ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Commission Name:	OneStar National Service Commission, OneStar Foundation
Federal Agency:	Corporation for National and Community Service
Funding Opportunity Types:	2018 AmeriCorps State Grants
CFDA Number:	94.006

This *Notice* is for AmeriCorps*Texas (AmeriCorps State) grants. These grants are awarded to organizations that propose to place AmeriCorps members in service solely within Texas. Selected organizations will receive grants to support AmeriCorps member positions that engage members in service to meet critical needs in Texas.

Disclosure: Publication of this Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (*Notice*) does not obligate the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) or OneStar Foundation (OneStar) to award any specific number of grants or to obligate any particular amount of funding. The 2018 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.

IMPORTANT DATES

Eligible applicants have the option of submitting in the fall of 2017 for Competitive funding consideration or submitting in the spring of 2018 for Formula funding consideration (see *Mandatory Supplemental Guidance* for definitions).

Competitive Funding Consideration
To be considered for Competitive funding, a Legal Applicant Organization must have successfully administered[1] an AmeriCorps State grant through OneStar Foundation for at least one three-year project period. Additionally, the Legal Applicant Organization must meet all eligibility criteria as outlined in the *Eligibility Information* section of this *Notice*. An applicant that is being considered for Competitive funding will also be considered for Formula funding if they are unsuccessful in the National competition for Competitive funding.

Formula Funding Consideration
To be considered for Formula funding, a Legal Applicant Organization must meet all eligibility criteria as outlined in the Eligibility Information section of this *Notice*.

	Competitive	Formula
Notice of Intent to Apply Form	**November 1, 2017** All interested applicants are required to submit the Notice of Intent to Apply form online using this link: https://www.tfaforms.com/4637270 by 10:59:59 PM Central on Wednesday, November 1, 2017.	**March 7, 2018** All interested applicants are required to submit the Notice of Intent to Apply form online using this link: https://www.tfaforms.com/4637270 by 10:59:59 PM Central on Wednesday, March 7, 2017.
Application Due in eGrants	**November 7, 2017** A first draft of the application will be due in eGrants by 10:59:59 PM Central on **November 7, 2017**. Final applications are due in eGrants and additionally required documents are due via email to grants@onestarfoundation.org by 10:59:59 PM Central on **December 4, 2017**.	**March 29, 2018** Applications are due in eGrants and additionally required documents are due via email to grants@onestarfoundation.org by 10:59:59 PM Central on Thursday, March 29, 2018.
Notification of Selection	**May 15, 2018**	**June 28, 2018**
Budget Period Start Date	**August 1, 2018** Successful applicants may not propose a budget period start date earlier than August 1, 2018.	**August 1, 2018 or September 1, 2018** Applicants that do not have prior history administering an AmeriCorps State program through OneStar may not propose a budget period start date prior to September 1, 2018.
Member Term of Service Start Date	**August 13, 2018** Applicants may not propose an AmeriCorps Member term of service start date earlier than August 13, 2018 without special written approval from OneStar.	**August 13, 2018** Applicants may not propose an AmeriCorps Member term of service start date earlier than August 13, 2018 without special written approval from OneStar.

---

[1] "Successfully administered" is defined as having a high level of past performance as evaluated by the OneStar Foundation Commission Board in relation to OneStar's Grantee Expectations Policy. The policy is available on the OneStar Foundation website here: http://onestarfoundation.org/americorpstexas/grantee-resources/.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. 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. 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 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 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; provide reforestation services after floods or fires; and more. AmeriCorps programs support activities, such as conservation and fire corps, which may also help veterans and others learn new job skills through conservation service.

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, wounded warriors, military service members, and their families served by CNCS-supported programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS-supported programs.

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 the following areas:

- 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 to prepare them for the workforce

- Education – improving student academic performance in Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Mathematics (STEM)
- 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 communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.
- Safer communities – Programs that focus on public safety, preventing and mitigating civil unrest, and/or partnerships between law enforcement and the community
- Encore Programs – Programs that engage Americans age 55 and older.

OneStar Foundation, in alignment with Texas' 2016-2018 State Service Plan seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in:

- **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.

- **Disaster Services** – Grant activities will provide support to increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters, improve individuals' readiness to respond, 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.

- **55+ Corps Programs** – In alignment with OneStar's Supplemental State Service Plan for Texans age 55 and older as well as Congress's intention that AmeriCorps funding should also support service programs that engage a significant number of participants age 55 or older, OneStar seeks to identify and encourage such programs to operate in Texas and expand their 55+ volunteer programs through AmeriCorps funding.

- **Intermediary Programs** – OneStar recognizes that rural and/or otherwise under-resourced communities may have limited capacity to successfully apply for and implement an AmeriCorps grant, due to the high level of organizational capacity required of eligible applicant/host site organizations or the lack of available matching funds in these communities. Thus it may be effective for a single eligible applicant (an intermediary) to develop an application and oversee the implementation of an AmeriCorps program that engages multiple non-profits/eligible applicants (a consortium) that, individually, do not have the necessary organizational or fundraising capacity to apply for and run an AmeriCorps program. Given the desire to address community needs holistically, the nonprofits/eligible applicants that make up the consortium may have but are not required to have different focus areas and thus the nonprofit/eligible applicant intermediary may be multi-focused. Applications seeking consideration under this priority must demonstrate that they will be serving at least one or more under-resourced community; that their application represents a consortium model; that the activities provided by the consortium collectively address a compelling community need or set of needs; and that they have sufficient financial and management capacity to act as an umbrella organization for the consortia.

- **Youth[2] Educational Attainment** – Programs which focus on Youth Educational Attainment will have a primary goal of one or more of the following:
  - Increase school-readiness rates among children **with a focus on Early Childhood Education**
  - Improve literacy rates among youth **with a focus on Reading Excellence**
  - Improve attendance rates
  - Improve student achievement and educational outcomes
  - Improve math performance and ensure students are performing at grade-level
  - Decrease in students that are required to repeat a grade (grade retention)

---

[2] For these purposes, "youth" is defined as: 1) An infant or toddler age birth to 4; 2) a person enrolled in an educational institution from pre-kindergarten to undergraduate; or 3) a person under the age of 21 who has dropped-out of high school and is seeking to enroll in an educational program to obtain high school equivalency.

o   Increase enrollment in postsecondary education

o   Improve attainment of postsecondary degree

o   Increase rate in attainment of high school diploma and/or high school equivalency

o   Provide students with new opportunities through collaborative partnerships with education and businesses to help ensure post-secondary success

o   Other goals than listed above that measure increased educational attainment

Additional priority will be placed on Youth Educational Attainment programs addressing two key **Governor Emergency Priorities: Early Childhood Education** and **Reading Excellence**. Learn more about Governor Abbott's Emergency Items, adopted in March 2015, outlined here.

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. Applications proposing a program design that meets a priority area are not guaranteed funding.

C. **National Performance Measures.**
All applicants 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. OneStar does not expect applicants to select performance measures to correspond to each and every potential member activity or community impact. OneStar and CNCS value the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures.

OneStar expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance measure 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.

Exceptions to the requirement of using National Performance Measures will be made on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions would be considered for programs that are proposing interventions within the designated CNCS focus areas, but due to specifications within the National Performance Measures, may not be eligible to select a National Performance Measure. Only applicant determined measures that demonstrate a substantially equivalent level of rigor to the National Performance Measures will be considered for an exception.

As described in the Application Instructions, applicants must include all their information about their proposed performance measures in the Performance Measure section of the application in eGrants (CNCS's web-based grants management system). All definitions and data collection requirements described in the National Performance Measure Instructions must be included in the text of the performance measures themselves, and it must be evident in the performance measure text that all definitions and requirements outlined in the National Performance Measure Instructions are met. Providing performance measure information elsewhere in the narrative cannot be in lieu of providing full information in the Performance Measure section of the application in eGrants.

In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets for their performance measures. Recompeting applicants proposing to significantly increase or decrease output or outcome targets from their previous grant should provide a justification for this change.

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

FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

A. **Estimated Available Funds**
OneStar and CNCS expect a highly competitive AmeriCorps grant competition. CNCS reserves the right to prioritize providing funding to existing awards over making new awards. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

B. Estimated Award Amount

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.

C. Project and Award Period

The project period is generally one year with a start date proposed by the applicant. The grant award covers a three-year project period unless otherwise specified. The application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding for subsequent years is not guaranteed and shall be dependent upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance.

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

D. 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. 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.

Table 1: General Summary

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement		Fixed Amount		
Available Subtypes	Traditional	Professional Corps	Full-time	Education Award Program	Professional Corps
Maximum Cost per MSY	$14,932	Up to $1,000*	$13,430	$800	Up to $1,000*
Type of Member Positions	All	All	Full-Time or Less than Full-Time serving in a full time capacity	All	Full-time only
Budget Submission Required	Yes		No		Yes, if requesting operating funds
Funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSYs	No		Yes		
Special Requirements	N/A	Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries must be paid entirely by the organization where members serve and not included in the budget	N/A		Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries must be paid entirely by the organization where members serve and not included in the budget
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes	Yes; living allowance or salary paid to members may not be counted toward the match requirement.	No		
Available to New Applicants	Yes		No		Yes

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

The following Non-Federal Entities (as defined in 2 CFR §200.69) who have DUNS numbers and are registered in the 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)

Competitive or Formula Applicants

To be considered for Competitive funding, an applicant must meet all criteria under *Eligibility Information.* Additionally, only the following types of organizations will be considered for Competitive funding consideration. If they are a Current or Prior Legal Application Organization that has successfully administered an AmeriCorps State grant through OneStar Foundation for at least one three-year project period.

An applicant that is being considered for Competitive funding will also be considered for Formula funding. Any application not meeting the criteria for Competitive funding consideration will be held and considered for Formula funding.

New Applicants

OneStar encourages organizations that have not received prior funding from OneStar or CNCS to apply. The general practice is to award at least 20 member positions (slots) but no more than 50 member positions (slots) to organizations receiving an AmeriCorps grant for the first time.

New applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants but are not eligible to apply for Full Time Fixed Amount grants. Existing 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.

Full Time Fixed Amount Applicants

To be considered for a Full Time Fixed Amount program, an applicant must be a current or prior legal applicant organization that has successfully administered[3] an AmeriCorps State grant through OneStar Foundation for at least one three-year project period.

Types of Applicants

Single-State Applicants. Organizations that propose to operate only in Texas must apply through OneStar Foundation. A single-state application that is submitted directly to CNCS by the applicant rather than OneStar Foundation will be considered noncompliant and will not be reviewed.

National Direct Applicants:
- Multi-State: Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one State or Territory apply directly to CNCS.
- Federally-Recognized Indian Tribes: Applicants that are Indian Tribes apply directly to CNCS.

B. Threshold Issues

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

- In most cases, applicants must request at least 20 Member Service Years (MSYs). Recompeting and continuation applicants requesting less than 20 MSYs will be deemed noncompliant and will not be reviewed. Applicant

---

[3] Successfully Administered is defined as having a high level of past performance as evaluated by the OneStar Foundation Commission Board in relation to OneStar's Grantee Expectations Policy. The policy is available on the OneStar Foundation website here: http://onestarfoundation.org/americorpstexas/grantee-resources/.

organizations that are New, may request as few as 10 MSYs in their first year of funding; however, they must include in their application a growth plan to support 20 MSYs by the third year of funding.

- Professional Corps applicants and/or applicants determined to be a Professional Corps by OneStar or 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 or less than full-time positions serving in a full-time capacity member types.

- 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.

- The applicant organization will have and submit at the time of application submission, a Single Audit or an Independent Financial Audit from 2016 or 2015.

- The applicant organization must have prior experience administering state and/or federal grant funds. The applicant organization will submit a list of all state and federal funds that have been administered over the past two years at the time of application submission. The experience of administering state and federal funds must exist with the legal applicant organization, not with an individual person's prior experience. An organization that has served as an AmeriCorps VISTA placement site over the past two years meets this requirement.

C. 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 1) has been assessed, 2) for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and 3) 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*[4]. A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this *Notice*.

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 USC 501(c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply for CNCS funding.

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

This *Notice* should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520-2550, the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, Application Instructions, and the National Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. These documents can be found at: http://onestarfoundation.org/americorpstexas/available-funding/. The full Regulations are available online at www.ecfr.gov.

A. Content and Form of eGrants Application Submission

In eGrants, 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 eGrants system.

- Narratives
  - o Executive Summary
  - o Program Design
  - o Organizational Capability
  - o Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
  - o Evaluation Plan

- Logic Model

- Standard Form 424 Budget

- Performance Measures

- Authorization, Assurances, and Certification

---

[4] 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.

B. Page Limits

There are three page limits that must be adhered to: Narrative, Logic Model, and Learning Memo (if recompeting).

1. <u>Narrative</u>: Applications must not exceed <u>12 pages</u> for the Narratives or 15 pages for Rural Intermediary applications with more than five operating sites. In determining whether an application complies with page limits, the following will be counted:

   a. The application's Executive Summary, SF 424 Facesheet, and

   b. The Narrative portions contained in the Program Design, Organizational Capacity and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy sections of the application.

   OneStar will consider the number of pages only as they print out from the "Review" tab in eGrants (where you will see the "View/Print your application" heading) when determining compliance for page limits. OneStar will not consider the results of any alternative printing methods in determining whether an application complies with the applicable page limits. OneStar strongly encourages 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 portion of the Evaluation Plan, the Logic Model, performance measures, or the supplementary materials, if applicable.

2. <u>Logic Model</u>: The logic model may not exceed <u>three pages</u> when printed with the application from the "Review" tab in eGrants.

   Please note the length of a document in word processing software may be different than what will print out in eGrants. 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 Narrative page limit and the Logic Model page limit.

3. <u>Learning Memo</u> (if a recompeting applicant): The learning memo must be in a 12 point font or larger and should not exceed three single sided pages double spaced text. (See *Submission of Additional Documents*)

C. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management
Applications must include a DUNS number and an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. 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 System for Award Management (SAM) 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 two weeks before the application deadline to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. **Applicants must use their SAM-registered name and address on all grant applications to OneStar Foundation**.

Applicants that do not comply with these requirements may become ineligible to receive an award. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees.

D. Submission Dates and Times

1. **Notification of Intent to Apply**
   Submission of the Notice of Intent to Apply form is REQUIRED for this competition and is due by 10:59:59 PM Central on **Wednesday, November 1, 2017** for Competitive funding consideration or by 10:59:59 PM Central on **Wednesday, March 7, 2018 for** Formula funding consideration**. The Notice of Intent to Apply form must be completed online using this link: https://www.tfaforms.com/4637270. All Notifications of Intent to Apply will receive an email response acknowledging receipt.

   Continuation applicants should <u>not</u> submit a Notification of Intent.

2. **Application Submission Deadline**

   <u>Competitive Consideration</u>: For New/Recompete applicants, a first draft of the application will be due by 10:59:59 PM Central on **Tuesday, November 7, 2017**. Final New/Recompete applications and Competitive Continuation applications are due by 10:59:59 PM Central on **Monday, December 4, 2017.**

Formula Consideration: New/Recompete and Continuation applications are due by 10:59:59 PM Central on **Thursday, March 29, 2018.**

3. Additional Documents Deadline

All required additional documents are due on the Application Submission deadline (in b. above). See *Submission of Additional Documents* section for other guidance.

4. Late Applications.

Late applications in whole or in part will not be accepted. OneStar will not accept applications submitted via mail, fax or email.

E. Intergovernmental Review. This *Notice* is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs".

F. Funding Restrictions

1. Member Living Allowance

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

While Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance to members that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements. Exceptions noted below. Most 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 2: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Member Service Year (MSY) Value	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-Time	1,700	1.0	$13,732	$27,464
Half-Time	900	.500	n/a	$14,539
Reduced Half-Time	675	.3809524	n/a	$10,905
Quarter-Time	450	.26455027	n/a	$7,270
Minimum-Time	300	.21164022	n/a	$4,847

Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements

- *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.

- *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.

- *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 are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget.

2. 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 recompeting applicants will be held to the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type.

Table 3: Maximum Cost Per MSY

Grant Program	Maximum
Cost Reimbursement	$14,932[5]
Full-Time Fixed Amount	$13,430
Education Award Program	$800
Professional Corps (*Cost Reimbursement and Fixed Amount*)	$1,000[6]

3. **Amount of the Segal Education Award for FY 2017**

   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.

4. **Cost Sharing or Matching**

   Fixed Amount Grants. There is no specific match requirement for Fixed Amount grants. CNCS does not provide all the funds necessary to operate the program; therefore, organizations must 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.

   Table 4: Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements

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 USC 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 that plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request at the time the application is submitted.

5. **Indirect Costs**

   Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants may either use a federally approved indirect cost rate, a 10% 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 cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across federal awards. Applicants that have a state or federally

---

[5] 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 $15,100 cost per MSY for the AmeriCorps members that will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth.

[6] CNCS requires Professional Corps programs to cover the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non-CNCS funds. CNCS will only consider operating funds of up to $1,000 per MSY if an applicant is able to demonstrate significant organizational financial need and substantial challenges to raising non-CNCS resources based on the materials reviewed by the Office of Grants 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.

negotiated indirect cost rate or will be using the 10% de minimis rate must enter that information in the Organization section in eGrants. However, under section 121(d) of the NCSA and CNCS's regulations at 45 CFR 2517.713, no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants.

G. Other Submission Requirements

1. Electronic Application Submission in eGrants

Applicants must submit applications electronically via eGrants, CNCS's web-based system. CNCS recommends that applicants create an eGrants 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 eGrants field no later than 10 days before the deadline.

The applicant's authorized representative must be the person who submits the application. The authorized representative must be using eGrants 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 representation to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Contact the National Service hotline at 800-942-2677 or via eGrants online 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.

2. Submission of Additional Documents

Applicants are required to submit the following additional documents by the application submission deadline. Additional Documents must be emailed to grants@onestarfoundation.org with the following subject line: [Legal Applicant Name]-[Application ID number]. Emails should include the following information:

- 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
- Individually saved files that are clearly labeled
- Files that include the legal applicant name and application ID number in the body of each document.

New Applicants:

- Current indirect cost rate 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.
- Member Placement Chart
- Federal and State Award Schedule (*do not submit if you are submitting a Single Audit*)
- Organizational Chart.
  - o *The Organizational Chart that is submitted must clearly show where the AmeriCorps program would be within the Organization including the name and/or title of the individual(s) responsible for supervising the AmeriCorps members.*
- Independent Financial Statement Audit from 2015 or 2016 (*submit the most recently completed*)
  - o *Not required for Colleges or Universities*
- Single Audit from 2015 or 2016 (*submit the most recently completed*) (if applicable)
  - o *Not required for Colleges or Universities*
- Bond Rating report
  - o *Only required for Colleges, Universities and School Districts*

Recompeting Applicants:

- Current indirect cost rate 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.
- Member Placement Chart

- Federal and State Award Schedule (*do not submit if you are submitting a Single Audit*)
- Organizational Chart.
  - *The Organizational Chart that is submitted must clearly show where the AmeriCorps program would be within the Organization including the name and/or title of the individual(s) responsible for supervising the AmeriCorps members.*
- Independent Financial Statement Audit from 2015 or 2016 (*submit the most recently completed*)
  - *Not required for Colleges or Universities*
- Single Audit from 2015 or 2016 (*submit the most recently completed*) (if applicable)
  - *Not required for Colleges or Universities*
- Bond Rating report
  - *Only required for Colleges, Universities and School Districts*
- Evaluation report, if required. Please see the *Evidence Base* section for further information.
- Learning Memo, if required. Any applicant required to submit an evaluation report in order to comply with CNCS evaluation requirements must also submit a learning memo that describes how they are using the evaluation to improve and to inform their activities in the next funding cycle. The learning memo must be in a 12-point font or larger and should not exceed three pages of double-spaced text. The learning memo should include:
  - A short summary of key learnings from the evaluation.
  - An explanation of how the program will incorporate key learnings into its strategy, design, or implementation.
  - An explanation of how these changes will improve the program.
  - A discussion of how learning from the evaluation may inform next steps in the program's long-term research agenda.

Continuation Applicants:
- Current indirect cost rate agreement, if used to claim indirect/administrative costs.
- Member Placement Chart
- Independent Financial Statement Audit from 2015 or 2016 (*submit the most recently completed*)
  - *Not required for Colleges or Universities*
- Single Audit from 2015 or 2016 (*submit the most recently completed*) (if applicable)
  - *Not required for Colleges or Universities*
- Bond Rating report
  - *Only required for Colleges, Universities and School Districts*

Rural Intermediaries:
- *All items from the New or Recompete list above, as applicable*
- Letters of support from the consortium members

> **Do not submit other items not requested in this *Notice* or Application Instructions.**
>
> **OneStar will not review or return them.**

APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Criteria

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

1. **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 program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of the 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 match with $[amount of projected match], $[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and $[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding. [7]

Fixed Amount grant applicants (EAP, Full-time fixed, and Professional Corps Fixed) should list their Other Revenue (see *Mandatory Supplemental Guidance*) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but must still raise significant additional resources to operate the program.

OneStar and CNCS will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on www.onestarfoundation.org and www.nationalservice.gov in the interest of transparency and Open Government.

2. **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. Please respond to each of the following in the order in which the item is presented.

   a. **Need (*4 points*)**
   - The problem the program will address is prevalent and severe in communities[8] where members will serve and has been documented with relevant data.

   b. **Theory of Change and Logic Model (*24 points*)**

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

---

[7] The dollar amounts listed in the Executive Summary must match exactly with the amounts in the Budget.
[8] "Community" can be a geographic region, a specific population of people, or a combination of both. The applicant must document the need it plans to address with its proposed program, whether it is a defined geographic community or a subset of individuals living in a particular area.

- The measureable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served, hours of service delivered, 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. Applicants may include short, medium, or long-term outcomes in the Logic Model. Applicants are not required to measure all components of their theory of change. The applicant's performance measures should be consistent with the program's theory of change and should represent significant program activities.

In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets for their performance measures. Recompeting applicants proposing to significantly increase or decrease output or outcome targets from their previous grant must provide a justification for this change.

Applicants should use National Performance Measures if they are part of the program's theory of change. Applicants are not required to use National Performance Measures and should only use them if they are part of the program's theory of change. Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization's performance data (e.g. program data observed over time 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.

c. **Evidence Base (*12 points*)**

The assessment of an applicant's evidence base has two steps. 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 applicant's overall capacity to collect and use data (including performance measurement and evaluation data) will be assessed and scored.

Evidence Tier: 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. Applicants should use the evidence checklist to self-assess their evidence tier before completing the application.

Applicants must 1) state the evidence tier in which they think they qualify; 2) clearly indicate and describe the evidence that supports the highest evidence tier for which they are eligible, and 3) describe the complete body of evidence that supports their program intervention including evidence from lower tiers. Applicants should pay particular attention to the requirements for each tier of evidence. All requirements must be met in order for applicants to be assigned to a tier. Applicants who do not fully describe their evidence base may not be assigned to a tier for which the applicant otherwise may have qualified.

In 2017 the evidence tiers of funded AmeriCorps State and National competitive grantees were as follows: Strong 9%, Moderate 9%, Preliminary 38%, and Pre-Preliminary 27%. As these figures indicate, CNCS values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum. Thus, do not be deterred from applying for funding due to your current evidence level.

Applicants classifying their evidence as preliminary who propose to replicate an identical or similar evidence-based intervention, as well as applicants classifying their evidence as either moderate or strong evidence should reference the information about the evidence tiers. Submission of additional documents (e.g., advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives that are not research studies or program evaluations) that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements described in the *Notice* will not be reviewed.

All applicants must include as much detailed information as possible in the Evidence section of the application. All applicants that have collected relevant performance measurement data must describe this data fully as outlined in the requirements for the pre-preliminary evidence tier. Applicants who have conducted evaluations

of their own program or that are replicating other evidence-based programs must describe these evaluations in the application narrative as outlined in the evidence tier descriptions. Applicants are advised to focus on presenting high-quality evidence from up to two of the strongest and most relevant studies while also summarizing the remaining body of evidence that exists for the program. Studies must be evaluations of specific programs or interventions. Research that does not focus on a specific program or intervention, but rather focuses on a broader issue area or population, will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points.

When describing research studies or evaluations in the application narrative, applicants must include the following information in order to earn points:

1. The date the research or evaluation was completed, and the time period for which the intervention was examined.
2. A description that shows the study's relevance to the proposed intervention.
3. A description of the target population studied (e.g. the demographics).
4. The methodology used in the study (e.g., outcome study, random assignment, regression discontinuity design, propensity score matching, etc.).
5. A description of the data, data source, and data collection methods.
6. The outcomes or impacts examined and the study findings
7. The strength of the findings (e.g., effect size, confidence level, statistical power of the study design and statistical significance of findings).

Applicants must provide this information in the narrative even if they submit the study or evaluation. Applicants must provide citations for the studies they describe, if applicable; however, reviewers will not review any links or cited documents referenced in the application and will not review any additional document that is not a study submitted in accordance with the *Notice* instructions.

Reviewers will examine the descriptions (and attached studies if relevant) using the following criteria:

- How closely the intervention evaluated in the studies matches the one proposed by the applicant;
- The methodological quality and rigor of the studies presented (e.g., sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, use of control or equivalent comparison groups, baseline equivalence and study attrition, etc.);
- Strength and consistency of the findings, with preference given to findings that show a meaningful and persistent positive effect on participants demonstrated with confidence levels; and
- The date of the study, with a preference towards studies that have been conducted within the last six years.

If the evidence submitted as part of an application does not describe a well-designed and well-implemented evaluation, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier. Applicants must meet all requirements of the evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier. Applicants that do not meet all requirements will be considered for a lower tier.

Evidence Quality and Evaluation Capacity. After the application's evidence tier has been assessed, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the applicant's overall capacity to collect and use data (including performance measurement and evaluation data) will be assessed and scored. Applicants must address the following standards in the application narrative. The standards are weighted differently for applicants in different evidence tiers to reflect expected variations in program life cycle and evaluation capacity at each state of the evidence continuum.

Evidence Quality and Evaluation Capacity Standards	No Evidence & Pre-Preliminary Points	Preliminary Points	Moderate & Strong Points
The applicant's evidence is of satisfactory quality. Applicants with no evidence describe an evidence-informed theory of change.	2	2	2
The applicant's data collection systems are sufficient to yield high quality process and outcome data.	5	4	1
The applicant demonstrates adequate capacity to use process and outcome data including performance measurement (and evaluation data if applicable) to inform continuous learning and program improvement.	5	5	5
The applicant's long-term research agenda is aligned to the organization's learning needs and position on the evidence continuum (evidence tier).	0	1	4

Evidence quality and evaluation capacity standards must be addressed in the application narrative. 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.

d. **Notice Priority (*3 points*)**

- The applicant proposed program fits within one or more of the 2018 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*.

e. **Member Experience (*7 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.

- AmeriCorps members will have access to meaningful service experiences that includes education about the community problem/need and the community in which they will serve.

- AmeriCorps members will have access to opportunities for reflection that involves the intentional processing of members' experiences and the incorporation of lessons learned.

- The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate.

- The applicant will also foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds, talents, and capabilities are welcomed and leveraged for learning and effective service delivery.

3. **Organizational Capability (*25 percent*)**
Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the following criteria below. Do not assume sub-criteria are of equal value.

a. **Organizational Background and Staffing (*7 points*)**

- The organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program.

b. **Compliance and Accountability (*8 points*)**

- The organization will comply with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities at the grantee, subgrantee (if applicable), and service site locations.

- The applicant will hold subgrantees (if applicable) and service site locations accountable if instances of risk or noncompliance are identified.
- If applicable, the CNCS-required evaluation report meets CNCS requirements.
- If applicable, the CNCS-required evaluation report is of satisfactory quality.

c. **Culture that Values Learning (*8 points*)**

- The applicant's board, management, and staff collects and uses information for learning and decision making.
- The applicant's management and staff produces frequent reports on how well the organization is implementing its programs and strategies.

d. **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.

4. **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".

a. **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 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 cost rate 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 "secured" or "proposed".

5. **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.

The applicant is recompeting for AmeriCorps funds for the first time (see definition of "recompeting" below) the program must submit its evaluation plan in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" section of the Narratives field in CNCS's web-based management system. If the application is recompeting for a subsequent time, the program must submit its evaluation report and a learning memo as attachments (see the Submission of Additional Documents section for more information), and must also submit an evaluation plan for the next three-year period in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field in the system. Evaluation plans submitted outside of the system will not be reviewed.

Evaluation plans must include as much information as possible for each of the following: (see Frequently Asked Questions: Evaluation, available at http://nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/cncs-evaluation-policies).

- A short description of the theory of change – why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results
- Outcome of interest – clear and measureable 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 proposed budget.

For more information about evaluation plans visit the CNCS Knowledge Network's Evaluation Resources: http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation.

The evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of the grant, as described in 45 CFR §2522.710
- If the applicant's average annual CNCS program grant is $500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in 45 CFR §2522.730.
- If the applicant's average annual CNCS program grant is less than $500,000, it must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in 45 CFR §2522.730.

For purposes of compliance with evaluation plan and report requirements, a program will be considered a recompeting application if it satisfies the CNCS definition of "same project" (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) and has been funded competitively for at least three of the last five years. If the project satisfies the definition of same project and the applicant has received competitive funding for at least three of the last five years, it will be required to submit an evaluation plan. If the project satisfied the definition of same project and the applicant has completed two or more competitively funded three-year cycles, including at least four years of competitive funding in the last five years, the applicant will be required to submit an evaluation report as well as an evaluation plan for the upcoming three year grant. If the project does not satisfy the definition of recompeting, it will not be required to submit an evaluation plan or completed evaluation report.

The "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field of the Narrative does not count towards the page limit of the application; however, it does have a set character limit of 10,000 characters. Applicants should print out the plan to ensure the narrative does not exceed the character limits when entered in eGrants.

Grantees that are recompeting for funds may be eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. Grantees requesting approval of an alternative evaluation approach should submit a request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach along with their evaluation plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in the system. The request should clearly explain: a) the evaluation constraints faced by the program, b) why the proposed approach is the most rigorous option feasible, and c) how the proposed alternative approach will help the grantee build their evidence base. Evaluation plans should include, at a minimum, the required elements listed in this Notice. The evaluation plan must be consistent with the information submitted in the competitive

funding application and in the request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. CNCS guidance on alternative approaches can be found at: https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Alternative-Evaluation-Approach-Guidance-FINAL-5.17.17.pdf.

If the request for the alternative evaluation approach and the evaluation plan itself will exceed the character limit of the evaluation summary or plan field in eGrants, the applicant should do the following:

- Enter the evaluation plan in the evaluation summary or plan field in eGrants.
- Include a note in the evaluation summary or plan field stating that the applicant is requesting an alternative evaluation approach.
- Include the alternative evaluation approach at the END of the application narrative with the heading "REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPROACH". This section of the application narrative will not count against the page limit.

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

7. **Clarification Information (*0 percent*)**
   Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period.

8. **Continuation Changes (*0 percent*)**
   Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter changes in the application narratives in continuation requests.

B. **Review and Selection Process**

1. **Compliance and Eligibility Review**
   OneStar staff will review all applications submitted to determine compliance with eligibility, the submission deadline, and completeness. Applications determined to be non-compliant will not be considered for funding. An applicant is compliant if the applicant:

   - Is an eligible organization
   - Submits a Notice of Intent to Apply Form by the submission deadline (*not applicable for Continuation applicants)*
   - 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 *Notice*
   - Submits an application with a minimum of twenty (20) AmeriCorps Member Service Years (MSYs). Or minimum of 20 MSYs if a new AmeriCorps program.
   - Submits an application with a Cost per MSY that does not exceed the maximum for the application type as outlined in this *Notice* in Table 3: Maximum Cost Per MSY

   OneStar will screen applications in accordance with the requirements in this *Notice* to determine if the applicant has met all eligibility and submission requirements. Applicants determined to be ineligible will not receive an award.

2. **Review**
   Each application will be assessed by several OneStar Foundation reviewers. External (community) reviewers will review and assess all eligible Formula applications using the application review criteria and will consider the comprehensiveness and feasibility of the application. Formula applications that receive a score of 70 percent or more will be passed along for an Internal (staff) review. Internal reviewers will evaluate Formula applications that pass a minimum score threshold and all Competitive applications using the application review criteria, and will consider the comprehensiveness and feasibility of the application as well as the priorities and strategic considerations detailed in the Notice. All reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest and relevant experience.

3. **Risk Assessment Evaluation**
   OneStar Staff, OneStar's National Service Commission Board, and CNCS staff (if applicable) 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 OneStar or CNCS 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, OneStar and CNCS 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:
  - o Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements,
  - o If applicable, meeting matching requirements, and
  - o 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 –
  - o Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information Systems (FAPIIS)
  - o U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
  - o Dun and Bradstreet, or
  - o "Do Not Pay"
- Reports and findings from Single Audits performed under Uniform Grants 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

OneStar will assess recompeting and previous subgrantees' past performance and, for Competitive applicants, will submit those assessments to CNCS. 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, OneStar and CNCS will consider the following for applicants:

- Grant progress reports - meeting Performance Measures
- Enrollment and Retention rates
- Compliance with 30 day enrollment and exit requirements in the AmeriCorps portal
- Site visits or other monitoring findings (if applicable)
- OIG findings (if applicable)
- Significant opportunities and/or risks of the grantee related to national service

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

4. **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 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 not consider any comments by any applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgement 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.

5. **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 OneStar and/or CNCS 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.

6. **Selection for Funding**
   The assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. OneStar and/or CNCS 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:
         o Geographic diversity
         o Rural communities (see definition in *Mandatory Supplemental Guidance*)
         o Single and multi-site programs
         o Faith-based organizations
      - OneStar and/or CNCS Priorities representation
      - Focus area representation
      - Moderate and Strong evidence levels
      - Program models that demonstrate a new approach to solving a community problem based on a thorough review of existing research and evaluation about existing approaches to the problem
      - Program models that will utilize AmeriCorps members to replicate evidence-based programs with fidelity.

   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 OneStar Foundation Commission Board and/or the CNCS Chief Executive Officer will endeavor to include a diverse portfolio of applications based on staff evaluations, recommendations, priorities and strategic considerations.

   OneStar and CNCS 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 in response to this Notice.

C. **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 external and staff review of the application, as applicable.

D. Transparency in Grant-making

CNCS is committed to transparency in grant-making. The following information for new and re-competing competitive 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.

FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Federal Award Notices

CNCS will make awards following the grant selection announcement. CNCS anticipates announcing the results of the Competitive competition by notifying OneStar Foundation no later than May 15, 2018, contingent on timely full year appropriations. OneStar anticipates announcing the results of the Formula competition by notifying applicants no later than June 28, 2018. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions via email. Notification will be sent to the individual listed in the eGrants Application Face Sheet as the person with whom communication regarding this application may be shared. If the applicant is a current OneStar grantee, notification will be sent to the following people listed in the Authorized Representative Form: Legal Authorized Signatory, Primary Program Contact, Primary Fiscal Contact, and Pre-Award or Grant Manager Contact. This notification is not an authorization to begin grant activities. The Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) signed by OneStar Foundation is the only document authorizing awardees to commence grant activities. Unsuccessful applicants will also receive notification that their application was not approved for funding.

An awardee may not obligate or expend federal funds until the start of the Budget Period identified on the Notice of Grant Award. OneStar will make an award for one year of operation.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Uniform Guidance

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

2. 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 Payment 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, OneStar and CNCS may, in appropriate circumstances, consider in its funding decisions any previous failures to make timely responses.

3. CNCS Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this Notice will be subject to the 2018 CNCS General Terms and Conditions, the 2018 Specific Terms and Conditions and the 2018 OneStar Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the Terms and Conditions are available at http://onestarfoundation.org/americorpstexas/grantee-resources/#General Operational Requirements.

C. 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 volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving CNCS funds. This includes staff that receive a 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.

Unless CNCS has 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, national service participants, and volunteers must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based search of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW); and

2. Either
   a. 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; *or*
   b. A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

Special Rule for Persons Serving Vulnerable Populations. Award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers *with recurring access to vulnerable populations* (i.e., children age 17 or younger, individuals age 60 or older, or individuals with disabilities) must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based check of the NSOPW; and
2. Both
   a. 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*
   b. 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.

D. Use of Materials
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)).

E. 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.

Recipients are required to provide mid-year and end of year progress reports, semi-annual financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740.

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 data 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 semi-annual reporting of progress toward the grant's approved performance measure outputs and outcomes, additional demographic and narrative data must be reported annually (as applicable), 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).

Failure to submit accurate, complete, and timely required reports may affect the recipient's ability to secure future CNCS funding. For further guidance and training resources see – CNCS Performance Measure Resources.

F. Continuation Funding Information and Requirements

Organizations that have current AmeriCorps awards that do not have a Project Period end date in 2018 must submit an application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. Please see the *Continuation Application Instructions*. Requests by existing applicants for increases in the level of funding or number of AmeriCorps member positions will be assessed using the criteria under this *Notice*.

OTHER INFORMATION

A. Technical Assistance

In addition to consulting the Application Instructions, Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, Performance Measure Instructions, and AmeriCorps regulations as directed in this *Notice*, applicants are encouraged also to consult the OneStar Foundation website for a schedule of technical assistance webinar calls, and Frequently Asked Questions that will be updated during the competition period and posted publicly online at: http://onestarfoundation.org/americorpstexas/available-funding/.

B. Reallocation of Funding

OneStar and CNCS reserve the right to re-focus funding in the event of a disaster or other compelling need for service.

CONTACT INFORMATION

All communication relating to this *Notice* must be directed to the contact person named below.

For questions regarding an AmeriCorps Texas application, contact:

Elisa Gleeson
Senior Grants Management Specialist
Email: elisa@onestarfoundation.org
Phone: (512) 287-2029
Availability: Phone consultations available by appointment only. Email Elisa to schedule.

Communication related to this application shall be directed to the contact named above. All emails and phone calls will be returned within a reasonable amount of time. Applicants are encouraged to submit their questions well in advance of the deadline as OneStar is not obligated to respond to questions that are received 48 hours prior to the due date.

Questions regarding multi-state or Indian Tribe applications must be submitted directly to CNCS:

Corporation for National and Community Service
Attn: Office of Grants Policy and Operations/ASN Application
250 E St. SW
Washington, DC 20525
Phone: (202) 606-7508
TTY: (202) 606-3472
Email: americorpsgrants@cns.gov