grant is to enable and stimulate volunteer community service, do not include the value of direct community service performed by volunteers. However, you may include the value of volunteer services contributed to the organization for organizational functions such as accounting, audit work, or training of staff.

#### B. Personnel Fringe Benefits

Under “Purpose/Description,” identify the types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position. Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Workers’ Compensation, Retirement, SUTA, Health and Life Insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate line item. If a fringe benefit amount is over 30 percent, please list covered items separately and justify the high cost. Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates, but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item.

#### C. 1. Staff Travel

Describe the purpose for which program staff will travel. Provide a calculation that includes itemized costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel-related expenses multiplied by the number of trips/staff. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information. Reimbursement should not exceed the federal mileage rate unless a result of applicant policy and justified in the budget narrative. Only domestic travel is allowable.

We expect all Nevada applicants to include funds in this line item for travel for staff and site staff to attend *one* CNCS-sponsored technical assistance meeting. There are typically two to three such opportunities per year and in the past have included the Pacific Region National Service Conference.

Please itemize the costs. For example: One staff member will attend the Pacific Region National Service Conference in Portland, OR. 1 staff X \$250 airfare + \$25 ground transportation + (2 days X \$ 100 lodging) + \$105 per diem = \$580.

#### C. 2. Member Travel

N/A for planning grant applicants

#### D. Equipment

N/A for planning grant applicants

#### E. Supplies

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials. You must individually list any single item costing \$1,000 or more.

#### F. Contractual and Consultant Services

Include costs for consultants related to the project's operations, except training or evaluation consultants, who will be listed in Sections G. and H., below. There is not a maximum daily rate.

**G. 1. Staff Training**

Include the costs associated with training staff on project requirements and training to enhance the skills staff need for effective project implementation, i.e., project or financial management, team building, etc. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate. There is not a maximum daily rate.

**G. 2. Member Training**

N/A for planning grant applicants

**H. Evaluation**

Include costs for project evaluation activities, including additional staff time or subcontracts, use of evaluation consultants, purchase of instrumentation, and other costs specifically for this activity not budgeted in Personnel Expenses.

**I. Other Program Operating Costs**

Allowable costs in this budget category should include when applicable:

- Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
- Utilities, telephone, internet and similar expenses that are specifically used for grant funded activities, and are not part of the organization's indirect cost allocation pool. If such expenses are budgeted and shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.

**Section II. Member Costs**

N/A for planning grant applicants

**A. Living Allowance**

N/A for planning grant applicants

**B. Member Support Costs**

N/A for planning grant applicants

**Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs**

**Definitions**

Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives CNCS funds and do not include particular project costs. These costs may include administrative staff positions. For organizations that have an established indirect cost rate for federal awards, administrative costs mean those costs that are included in the organization's indirect cost rate agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the organization's overall operation and are further described in Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-21, A-87, and A-122.

**Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs (you may only choose either A OR B)**

Applicants choose one of two methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a CNCS-fixed percentage rate method or a federally approved indirect cost rate method. Regardless of the option chosen, the CNCS share of administrative costs is limited to 5 percent of the total CNCS funds actually expended under this grant. Do not create additional lines in this category.

**A. CNCS-Fixed Percentage Method - Five Percent Fixed Administrative Costs Option (skip item A if you plan to claim a federally approved indirect cost rate)**

The CNCS-fixed percentage rate method allows you to charge administrative costs up to a cap without a federally approved indirect cost rate and without documentation supporting the allocation. If you choose the CNCS-fixed percentage rate method (Section IIIA in eGrants), you may charge, for administrative costs, a fixed 5 percent of the total of the CNCS funds expended. In order to charge this fixed 5 percent the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10 percent of all direct cost expenditures.

1. As allowed by CNCS policy, Nevada Volunteers elects to retain a share of 30 percent share of the 5 percent of the federal funds available to programs for administrative costs (or 1.5 percent of the overall CNCS share). To calculate these fractional shares, within Section III of the subgrant budget, three-tenths (30 percent) of the federal dollars budgeted for administrative costs is allocated to the Commission's share and seven-tenths (70 percent) of the federal dollars budgeted for administrative costs are allocated to the program's share. The allocation between commission and program shares would be calculated as follows:

$$([\text{Section I}] + [\text{Section II}] \times 0.0526) \times (0.30) = \text{Commission Share}$$

$$([\text{Section I}] + [\text{Section II}] \times 0.0526) \times (0.70) = \text{Subgrantee Share}$$

The factor 0.0526 is used to calculate the 5 percent maximum amount of federal funds that may be budgeted for administrative (indirect) costs, rather than 0.0500, as a way to mathematically compensate for determining Section III costs when the total budget (Sections I + II + III) is not yet established. **The budget worksheet in Attachment B outlines this calculation so that it can be easily input into the budget.**

2. To determine the Grantee share for Section III: Multiply the total (both Corporation and grantee share) of Sections I and II by 10 percent (0.10) and enter this amount as the grantee share for Section III A.

3. Enter the sum of the CNCS and grantee shares under Total Amount.

**B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate (skip item B if you are claiming a fixed percentage using A above)**

If you have a federally approved indirect cost rate and choose to use it, the rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs, including the 5 percent maximum payable by CNCS. Specify the Cost Type for which your organization has current documentation on file, i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost rate. Supply your approved IDC rate (percentage) and the base upon which this rate is calculated (direct salaries, salaries and fringe benefits, etc.). It is at your discretion whether or not to claim your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate in the Rate Claimed field.

1. Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both the CNCS and Grantee shares, as prescribed by your established rate agreement (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other). Then multiply the appropriate direct costs by the rate being claimed. This will determine the total amount of indirect costs allowable under the grant.

2. To determine the CNCS share: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as the CNCS share of indirect costs. As Nevada Volunteers elects to retain a 30 percent share of the 5 percent of federal funds available (or 1.5 percent of the overall federal share), please note the percentage or amount in the text. There is no separate line item to show this calculation.

3. To determine the Grantee share: Subtract the amount calculated in step 2 (the CNCS administrative share) from the amount calculated in step 1 (the Indirect Cost total). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for administrative costs.

**C. Source of Match**

In the "Source of Match" field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the Source of Match, the amount, the match classification (Cash, In-kind, or Not Available) and Match Source (State/Local, Federal, Private, Other or Not Available) for your entire match. Define any acronyms the first time they are used.

## ATTACHMENT B: Budget Checklist for Cost-Reimbursement Grants

*Below is a checklist to help you make certain that you submit an accurate budget narrative.*

In Compliance?	Section I. Program Operating Costs
Yes ___ No ___	Costs charged under the Personnel line item directly relate to the operation of the AmeriCorps project? Examples include costs for staff that recruit, train, place, or supervise members as well as manage the project.
Yes ___ No ___	Staff indirectly involved in the management or operation of the applicant organization is funded through the administrative cost section (Section III.) of the budget? Examples of administrative costs include central management and support functions.
Yes ___ No ___	Staff fundraising expenses are not charged to the grant? You may not charge AmeriCorps staff members' time and related expenses for fundraising to the federal or grantee share of the grant. Expenses incurred to raise funds must be paid out of the funds raised. Development officers and fundraising staff are not allowable expenses.
Yes ___ No ___	All positions in the budget are fully described in the narrative?
Yes ___ No ___	The types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position are described? Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Worker's Compensation, Retirement, SUTA, Health and Life Insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If the fringe amount is over 30%, please list separately.
Yes ___ No ___	Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item?
Yes ___ No ___	The purpose for all staff and member travel is clearly identified?
Yes ___ No ___	You have budgeted funds for staff travel to CNCS sponsored meetings in the budget narrative under Staff Travel?
Yes ___ No ___	All single supply items over \$1000 per unit are specifically listed?
Yes ___ No ___	Are all items in the budget narrative itemized and the purpose of the funds justified?
In Compliance?	Section II. Member Costs
Yes ___ No ___	Are all portions of section two left blank as instructed?
In Compliance?	Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs
Yes ___ No ___	<b>If applicant has chosen Option A – CNCS-fixed percentage method</b> , the maximum federal share of administrative costs does not exceed 5% of the total federal funds budgeted? To determine the federal administrative share, multiply all other budgeted federal funds by .0526.
Yes ___ No ___	<b>If applicant has chosen Option A – CNCS fixed percentage method</b> , the maximum grantee share is at 10% or less of total budgeted funds?
Yes ___ No ___	<b>If applicant has chosen Option B – federally approved indirect cost rate method</b> , administrative costs budgeted include the following: (1) indirect costs such as legal staff, central management and support functions; (2) costs for financial, accounting, audit, internal evaluations, and contracting functions; (3) costs for insurance that protects the entity that operates the project; and (4) the portion of the salaries and benefits of the director and any other project administrative staff not attributable to the time spent in direct support of a specific project
Yes ___ No ___	<b>If applicant has chosen Option B –</b> The maximum grantee share does not exceed the federally approved rate, less the 5% CNCS share?
Yes ___ No ___	<b>If applicant has chosen Option B -</b> the type of rate, the IDC rate percentage, the rate claimed and the base to which the rate is applied has been specified?
Yes ___ No ___	Is the overall match being met at the required level, based on the year of funding?
Yes ___ No ___	For all matching funds, the source(s) [private, state and local, and federal], the type of contribution (cash or in-kind), and the amount (or an estimate) of match, are clearly identified in the narrative and in the Source of Match field in eGrants?

