

State Of Alaska
Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
Serve Alaska, State Service Commission



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

FOR AMERICORPS PROGRAMS

**SOLICITATION NUMBER:
AC-15**

DATE OF ISSUE: October 15, 2015

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IMPORTANT NOTICE – Read This First

Proposals are DUE November 18, 2014. See the [RFP Timeline](#)

This Serve Alaska RFP is an overview of the process for submitting AmeriCorps applications. The federal agency that oversees and funds AmeriCorps programs is the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). This RFP should be read in conjunction with the Notice of Funding Opportunity (*Notice*) and the Application Instructions for a complete picture of the grant/application needs and expectations. Although, **do NOT follow any timeline other than what is in this RFP.**

Applications may not exceed 15 pages for the Narratives (18 pages for Multi-Focus Intermediaries), including the Executive Summary and SF 424 Facesheet, as the pages print out from eGrants. Serve Alaska strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the “Review and Submit” page prior to submission to check that the application does not exceed the page limit. This limit does not include the narrative portion of the evaluation plan or the logic model, budget, performance measures, or the supplementary materials, if applicable.

Reviewers will not consider submitted material that is over the page limit in the printed report, even if eGrants allows an applicant to enter and submit text over the limit. Do not submit other items not requested in the *Notice*, Application Instructions or this RFP. Serve Alaska will not review or return them.

Re-Focusing of Funding

Serve Alaska and CNCS reserves the right to re-focus funding in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.

Funding Restrictions

A. Types of Grants

AmeriCorps grants can be awarded on a cost reimbursement or fixed amount basis. CNCS will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year.

Eligible Applicants:

The following entities are eligible to apply: public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; and Indian Tribes. Receiving funding previously from CNCS or another Federal agency is not a prerequisite to applying under the *Notice*.

In addition to being eligible to apply under this *Notice*, federally recognized Indian Tribes will also be eligible to apply under a separate Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity for Indian Tribes for operating or planning grants released later in the fall with an application deadline of spring 2015.

Organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in 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 U.S.C. § 501 (c)(4), that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

Notice of Intent to Apply (NOIA): Due October 22, 2014. Each program that will be applying through Serve Alaska (recompetes and new applicants) for an AmeriCorps grant **must** complete a "Notice of Intent to Apply." Submit the NOIA in Word format via email to: Margaret.Hughes@alaska.gov. This notice must include:

1. *Summary (one or two paragraphs) of what the program is proposing*
2. *Number of AmeriCorps members the program is expecting to enroll*
3. *Performance Measure(s)*
4. *A general budget (not detailed please)*
5. *Include match source(s)*

Theory of Change Matrix: Due October 31, 2014. Each program that will submit an application, must submit a Theory of Change Matrix to Margy Hughes via email: Margaret.Hughes@alaska.gov. Documents addressing the Theory of Change (TOC) will be sent to any organization submitting a Notice of Intent. If the TOC information is needed, please contact Margy via email. Applications submitted without a Theory of Change matrix will be considered non-compliant and will not be reviewed. The Theory of Change matrix may be submitted earlier than the due date. Serve Alaska will review the TOC document and help the applicant strengthen the TOC if necessary.

National Service Priorities:

This AmeriCorps State and National (AmeriCorps) *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity Notice (Notice)* will focus grant making for fiscal year 2015 in following focus areas:

2015 AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

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

- Disaster Services -- improving community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation
- Economic Opportunity -- increasing economic opportunities for communities, specifically opportunity youth (see Glossary), both as the population served and as AmeriCorps members.
- Education -- improving student academic performance including STEM
- Environment -- 21st Century Service Corps (see Glossary)
- Veterans and Military Families -- positively impacting the quality of life of veterans and improving military family strength
- Governor and Mayor Initiatives (see Glossary attached to *Notice*)
- Programing that supports My Brother's Keeper (see Glossary attached to *Notice*)

- Multi-focus intermediaries that demonstrate measureable impact and primarily serve communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure. i.e. rural and other underserved communities. (See Glossary attached to *Notice*)

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

Serve Alaska:

A prime focus of Serve Alaska, as directed by the agency's Commission, is to address the unmet needs of underserved communities. Staff will assess Program Design, particularly focusing on evidence-basis for the proposed solution(s) to the identified community problem(s), appropriateness of national service as a solution, and potential quality of the member experience; Organizational Capability; and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

This *RFP* should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550, the Notice, Notice Glossary, Application Instructions, and the Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. The documents can be found at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities>. The full regulations are available online at www.ecfr.gov. The TTY number is 800-833-3722. For a printed copy of related material, call 202-606-7508.

The *Notice* includes eligibility requirements, submission requirements, maximum amount of funding per Member Service Year (MSY),¹ and other information that changes each year for all AmeriCorps grant programs.

If there is any inconsistency between the AmeriCorps regulations, the *Notice*, and the Application Instructions, the order of precedence is as follows:

1. AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550 take precedence over the
2. *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity*, which takes precedence over the
3. Application Instructions which takes precedence over the
4. Serve Alaska RFP (except for Serve Alaska specific requirements and timelines)

Do not submit any other supplementary materials such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested. Serve Alaska will not review or return them.

¹ One MSY is equivalent to at least 1700 service hours, a full-time AmeriCorps position. The CNCS cost per MSY is determined by dividing the CNCS share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested in the application. It does not include childcare or the cost of the education award.

Valuable Online Resources/References

[2015 Application Instructions](#): This is a **MUST** read – this document has all the details needed to submit a complete and nationally competitive application. Any details that are not included on this document are included in CNCS's Application Instructions. Be sure to use the timeline in this RFP only, if submitting grants to the State Commission.

[Notices of Funding Opportunities](#) (NOFO): Resource that lists the open NOFO's for CNCS. The NOFO is also a **MUST** read for applicants. Any instructions that are not contained in the Application Instructions are included in the NOFO. The NOFO explains in more detail Performance Measures, the Tier status of funding priorities and other important, specific grant information.

[General Resource to Access Important URL's](#): Contains Performance Measure help, Criminal history support, etc.

[eGrants](#): Online system to submit your application

[Create a New eGrants Account](#): Need to do this to apply, if one doesn't exist for your organization.

New and Recompeting Program Application Process

Please use the following guidelines and instructions if you are a new or re-competing applicant applying for the following grants: AmeriCorps State and State Education Award Program (EAP). Applications will only be accepted electronically, via eGrants. *Continuation proposals (grants currently in year 1 or 2 of their cycle) refer to the Application Instructions for guidance.* **For complete application instructions, refer to the 2015 Application Instructions referenced above.**

The deadline for this competition is **November 18, 2014 at 4:00 pm Alaska Standard Time.**

State of Alaska Contact Person:

All correspondence having to do with this RFP shall be sent to:

Margy Hughes
Program Coordinator
550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1640
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
Margaret.Hughes@alaska.gov
(907) 269-4674

Inquiries specific to this RFP must be via writing/email. Phone calls will not be allowed, except for the Pre-Application teleconference mentioned in the timeline.

CNCS and Serve Alaska require that all applicants make every effort to submit their applications electronically utilizing the Corporation's web-based application system, eGrants. ***All requirements described herein apply to electronic applications. If you cannot apply electronically, due to extenuating circumstances, you must contact Serve Alaska immediately.***

Deadline for Receipt of Proposals

Late applications may be accepted only if the applicant submits a letter explaining the extenuating circumstance which caused the delay. Such letter must be sent to Serve Alaska via email to Margaret.Hughes@alaska.gov, within 24 hours of the due date. Late applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

RFP Timeline

RFP Timeline	Date
AmeriCorps RFP Released	October 15, 2014
<u>Notices of Intent Due @ 4pm</u>	October 22, 2014
Mandatory Pre-Application Teleconference @ 10am	October 24, 2014
<u>Theory of Change Matrix Due @ 4pm</u>	October 31, 2014
Applications Due @ 4PM	November 18, 2014
Commission Decision on Funding	December 16, 2014
Notify Applicants of Status	December 17, 2014
Clarification Begins	December 18, 2014
<u>Grievance Due</u>	December 31, 2014
Applications Re-submitted in eGrants	January, 7, 2015
Funding Announcements	May 8, 2015

Mandatory Pre-Application Teleconference

A mandatory Pre-Application Teleconference will be held on October 24, 2014, at 10am. A call in number will be sent out. If you have any questions, contact Margy Hughes at (907)-269-4674.

Pre Award Risk Assessment

Serve Alaska will conduct a pre-award risk assessment regarding financial and organizational capacity to administer federal grants with each new AmeriCorps application submitted for funding. The information contained in the assessment is intended to help the Commission understand the agency/organization and to evaluate its overall operational and financial controls. Serve Alaska staff and the Commission will review all assessments prior to awarding a grant. If the Commission determines that an applicant's operational and financial controls are deficient, the Commission may postpone the grant award until sufficient corrective action is completed or may refrain from awarding the grant altogether. Monitoring timelines will be created in consideration of pre-award risk assessment results.

Appeal Process/ Grievance Process

In the event the Application Review committee does not recommend funding an application, the following appeal procedure must be followed.

The appeal procedure of Serve Alaska is as follows:

Serve Alaska will notify proposal applicants of the Application Review results and potential funding recommendations.

- a. If the applicant has substantive objections to the results of the Application Review Group, the applicant may request a reconsideration of the recommendation by Serve Alaska.
- b. A request for reconsideration of the Application Review must be made to the Chair of Serve Alaska by the due date noted in the timeline.

- c. If a request for reconsideration is made, Serve Alaska shall hear such additional information as may be deemed appropriate and pertinent to the matter involved. A delegation of not more than three representatives of the requesting applicant may present such additional information. In its discretion, Serve Alaska may invite discussion or comments from others knowledgeable in the matter being appealed.
- d. Serve Alaska shall send to the applicant and others as deemed appropriate, its written determination pursuant to the request for reconsideration. Such determination shall be final.
- e. If an application, which has previously been rejected by Serve Alaska, is submitted for reconsideration in a substantially altered condition, Serve Alaska shall treat this grant as a new grant request, and all policies and procedures relating to a new grant will apply.

Other Information

Program Types

Through this RFP, there are two funding sources available through Serve Alaska. One is the State AmeriCorps Program and the other is State AmeriCorps Education Award Program (EAP).

1. AmeriCorps State

Serve Alaska is seeking to fund **AmeriCorps State Programs** that are community nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, tribes and local governmental agencies that demonstrate community impact and solve community problems through an evidence-based approach which meet local needs in Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, Veterans and Military Families and Violence Prevention.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations to recruit, train, and manage AmeriCorps members who address community needs. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who is enrolled in an approved national service position and engages in community service. Upon successful completion of their service, members receive an education award from the National Service Trust.

Proposals selected by Serve Alaska are put forward to the Corporation to participate in a nationwide competition. Applicants will be informed of Serve Alaska's intent of submitting a proposal to the nationwide competition.

2. State Education Award Program (EAP)

The Alaska AmeriCorps *Education Awards Program* (EAP) seeks to broaden the network of national service programs and strategies utilizing AmeriCorps members to better meet Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, Veterans and Military Families, Violence Prevention, and other human needs. An Education Award Program complements organizations with existing volunteer programs, institutions of higher learning with community based placements for federal work-study students, graduate programs in areas of social work,

education, science and health, and other program designs. The grant is intended to add value to programs by providing participants/ members with post-service education awards.

Organizations put forward to participate in a nationwide competition by Serve Alaska are eligible to apply for a small grant and use their own or other resources for the members' living allowance and program costs. Applicants can apply for up to \$800 per MSY. There is no match requirement for EAP grants.

Requirements:

An application is only complete if it includes all required documentation and is received by the application due date. Incomplete applications will not be considered. All additional required documents that are not possible to attach in eGrants are due by the application deadline unless otherwise noted. See below for a list of required documentation. All documents should be attached to an email and sent to Margaret.hughes@alaska.gov. Your email subject should include your organization name and Application ID number. **Do NOT send documents to CNCS.**

Required Additional Documents: (due 11/18/2014 unless noted)

- Theory of Change Worksheet (See NOFO for instructions) (due October 31, 2014)
- Letters of Commitment from most significant community partners (Governor/ Mayor Initiative)
- Evaluation Plan/ Report (if applicable)
- Letters from consortium members for Multi-focused intermediaries
- Performance Measure worksheet on Volunteer Generation (Serve Alaska specific)
- Participation in the mandatory three Days of Service (Serve Alaska specific)
- Evidence Base supporting reports/studies/briefs (if applicable)

Applications submitted as part of the Governor and Mayor Initiative must check the "Governor and Mayor Initiative" box in the Performance Measure tab and email a letter of endorsement cosigned by the Governor and (one) Mayor, as well as signed letters of commitment from partnering nonprofits to Margaret.hughes@alaska.gov by the application due date in order to be considered for this Initiative.

Requirement Specific for Serve Alaska State Programs:

When submitting the required documents, include written clarification to describe how you will fulfill any of the Serve Alaska requirements or focus areas. This includes the requirements of the Serve Alaska Performance Measures on Volunteer Generation and it must utilize the PM Form on Volunteer Generation attached to this RFP. Also, explain how your program will plan and participate in the required Days of Service. Use this format to address anything specific you feel is relevant to Serve Alaska's priorities and requirements.

Travel: A minimum \$2,000 line item for Staff Travel **must** be included in this year's proposed budget. This will be used for Serve Alaska's approved training or meeting attendance. (This does not apply to EAP programs.)

Volunteer Generation Performance Measure: ALL sub-grantees will need to track a Performance Measure as a Serve Alaska grant requirement (not the Corporation):

1. Volunteer Generation Plan

- a. How your program will encourage and track Members' volunteer generation
- b. The number of volunteer opportunities created
- c. The number of volunteers generated
- d. The number of volunteer hours tracked

This Performance Measures will NOT be entered into e-grants

Days of Service: Each year-round program is required to *organize* and have members participate in at least THREE National Days of Service during their program year. Ideally these National Days of Service, ***organized by the Sub Grantee***, and/or AmeriCorps Member(s) would encourage esprit d' Corps among members. MLK Day and 9/11 Day of Remembrance are required, with the third being the choice of the program. Less than year-round programs will have this requirement reduced by Serve Alaska on a sliding scale. Every program must register the Day of Service at least one week in advance on Serve Alaska's Facebook Page. Programs are also required to post their activities conducted (preferably with photos) on Serve Alaska's Facebook page after their day of service, if possible the day of, but no later than a week after the event.

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**Application Review Information**

Serve Alaska will review each application in a state-level pool. If your application is successful at the state level, it may be submitted for funding at the National (CNCS) level.

Logic Model Chart (Theory of Change)

| Project Resources                                 | Core Project Components | Evidence of Project Implementation and Participation | Evidence of Change                                |                                                                            |                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inputs                                            | Activities              | Outputs                                              | Outcomes                                          |                                                                            |                                                                |
|                                                   |                         |                                                      | Short-term                                        | Medium-term                                                                | Long-Term                                                      |
| What we invest (# and type of AmeriCorps members) | What we do              | Direct products from program activities              | Changes in Knowledge, skills, attitudes, opinions | Changes in behavior or action that result from participants' new knowledge | Meaningful changes, often in their condition or status in life |
|                                                   |                         |                                                      |                                                   |                                                                            |                                                                |

Program Name :

## Template for Serve Alaska specific Performance Measures

Please submit this form to Serve Alaska as part of your RFP packet. This form is primarily for the Serve Alaska required Performance Measures: Volunteer Generation and Disability Inclusion. Each application is required to submit a PM on these two topics.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                |        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Please fill in the performance measure information for each section.                                                                                                                                           |        |
| <b>General Info</b>                                                                                                                                                                                            |        |
| Performance Measurement Title:<br><a href="#">Serve Alaska Volunteer Generation PM</a>                                                                                                                         |        |
| Is this Performance Measure part of Serve Alaska's requirements? <a href="#">Yes</a>                                                                                                                           |        |
| Measure Category (choose one):<br><a href="#">Community and Economic Development: Community-based Volunteer Programs</a>                                                                                       |        |
| National PM Code: <a href="#">G3:3.1: Number of community volunteers recruited by CNCS-supported organizations or National Service Participants.</a>                                                           |        |
| <b>Needs and Activities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                    |        |
| Briefly describe how you will achieve this result (1-3 sentences):<br><a href="#">AmeriCorps Members will increase capacity in their organization and/or community through volunteer generation.</a>           |        |
| How many AmeriCorps members will be participating in this activity?                                                                                                                                            |        |
| How many days per week (on average) will this activity occur?                                                                                                                                                  |        |
| How many hours per day (on average) will this activity occur?                                                                                                                                                  |        |
| When does this activity begin?                                                                                                                                                                                 |        |
| When does this activity end?                                                                                                                                                                                   |        |
| <b>Results</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |        |
| <a href="#">The outputs you intend to track for a particular activity:</a>                                                                                                                                     |        |
| <a href="#">Result Type</a>                                                                                                                                                                                    |        |
| <a href="#">Outputs are counts of the amount of service members or volunteers have completed, but do not provide information on benefits to or other changes in the lives of members and/or beneficiaries.</a> |        |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                |        |
| <b>Result: Output</b>                                                                                                                                                                                          |        |
| <b>Indicator:</b> A specific, measurable item of information that specifies progress toward achieving a result.<br><br>Indicator: <a href="#"># of Volunteer opportunities</a>                                 |        |
| <b>Targets</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |        |
| Target Description:<br><a href="#">Members will increase the number of volunteer opportunities in their community.</a>                                                                                         |        |
| Target Number (measure)                                                                                                                                                                                        | Number |
| <b>Instruments:</b> Specific tool to collect information (e.g. behavior checklist, tally sheet, attitude questionnaire, interview protocol).<br><a href="#">Self Reporting.</a>                                |        |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |        |
| <b>Result: Output</b>                                                                                                                                                                                             |        |
| <b>Indicator:</b> A specific, measurable item of information that specifies progress toward achieving a result.<br><br>Indicator: # of volunteers generated                                                       |        |
| <b>Targets</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                    |        |
| Target Description:<br>Members will recruit volunteers for their activities                                                                                                                                       |        |
| Target Number (measure)                                                                                                                                                                                           | Number |
| <b>Instruments:</b> Specific tool to collect information (e.g. behavior checklist, tally sheet, attitude questionnaire, interview protocol).<br><br>Sign in sheets.                                               |        |
| <b>Result: Output</b>                                                                                                                                                                                             |        |
| Indicator: A specific, measurable item of information that specifies progress toward achieving a result.<br><br>Indicator: # of hours contributed by community volunteers                                         |        |
| <b>Targets</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                    |        |
| Target Description:<br>Number of hours served by community volunteers who were recruited and / or managed by AmeriCorps Members.                                                                                  |        |
| Target Number (measure)                                                                                                                                                                                           | Number |
| <b>Instruments:</b> Specific tool to collect information (e.g. behavior checklist, tally sheet, attitude questionnaire, interview protocol).<br><br>Sign in sheets that address start and stop time of volunteers |        |