



**AMERICORPS ARKANSAS
SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION PACKAGE:
NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORUNITY**

EngageAR/Arkansas Service Commission is accepting applications for one-time, short-term AmeriCorps grant project funding. Organizations eligible to apply are limited to:

Operational grant:

- **Current CNCS 2019 – 2020 National Service Project grant holders with the ability to host an operational summer only program, may apply for an operational grant with AmeriCorps members. The program applying for supplemental funds:**
 - is on target to expend 85% or greater of funds awarded in 2019 – 2020 and
 - is on target to successfully achieve outcomes listed in 2019 – 2020 grant application and
 - has a member enrollment rate average greater than or equal to: 50 percent and
 - has a member retention rate average greater than or equal to: 70 percent

Or

Planning grant:

- **Four-year institutions interested in developing an AmeriCorps program for the 2021 – 2022 program year may apply for a planning grant**

Or

- **Public high school districts interested in developing a service learning focused AmeriCorps project for the 2021 – 2022 program year may apply for a planning grant**

The project would begin June 1, 2020 and end September 30, 2020

This Application Package consists of:

1. Notice of Funding Opportunity (*Notice*)
2. Mandatory Supplemental Guidance
3. Arkansas Application Instructions

This Package should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550, and the Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. The full regulations are available online at www.ecfr.gov

NOTICE OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service
Funding Opportunity Title: 2019 AmeriCorps State and National Grants
Announcement Type: Initial Announcement
CFDA Number: 94.006

Disclosure: Publication of this Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (*Notice*) does not obligate the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to award any specific number of grants or to obligate any particular amount of funding. The 2019 President's Budget proposed the elimination of CNCS. The actual level and timing of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

Application Submission:

- Formula applications are due to the Arkansas Service Commission by **4:00 PM Thursday, April 2, 2020** with 10 hard copies submitted by mail or in person to:

Arkansas Division of Higher Education – EngageAR
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201

- Complete application submissions will include the SF 424 as printed out from eGrants, the application narrative, logic model, performance measures, budget, and budget narrative as printed out from eGrants, the CNCS web-based system.
- New and re-competing applicants requesting over \$75,000 and All New to CNCS applicants regardless of funding level are required to submit a Financial Management Survey (FMS) and supporting documents located at: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/financial-management-select> Financial Management Survey under the Application Certification Forms Section.
- A copy of your most recent audit or A-133 or Annual certification of solvency

Failure to submit the required additional documents by the deadline will have a negative effect on the assessment of your application and/or on the determination of the application's eligibility to advance for review. Additional Documents must be emailed to Engage.AR@adhe.edu with the labels outlined below. Emails should include the following information:

- Subject line: [Legal Applicant Name]– [Application ID number]
- Body of the email should identify:
 - The legal applicant name and its point of contact information
 - The application ID number
 - A list of documents that should be attached to the email
 - Attachments to emails should include
 - Individually saved files that are clearly labeled
 - Each file should also include a header or title within the body of each additional document to include the legal applicant name and application ID number.
- **New Applications:**
 - copy of your W-9

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. 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, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, CNCS has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

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

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 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' preparation 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 programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS programs.

Arkansas State Service Plan

Although the above are the primary focus areas for CNCS, programs that receive Formula funding through the Arkansas Service Commission are also measured against the needs of Arkansas as described in the State Service Plan. CNCS allows State Service Commissions the ability to determine what needs are best for their state.

2. 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 the following areas:

- Economic Opportunity - increasing economic opportunities for communities by engaging opportunity youth to prepare them for the workforce.
- Education - selection of one of the evidence-based interventions in three categories: School Readiness (three evidence-based interventions), K-12 success (nine evidence-based interventions), and Post-Secondary Support (one evidence-based intervention). In order to qualify for this priority, the applicants must be assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence by the reviewers.
- 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.
- Rural intermediaries - organizations that demonstrate measureable impact and primarily serve rural communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.
- Safer Communities - programs that focus on public safety, and/or partnerships between law enforcement and the community.
- Faith-based organizations.

In order to receive priority consideration for submitting an application within a *Notice* 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.

3. 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 measurement 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: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/2018/2019-performance-measure-instructions>

4. 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.)

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimated Available Funds

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

2. Estimated Award Amount

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 – as determined by the scope of the projects.

3. Project and Award Period

The Arkansas Service Commission awards funding for a period of service of June 1, 2020 – September 30, 2020. Continuation funding for subsequent years is not guaranteed and shall be dependent upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance.

The project start date may not occur prior to the date 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.

4. Type of Award

AmeriCorps Operating Grants: CNCS may award a Cost Reimbursement or a Fixed Amount grant to any successful applicant, but the availability of a Full-Time 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. Most programs in Arkansas are traditional cost reimbursement programs as shown in the table below.

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement	Fixed Amount			
		Full-time	Education Award Program (EAP)	Professional Corps	No Cost Slots
Available Subtypes	Traditional	Full-time	Education Award Program (EAP)	Professional Corps	No Cost Slots
Maximum Cost per MSY	\$15,192	\$15,192	\$800	\$1,000*	\$0
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time	Full-time or Less than Full-time serving in a full-time capacity	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time	Full-time only	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time
Budget Submission Required	Yes	No		Yes, if requesting operating funds	No
Availability of Funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSYs	No	Yes			No

Special Requirements	N/A	N/A	Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries and benefits must be paid entirely by organization where member serves and not included in budget.	N/A
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes	No		
Available to new Applicants	Yes	No	Yes	

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following Non-Federal entities (as defined in 2 CFR §200.69) who have DUNS numbers and are registered in System for Award Management (SAM) are eligible to apply:

- Indian Tribes (2 CFR §200.54)
- Institutions of higher education (2 CFR §200.54)
- Local governments (2 CFR §200.64)
- Nonprofit organizations (2 CFR §200.70)
- States (2 CFR §200.90)

New Applicants

CNCS encourages organizations that have not received prior funding from CNCS to apply. The general practice for Arkansas funds is to award no more than 50 member positions (slots), with a minimum of at least 4 MSY (4 full-time equivalent) 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 subgrantees/operating sites of Fixed Amount and Cost Reimbursement grantees who 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.

Types of Applicants

State and Territory Service Commissions (for Single-State Applicants)

Organizations that propose to operate in only one state must apply through the Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions. Each commission administers its own selection process and submits the applications it selects to compete for funding directly to CNCS. Single-State applicants must contact their Commissions to learn about their state or territory processes and deadlines. State deadlines may be significantly earlier than the CNCS deadlines and may have additional requirements. The list of Commissions can be found on the CNCS website. A Single-State application from a State or Territory with a Commission that is submitted directly to CNCS by the applicant rather than the Commission will be considered noncompliant and will not be reviewed. See the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for descriptions of National Direct and Single-State applicants.

National Direct Applicants¹

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

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

States and Territories without Commissions: Applicants in South Dakota, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands apply directly to CNCS because this State and these Territories do not have an established Commission.

Federally-recognized Indian Tribes: Applicants that are Indian Tribes apply directly to CNCS. In addition to Indian Tribes as defined in 2 CFR §200.54, tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by Indian Tribes are also eligible to apply. An entity applying on behalf of a federally-recognized tribe or multiple specific federally-recognized tribes must submit a sanctioning resolution, applicable for the entirety of the period of performance that the applicant is applying for, adopted by the Tribal Council (or comparable tribal governing body) of each Indian Tribe. The resolution(s) must identify the entity by name as a tribal organization and indicate whether it is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by an Indian Tribe(s). It must authorize the entity to be the legal applicant and act on behalf of and include the Indian Tribe(s) in a CNCS application for the purpose of conducting the activities and providing the services described in the application. A current resolution will not suffice to meet this requirement unless the resolution applies for the entire period of performance of the award, i.e., current resolutions that are applicable to a previous AmeriCorps award at the time of the application submission, but expire during the prospective period of performance of a new award, do not meet this requirement.

In addition to being eligible to apply under this *Notice*, federally-recognized Indian Tribes will also be eligible to apply for operating or planning grants under a separate Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity for Indian Tribes to be released later in the Winter with an application deadline in the Spring. CNCS may request applicants apply under the Tribal competition, rather than under this *Notice*.

2. Threshold Issues

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

- The general practice for Arkansas Formula funds is to award no more than 50 member positions (slots), with a minimum of four (4) MSY to organizations receiving an AmeriCorps grant for the first time.
- Professional Corps applicants and/or applicants determined to be a Professional Corps by CNCS must demonstrate that the community in which it will place AmeriCorps members serving as professionals has an inadequate number of said professionals.
- Applications for a Full-Time Fixed Amount grant must reflect only full-time members (either 1,700 hour members or 300, 450, 675, 900, or 1,200 hour members serving in a full-time capacity.)
- If the proposed service activities require specialized member qualifications and/or training (for example, tutoring programs: 45 CFR §2522.910-.940), the applicant must describe how the program will meet these requirements.

3. Other Requirements

Under section 132A(b) of the NCSA, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this *Notice*.

Note that under section 745 of Title VII, Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, if CNCS is aware that any corporation has any unpaid Federal tax liability which—

- has been assessed,
- for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and
- that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, that corporation is not eligible for an award under this *Notice*.² A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this *Notice*. However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation which a federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interest of the federal government

² However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation which a federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the federal government.

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in 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 for CNCS funding.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

This *Notice* should be read together with the Arkansas Application Package, the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550, and the National Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. These documents can be found on the CNCS website. The full Regulations are available online at www.ecfr.gov.

1. To Request an Application Package

The full application package and the forms to be completed can be found at www.VolunteerAR.org. Applicants can also send an email to Engage.Ar@adhe.edu for information.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

a. Application Content

In CNCS's web-based management system, applicants will enter the following components of a complete application:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet: This is automatically generated when applicants complete the data elements in the system
 - Box 16: The Application is Subject to Review by State Executive Order 12372 Process: Change to YES with a date of May 30, 2020.
- Narratives
 - Executive Summary
 - Program Design
 - Organizational Capability
 - Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
 - Evaluation Plan (if applicable)
- Logic Model
- Standard Form 424 Budget
- Performance Measures
- Authorization, Assurances, and Certification

b. Page Limits

There are two page limits that must be adhered to: Narrative and Logic Model.

Narrative

Applications must not exceed 10 pages for the Narratives or 13 pages for Rural Intermediaries and Multi-State applications with more than five operating sites. CNCS will use the number of locations in the "multi-state operating sites" field in CNCS's web-based management system to determine whether a multi-site application has more than five operating sites. The "multi-site operating sites" field can be found by clicking on the "operating sites" link in the system. Multi-state applicants that list five or fewer operating sites cannot exceed 10 pages for the Narrative.

In determining whether an application complies with page limits, CNCS **will count** the following for the narrative:

- The application's Executive Summary, SF 424 Facesheet, and
- The Narrative portions contained in the Program Design, Organizational Capacity, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy sections of the application.

ASC and CNCS will consider the number of pages only as they print out from the "Review" tab in CNCS's web-based grant management system (where you will see the "View/Print your application" heading) when

determining compliance for page limits. ASC and CNCS will not consider the results of any alternative printing methods in determining whether an application complies with the applicable page limits. ASC and CNCS strongly encourage applicants to print out the application from the “Review” tab prior to submission to check that the application does not exceed the page limit. The application page limit does not include the Budget narrative, narrative portion of the Evaluation Plan, the Logic Model, performance measures, or the supplementary materials, if applicable.

Logic Model

The Logic Model may not exceed three pages when printed with the application from the “Review” tab in CNCS’s web-based management system.

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

3. Dun and Bradstreet University Numbering System (DUNS) Number & 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: [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 and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete and, if a grant is awarded, throughout the life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. CNCS suggests finalizing a new registration or renewing 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 who do not comply with these requirements may be ineligible to receive or maintain an award. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at https://sam.gov/sam/transcript/Quick_Guide_for_Grants_Registrations.pdf.

4. Submission Dates and Times

a. Application Submission Deadline

Supplemental applications are due to the EngageAR/Arkansas Service Commission by **4:00 PM Thursday, April 2, 2020** with 10 hard copies submitted to the EngageAR/Arkansas Service Commission via mail or in person drop off at:

**Arkansas Division of Higher Education
EngageAR/Arkansas Service Commission
423 Main Street, Suite 400
Little Rock, AR 72201**

c. Additional Documents Deadline

Any required additional documents are due on the application deadline. See *Submission of Additional Documents* section for other guidance.

d. Late Applications

All applications received after the submission deadline published in the *Notice* are presumed to be non-compliant. In order to overcome this presumption, the applicant must:

- provide a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay, including:

- the timing and specific cause(s) of the delay
- the ticket number if a request for assistance was submitted to the National Service Hotline
- any information provided to the applicant by the National Service Hotline
- any other documentation or evidence that supports the justification
- ensure that the Arkansas Service Commission receives the justification and any other evidence that substantiates the claimed extenuating circumstance(s) via email to Engage.Ar@adhe.edu no later than one business day after the application deadline stated in the Notice.

Communication with ASC staff is not a substitute for the email / letter. Applicants are required to continue working in CNCS's web-based application system and with the National Service Hotline to submit the application. ASC will determine whether or not to accept a late application on a case-by-case basis. Applicants that do not submit a justification or any other evidence to overcome the presumption of non-compliance within the published timeframe will not be reviewed or selected for award.

Please note: ASC will not consider an advance request to submit a late application. Applicants are encouraged to continue working on their application until it is submitted. If you are experiencing technical difficulties, please carefully review and follow the guidance listed above, and submit your application as soon as possible.

5. Funding Restrictions

a. Member Living Allowance

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

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

Table: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1,700	\$13,992	\$27,984
Three Quarter-time	1,200	n/a	\$19,753
Half-time	900	n/a	\$14,815
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	\$11,111
Quarter-time	450	n/a	\$7,408
Minimum-time	300	n/a	\$4,938

Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements

1. 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.

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

3. Professional Corps Grantees must provide members a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance set in the Living Allowance Table above. Professional Corps member salaries and benefits including child care are paid entirely by the organizations

with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget request to CNCS (federal or matching share.)

b. Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

The CNCS cost per MSY is determined by dividing the CNCS share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum amount an applicant may request from CNCS per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

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

All Arkansas State Commission sub-grantees/applicants will be held to the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type.

Table: Maximum Cost per MSY

Grant Program	Maximum
Individual State/Territory Program (cost reimbursement)	\$15,192*
Professional Corps Fixed Amount Applicants/Grantees	\$1,000**
Education Award Program Fixed Amount Grant	\$800
Full-time Fixed Amount Grant	\$15,192
State/Territory Commission Average (of all its subgrants)	\$15,192

*Cost reimbursement programs operating in rural communities (as defined in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) and cost reimbursement programs that recruit opportunity youth as AmeriCorps members may request up to \$15,360 cost per MSY for the AmeriCorps members who will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth.

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

CNCS reserves the right to determine whether an applicant is a Professional Corps and whether the legal applicant has sufficiently demonstrated that they cannot effectively operate an AmeriCorps program without receiving CNCS operating funds. Given the high demand for AmeriCorps funding there may be specific circumstances where CNCS determines that either a legal applicant is not a Professional Corps program or is unlikely to demonstrate a need for operational funds due to other funding resources. Where CNCS's due diligence review of a Professional Corps application shows that the applicant has a historically high level of support from non-CNCS sources, and as a result has levels of unrestricted funding that is in excess of the requested level of CNCS funding, CNCS may choose to not provide additional operational funding.

c. Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

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

**d. Cost Sharing or Matching
Fixed Amount Grants**

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

Cost Reimbursement Grants

A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR §2521.60 and below.

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

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

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

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**. State programs submit requests for alternative match to the Arkansas Service Commission.

e. Indirect Costs

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants will either use a federally approved indirect cost rate, a 5/10 percent fixed option, 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 approved indirect cost allocation plans. **All methods must be applied consistently across 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 the CNCS's web-based management system. 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.

6. Other Submission Requirements

a. Coordination among State Commissions and National Direct Applicants

CNCS expects 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. The list of Commissions can be found here: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact-us/state-service-commissions>.

To ensure coordination:

National Direct applicants, except federally-recognized Indian Tribes, must:

Before application submission:

- Consult with the Commission of each state and/or territory in which the organization plans to operate and describe this consultation in their applications. Contact the Commissions for details about the consultation process. Provide information that connects the proposed activities to the current State/Territory Service plan and/or State logic model.

After Award:

- Provide the Commission with contact information for National Direct programs in the state and/or territory and update the information on an annual basis.

- Participate in the Commissions' annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of its state/territory service plan, as well as appropriate training and other events.
- Include the Commission on the National Directs mailing/email distribution lists and invite it to appropriate training and other events.

State/Territory Commissions must:

Before application submission:

- Consult in a timely manner with the National Direct applicants, except Indian Tribes, that contact them prior to application submission.

After Award:

- Consider the schedules and needs of National Direct applicants, including Indian Tribes, operating in their states when planning annual events and technical assistance activities.
- Include National Direct programs, including Indian Tribes, in their annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state/territory service plan.
- Add staff of multi-state programs in their state/territory to their mailing/email distribution lists and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

CNCS will solicit Commission input on National Direct applicants, except Indian Tribes, proposing to operate in their state/territory. Via the CNCS's web-based management system, Commissions have the opportunity to select "support," "do not support," or "neutral," and provide comments. Participation by Commissions in providing this input is strongly encouraged. CNCS reviews and considers Commission input on multi-state applicants proposing to operate in their state.

CNCS will assess an applicant's strategic considerations. Applicants must check the relevant boxes in the Program Information tab in CNCS's web-based management system in order to be considered for CNCS's assessment of the strategic considerations (see *Selection for Funding* section.) Applicants should only check the boxes if the strategic consideration is a significant and if intentional part of their program design and implementation strategies are described in the application.

b. Electronic Application Submission in CNCS's web-based management system

Applicants must submit applications electronically via CNCS's web-based system. CNCS recommends that applicants create an account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the text into the appropriate field no later than ten 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 via [Questions](#) if a problem arises when creating an account or 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 extenuating circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit in CNCS's web-based management system, applicants must notify ASC by sending an email to Engage.Ar@adhe.edu, subject line: [Late Submission](#), and send 18 paper copies of the application (including logic model, performance measures, budget and budget narrative) via overnight carrier to the address provided in this *NOFO*.

Please use a non-U.S. Postal Service carrier to avoid security-related delays. All deadlines and requirements in this *Notice* also apply to paper applications. Paper applications must include a cover letter detailing the

circumstances that make it impossible to submit via CNCS's web-based management system. ASC and CNCS do not accept applications submitted via fax or email.

c. Submission of Additional Documents

Applicants are required to submit the following additional documents by the application submission deadline:

All applicants

- Evaluation briefs, reports, studies. Please refer to the *Evidence Base* section and Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for detailed instructions by evidence tier.
- Financial Management Survey (FMS) and supporting documents located on the CNCS website. Selected Financial Survey under the Application Certification Form section.

Additional Documents must be emailed to Engage.AR@adhe.edu with the labels outlined below. Emails should include the following information:

- Subject line: [Legal Applicant Name]– [Application ID number]
- Body of the email should identify:
 - The legal applicant name and its point of contact information
 - The application ID number
 - A list of documents that should be attached to the email
- Attachments to emails should include
 - Individually saved files that are clearly labeled
 - Each file should also include a header or title within the body of each additional document to include the legal applicant name and application ID number.

Do not submit other items not requested in this *Notice* or Application Instructions. EngageAR/Arkansas Service Commiion will not review or return them.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

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

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 non-governmental funds] in private funding.

*If the program is not operating in a CNCS focus area, omit this sentence.

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 (28 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 may include short, medium or long-term outcomes in the logic model. **Applicants are not required or expected 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 (16 points)

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

Evidence Tier (8 points):

An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of applying the strategic characteristics (moderate/strong evidence) and 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 2018, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 9%, Moderate 5%, Preliminary 40%, and Pre-Preliminary 46%. 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 evaluation reports of the same intervention described in the application (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance for a definition of “same intervention”) may submit up to 2 of those reports, plus (if applicable) the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle, to qualify for the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tier. In order to qualify for consideration, the intervention evaluated in the submitted report(s) must match the intervention proposed by the applicant in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Program Design and Logic Model sections of the application:

- Characteristics of the beneficiary population
- Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention
- Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention
- 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 evaluation report(s) submitted and (2) describe any other evidence that supports their program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform their program design. Applicants who submit evaluation reports for consideration must also describe in the Evidence Base section of the application narrative how the intervention described in the submitted reports is the same as the intervention described in the application (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance).

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

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

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

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.

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 2019 AmeriCorps funding priorities as outlined in the *Funding Priorities* section and more fully described in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance and the proposed program meets all of the requirements detailed in the *Funding Priorities* section and in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.

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 Capability (25 percent)

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

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 (6 points)

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

4. Member Supervision (2 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.

This 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 if used to claim indirect/administrative costs.
- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project, including for 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 (0 percent)

If the applicant is competing for the first time, please provide a data collection plan in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field that includes the following:

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

First-time applicants should be aware that CNCS may require submission of data collection instruments if a grant is approved for funding. For more information about how to develop a high-quality data collection plan, visit the CNCS Knowledge Network.

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 post-review period.

H. Continuation Changes (0 percent)

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

2. Review and Selection Process

The Arkansas Service Commission and/or CNCS will make determination about applicants utilizing the data provided within the application and requested supplemental materials. These determinations may be different than what the applicant self-determined upon submission of its application.

a. Compliance and Eligibility Review

ASC staff will conduct a Compliance Review to determine if an application meets the compliance requirements published in this *NOFO* to advance to the next stage of the review process. Applications determined noncompliant will not be considered for funding. An application is compliant if the applicant:

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

Reviewing for eligibility is intended to ensure that only those applications that are eligible for award are further reviewed. However, a determination of eligibility can take place at any point during the application review and selection process. Applicants that are determined to be non-compliant and ineligible will not receive an award.

b. Review

Each application will be assessed by several ASC and/or CNCS staff. Applications for Arkansas formula funding will also be assessed by external reviewers. Staff and/or external reviewers will evaluate the application using the application review criteria, consider the comprehensiveness and feasibility of the application, and assess the priorities and strategic considerations detailed in the *Notice*. External Reviewers will review and assess the evidence base criteria for Competitive funding. All reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

c. Post Review Quality Control

After the reviewers complete their assessment of Competitive applications, CNCS staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review may be used to assess applications ranked first by a Commission that received low scores (unless the Commission only submitted one application) and applications for which there are significant panel anomalies. In addition, the Commission input on National Direct applications will be reviewed and assessed.

d. Risk Assessment Evaluation

CNCS and ASC 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 CNCS and/or ASC determine 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, CNCS and/or ASC may consider the following, but not limited to:

- Financial capability and capacity to manage Federal funds
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant's record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
 - Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements,
 - If applicable, meeting matching requirements, and
 - If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- Information available through any 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,
- “Do Not Pay,” and /or
- System for Award Management
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance and findings of any other available audits
- 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 CFR § 2522.140
- The applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.
- Responses to the Financial Management Survey and supporting documentation
- Past Performance

ASC staff will assess their re-competing subgrantees’ past performance and submit those assessments to CNCS. CNCS will assess its re-competing 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, CNCS will consider the following for applicants that are current formula and competitive grantees:

- Grant progress reports – attainment of Performance Measures
- Enrollment and retention
- Compliance with 5 day enrollment and 30 day exit requirements in the AmeriCorps portal
- Site visit or other monitoring findings (if applicable)
- OIG findings (if applicable)
- Significant opportunities and/or risks of the grantee related to national service
- Commission Rank

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

e. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information

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

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

CNCS 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 *Notice*.

f. 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 by CNCS and/or ASC staff 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.

g. Selection for Funding

The assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. CNCS and/or ASC staff will apply their experience and expertise in evaluating and recommending applications. CNCS will engage external reviewers to provide insight and input with respect to the evidence base of eligible 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 *Notice*.

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)
 - Single and multi-state programs
 - Faith-based organizations
- CNCS *Notice* Priorities representation
- Focus area representation
- Moderate and Strong evidence levels
 - Program models that demonstrate a new approach to solving a community problem based on thorough review of existing research and evaluation about existing approaches to the problem

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

CNCS and/or ASC reserve 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 CNCS and ASC in response to this Notice.

3. Feedback to Applicants

Following grant awards, grant review results are available upon request. 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.

4. 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 external review worksheet
- A list of all external reviewers that completed the review process
- A summary of external reviewer comments for successful applications.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Applicants will be notified via email as to funding decisions. ASC anticipates announcing supplemental Formula results early May 2020. This notification is not an authorization to begin grant activities. A signed sub-grant agreement between the organization and the Arkansas Department of Human Services will be required. Unsuccessful applicants will also receive a notification that their application was not approved for funding.

An awardee may not obligate or expend federal funds until the start of the Project Period identified on the Notice of Grant Award.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

a. Uniform Guidance

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

b. Requests for Improper Payment Information

CNCS may, from time to time, request documentation from recipients in order to monitor the award or to comply with other legal requirements, such as the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002, as amended. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on temporary manual hold, reimbursement only, or other remedies as appropriate. In addition, CNCS may, in appropriate circumstances, consider in its funding decisions any previous failures to make timely responses.

c. CNCS Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this *Notice* will be subject to the 2019 CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and the 2019 AmeriCorps Program Specific Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnccs-grants>.

3. National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or national service volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving CNCS funds. This includes staff that receive part of their salary through a subgrant. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such CNCS funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award.

Please budget \$80 per covered individual (staff and members) on the CNCS share of the budget.

Unless the Arkansas Service Commission and CNCS have provided a recipient with a written exemption or written approval of an alternative search procedure, recipients must perform the following checks—

All award-funded staff and national service participants must undergo NSCHCs that include:

- A nationwide name-based check of the NSOPW; and
- Both
 - A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *and*
 - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

See 45 CFR § 2540.200–§ 2540.207 and [CNCS Criminal History Check Resources](#) for complete information and FAQs. The Arkansas Service Commission has determined that the probability of access to vulnerable populations is so great that all members will undergo all required criminal history checks: NSOPW, FBI, and Arkansas State Police, as well as other states, as necessary using vendors Truescreen and Field

4. Use of Material

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

5. Reporting

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

AmeriCorps Arkansas grantees are required to provide quarterly progress reports and monthly financial reports and invoices, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740. A final financial report is due at the end of the grant.

Once the grant is awarded, recipients will be expected to have data collection and data management policies and practices that provide reasonable assurance that they are providing CNCS with high quality programmatic and financial data. At a minimum, grantees should have policies and practices which address the following five aspects of data quality:

- The grantee measures what it intends to measure;
- The grantee collects data in a consistent manner;
- The grantee takes steps to correct data errors;
- The grantee ensures that the data reported is complete; and
- The grantee actively reviews data prior to submission.

Progress Report Data

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

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

6. Competitive Continuation Funding Information and Requirements

Organizations that have current AmeriCorps awards that do not end in FY18 must submit an application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. Please see the AmeriCorps Arkansas Application Instructions. 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*.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

This *Notice* is available at www.VolunteerAR.org. For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice*, call (501) 682-7540. For questions regarding multi-state or Indian Tribes applications submitted directly to CNCS, please call (202) 606-7508 or send an email to americorpsgrants@cns.gov. Questions about the Arkansas applications should be emailed to Engage.Ar@adhe.edu or addressed to the Arkansas Division of Higher Education – EngageAR/Arkansas Service Commission, 423 Main Street, Suite 400, Little Rock, AR, 72201.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Technical Assistance

In addition to consulting the AmeriCorps Arkansas Application Package, Performance Measure Instructions, and AmeriCorps regulations as directed in this *NOFO*, Commissions and National Direct applicants are

encouraged to consult the CNCS web site for a schedule of technical assistance conference calls, and Frequently Asked Questions that are updated during the competition period.

2. Reallocation of Funding

CNCS reserves the right to reallocate funding in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.