



State of Alaska

Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development

Division of Community and Regional Affairs

Serve Alaska, State Service Commission

FY 2021 FORMULA GRANTS AMERICORPS STATE AND NATIONAL GRANTS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

**SOLICITATION NUMBER: 21AC-F
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Overview and Purpose

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

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations 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 and apply to qualified student loans.

This RFP is an overview of the process for submitting FY 2021 Formula Grant applications for AmeriCorps programs through Serve Alaska, the official State Service Commission for AmeriCorps in Alaska. This RFP should be read in conjunction with AmeriCorps's complete FY 2021 AmeriCorps State and National Grants funding opportunity documents (https://americorps.gov/funding_opportunity/americorps-state-and-national-grants-fy-2021), including the 2021 [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (Notice), 2021 [Mandatory Supplemental Information](#), and 2021 [Application Instructions](#). Download these documents immediately for use and reference while reviewing this RFP. These documents will help give potential applicants a complete picture of the grant program and application requirements.

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

Jill Furbish, Grant Administrator II
Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
Division of Community and Regional Affairs, Serve Alaska
550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1640
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3569
Serve.Alaska@alaska.gov
Phone: (907) 269-6720

Serve Alaska Funding Priorities

A prime focus of Serve Alaska, as directed by the agency's Commission, is to address the unmet needs of underserved communities in Alaska. Reviewers 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.

Eligibility

The following non-federal entities, which are defined in [2 CFR 200.1](#), are eligible to apply:

- Indian Tribes
- Institutions of higher education
- Local governments
- Nonprofit organizations
- States

Serve Alaska encourages organizations that have not received prior AmeriCorps funding to apply.

In addition to being eligible to apply under this Notice, federally recognized Indian Tribes may also be eligible to apply under a separate Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity for Indian Tribes for operating or planning grants. For more information contact Serve Alaska.

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 the [Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501 \(c\)\(4\)](#) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply for AmeriCorps funding.

Serve Alaska and AmeriCorps reserve the right to reallocate funding in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.

Types of Grants

Applications in response to this RFP are categorized in one of three options: New, Re-Compete, or Continuation grants. Please consult the 2021 Notice, 2021 Mandatory Supplemental Information, and 2021 Application Instructions for more information and definitions on all grant types.

New and Re-Compete Applications: These programmatic grants are for first-year funding of a new program (New), or fourth-year funding of an existing program (Re-Compete at the end of a three-year AmeriCorps grant cycle). Both types of grants will go through a competitive and complete review by Serve Alaska. If approved at the state level, the grants will go through a budgetary review at the national level.

AmeriCorps grants can be awarded on a cost reimbursement or fixed amount basis. AmeriCorps will not provide both types of grants for the same program in one fiscal year. New applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement* and Education Award Program (EAP) Fixed Amount grants* but are not eligible to apply for the Full-Cost Fixed Amount grant option. Re-Compete applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and EAP Fixed Amount grants, and with prior discussion and permission from Serve Alaska, they are also eligible to apply for Full-Cost Fixed Amount grants.

Continuation Applications: Organizations that have AmeriCorps awards that are currently in their first or second year of operation must submit a Continuation application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the consecutive year. These grants only report on ‘continuation changes’ (i.e., how the program is different from the previous year) and edit the operating budget, if necessary. Performance Measure edits may be allowed; contact Serve Alaska to discuss Performance Measure changes.

Continuation applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and EAP Fixed Amount grants, and with prior discussion and permission from Serve Alaska, they are also eligible to apply for Full-Cost Fixed Amount grants.

*Cost Reimbursement, page 2 in Mandatory Supplemental Information

*Fixed Amount Grants, pages 4-5 in Mandatory Supplemental Information

Application Requirements

Please refer to the 2021 Notice, 2021 Application Instructions, 2021 Mandatory Supplemental Information, and the 2021 Performance [Measure Instructions](#) for filling out the complete AmeriCorps application in eGrants, the online grant application system of AmeriCorps. An application is only complete if it includes all required documentation and is received by the application deadline. Incomplete applications may not be considered.

All additional AmeriCorps-required documents that are not possible to attach in eGrants are also due by the application deadline. Serve Alaska-specific documents are included and noted in ‘Required Additional Documents’ (below). All documents should be attached to an email and sent to Serve.Alaska@alaska.gov. The email subject should include the organization name and Application ID number (as assigned in eGrants). Do not send documents directly to AmeriCorps.

Required Additional Documents: Documents are due March 19, 2021 unless otherwise noted.

- Serve Alaska Documents Checklist, completed
- Draft TOC and Logic Model (due March 12)
- Evidence Base supporting reports/studies/briefs (if applicable)
- Most recent single audit report or financial statements (New applicants)
- Operational and Financial Management Survey (All New and Re-Compete) applicants are required to submit an [Operational and Financial Management Survey](#) (OFMS) - select Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey under the Pre-Award/Application Certification Forms Section. Please submit the OFMS as a Word document to Serve.Alaska@alaska.gov.

Additional Requirement Specific to Serve Alaska State Programs: When submitting the Required Additional Documents, use the Documents Checklist from this RFP packet to describe how you will fulfill any of the Serve Alaska requirements.

Days of Service: Each year-round AmeriCorps grant program is required to organize and have members participate in at least three (3) National Days of Service during the program year.

Ideally these National Days of Service, and/or AmeriCorps member(s), would encourage esprit de corps among members. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service and September 11th Day of Service and Remembrance are required, with the third Day of Service being the choice of the program. Less than year-round grant programs will have this requirement reduced by Serve Alaska on a sliding scale. Days of Service projects are submitted on the 'Documents Checklist' contained in this RFP and submitted as directed in this RFP.

Staff Capacity: Serve Alaska requires one dedicated employee to manage the programmatic aspect of an AmeriCorps program of 10-20 AmeriCorps members. The number of dedicated staff for larger than 20-member programs will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Dedicated staff must be clearly written in the grant and budget narratives.

Timeline and Deadlines - New and Re-Compete Applications

Deadlines listed in this RFP must be followed. If a deadline cannot be met, and prior to any deadline, applicants must submit an email explaining the extenuating circumstance which caused the delay. Such notice must be sent to Serve Alaska via email to Serve.Alaska@alaska.gov. If email is not available, call (907) 269-6720. Missed deadlines are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Any exceptions/approval of extension requires written approval by Serve Alaska.

FY 2021 Serve Alaska Formula Grants (21AC-F)	Dates
Serve Alaska AmeriCorps RFP Released	February 8, 2021
Notice of Intent to Apply Due by 4pm AST*	February 16, 2021
Mandatory Pre-Application Teleconference*	February 19, 2021
Draft Theory of Change and Logic Models Due*	March 12, 2021
Applications Submitted in eGrants by 4pm AST	March 19, 2021
Application Clarification Period	April 16-30, 2021
Applications Re-submitted in eGrants by 4pm AST	April 30, 2021
State Service Commission (Serve Alaska) Decision on Funding	May 25, 2021
Formula Grant Applicants Notified of Status	May 27, 2021
Appeals Due by 4pm AST	June 2, 2021
AmeriCorps Funding Announcements	June 18, 2021

*Notice of Intent to Apply: Potential applicants, both New and Re-Compete, are required to submit a Notice of Intent to Apply (NOIA), due by 4pm AST on February 16, 2021. Submitting a NOIA does not bind a potential applicant to any further action nor commit an organization to apply but ensures that potential applicants receive all documents and information from Serve Alaska throughout the grant opportunity process. Potential applicants are to submit the NOIA utilizing the form attached to this RFP to Serve.Alaska@alaska.gov.

The NOIA 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. Total expected federal budget request
4. Estimated match source(s)

***Mandatory Pre-Application Teleconference:** A mandatory Pre-Application Teleconference for New and Re-Compete applications will be held at 2pm AST on February 19, 2021. A call-in number will be sent out to organizations that submitted a NOIA.

***Draft Theory of Change and Logic Model:** By 4pm AST on March 12, 2021, each New or Re-Compete applicant must submit a draft Theory of Change (TOC) and Logic Model via email to Serve.Alaska@alaska.gov. A TOC Matrix form is attached to this RFP. Additional documents and trainings addressing the TOC can be found [here](#). If more TOC information is needed, please contact Serve Alaska prior to the draft deadline. Serve Alaska will review the draft TOC and help the applicant strengthen the TOC for the full application deadline if necessary.

Application Process – New and Re-Compete Applications

The following guidelines are for New and Re-Compete applicants. Applications will only be accepted electronically via eGrants. Serve Alaska requires that all applicants make every effort to submit their applications electronically utilizing eGrants. All requirements described herein apply to electronic applications. If an applicant cannot apply electronically due to extenuating circumstances, the applicant must contact Serve Alaska immediately.

Application Limits: On or before March 19, 2021, applications must be entered into the AmeriCorps eGrants [online system](#). Applications must not exceed 10 double-spaced pages for the Narratives, or 12 pages for applicants applying as Rural Intermediaries. Application content considered in determining page limit compliance includes the SF 424 Facesheet, Executive Summary, and the Narrative portions contained in Program Design, Organizational Capability, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy. Serve Alaska will consider the number of pages only as they print out from the “Review” tab in eGrants (see the “View/Print your application” heading). Serve Alaska strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the “Review” page prior to submission to check that the application does not exceed the page limits. This limit does not include the narrative portion of the Budget, Performance Measures, or any supplementary materials. Separately, the Logic Model may not exceed three pages when printed with the application from the “Review” tab in eGrants.

Member Living Allowance: A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. Programs are not required to provide a living allowance for members serving in less than full-time terms of service. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to a less than full-time member, it must comply with the maximum limits in the table on page 12 of the 2021 Notice. For Cost Reimbursement grants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either AmeriCorps and/or grantee share.

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. 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.

Maximum Cost per Member Service Year: One Member Service Year (MSY) is equivalent to a full-time AmeriCorps position (at least 1,700 service hours). The AmeriCorps cost per MSY is determined by dividing the AmeriCorps 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 AmeriCorps per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

New and Re-Compete applicants will be held to the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type. More information on cost per MSY can be found starting on page 12 of the 2021 Notice.

Application Review Process

Applicants must describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to solve a significant community problem. The quality of an application will be an important factor in determining whether an applicant will receive funding. Applications will be reviewed using the categories below:

Categories/Subcategories
Executive Summary
Program Design
Theory of Change and Logic Model
Evidence Tier
Evidence Quality
Notice Priority
Member Experience
Organizational Capability
Organizational Background and Staffing
Compliance and Accountability
Culture That Values Learning
Member Supervision
Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

Serve Alaska’s Review Committee will review submitted applications and give feedback to the applicant. Some feedback may require the applicant to make edits to the application, while other feedback may be a suggestion for strengthening but edits are not required. This process is called ‘Application Clarification’ (see Timelines and Deadlines – New and Re-Compete Applications in this RFP). During the clarification period, the applicant will take the required and/or suggested Review Committee comments and incorporate them into the application.

After the applicant re-submits a revised application into eGrants, the Review Committee will assess the applications a final time to ensure required feedback has been incorporated. The Review Committee will also ensure the scope of the project has not been substantially altered between the two submission times. The Review Committee, based on the content of the re-submitted application, will then recommend applications to the full Serve Alaska Commission for a vote.

Timelines and Deadlines, Application Process – Continuation Applications

The following guidelines are for Continuation applicants. Applications applying for the second or third year of funding are considered ‘Continuation applications.’ If the program is in good standing with Serve Alaska (i.e., reports are submitted on time, monitoring visits and desk audits show minor, correctable issues, and risk assessment has not increased) the program can submit a Continuation application.

Applications will only be accepted electronically via eGrants. Serve Alaska requires that all applicants make every effort to submit their applications electronically utilizing eGrants. All requirements described herein apply to electronic applications. If an applicant cannot apply electronically due to extenuating circumstances, the applicant must contact Serve Alaska immediately.

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Continuation Changes Due in eGrants by 4pm AST	March 19, 2021
Application Clarification Period	April 16-30, 2021
Applications Re-submitted in eGrants by 4pm AST	April 30, 2021
AmeriCorps Funding Announcements	June 18, 2021

Administrative and National Service Policy Requirements

All awards made under this Notice will be subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) in [2 CFR Parts 200](#) and [2205](#). This RFP should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations 45 CFR 2520–2550, 2021 Notice, 2021 Mandatory Supplemental Information, 2021 Application Instructions, and 2021 Performance Measure Instructions, which are incorporated by reference in the aforementioned documents. Information in these documents change each year for all AmeriCorps grant programs. Do not submit any other supplementary materials such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any other item if it is not specifically requested.

Documents that Govern the Grant: Successful applicants will receive a Grant Agreement from Serve Alaska incorporating the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant, as well as the AmeriCorps regulations and grant provisions.

AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions: All awards made under the 2021 Notice and this RFP will be subject to the FY 2021 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions and the FY 2021 AmeriCorps Program Specific Terms and Conditions for a particular program (when applicable). These Terms and Conditions contain detailed mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of both the General and Program Specific Terms and Conditions for each program are available at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnccs-grants>.

National Service Criminal History Check Requirements: The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a specific screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires grantees to conduct and document NSCHCs on persons (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving AmeriCorps funds. This includes staff that receive part of their salary through a subgrant. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such AmeriCorps funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. Grantees should utilize the two vendors AmeriCorps has engaged to conduct the required NSCHCs. Make sure to include costs for checks in your submitted budget. Checks cost approximately \$56.50/person. Additional information about the NSCHC requirements can be found in [45 CFR 2540.200–2540.207](#).

Pre-Award Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are a requirement under 2 CFR 200 regulations. The information contained in the assessment is intended to help the Commission understand the applicant agency/organization and to evaluate its overall operational and financial controls. Serve Alaska will communicate directly to an applicant if/when a Pre-Award Risk Assessment is required.

Appeal Process

In the event the Commission does not recommend funding an application, or a deadline has been missed, the following appeal procedure must be followed. All correspondence must be sent to the contact person listed in the Overview and Purpose section of this RFP.

Missed Deadline:

- a. A request for appeal of a missed deadline must be made prior to the missed deadline.
 - o Appeals must be sent via email to the contact person listed in the Overview and Purpose section of this RFP.
 - o Follow below, c-e.

Funding:

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

- a. If the applicant has substantive objections to the results of the Application Review Committee and/or the Commission decision, the applicant may request an appeal.
- b. A request for appeal must be made to the Chair of Serve Alaska by the due date noted in this RFP.

- Appeals must be sent via email to the contact person listed in the Overview and Purpose section of this RFP.
- c. If a request for an appeal 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 (3) 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 appeal. The Chair's determination shall be final.
- e. If an application, which has previously been rejected by Serve Alaska, is submitted for future funding 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.

Mandatory Online Resources/References

The FY 2021 Formula Grants – AmeriCorps State and National Grants formula funding opportunity and related resources are found at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/grants-funding/funding-resources/cncs-funding-opportunities-resources>.

[2021 Application Instructions](#): Reading and utilizing this document is required. This document has all the details needed to submit a complete application.

[2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity \(Notice\)](#): Reading and utilizing this document is required. The document explains in more detail Performance Measures, the Tier status of funding priorities, and other important, specific grant information. The Notice includes eligibility requirements, submission requirements, maximum amount of funding per MSY, and other information that is specific to the grant competition. Be sure to use the Timelines and Deadlines sections of this RFP only, not the Notice.

[2021 Performance Measure Requirements](#): Reading and utilizing this document is required for those that are creating or changing performance measures. All applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (output paired with outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. This may be a National Performance Measure or an applicant-determined measure depending on the program's TOC. Applications may also include National Performance Measure outputs without associated outcome(s) provided that the output measures a significant program activity. These output-only measures do not fulfill the requirement for an aligned performance measure but may be selected in addition to the aligned measure(s).

All performance measures must reflect significant program activities whose outputs and outcomes are consistent with the applicant's core TOC. Applicants are not expected to have performance measures for every program activity. AmeriCorps does not require applicants to use National Performance Measures but expects them to do so if National Performance

Measures reflect key outputs and/or outcomes of the TOC. Applicants may not create applicant determined outputs or outcomes that duplicate existing National Performance Measures.

All performance measures, including output-only measures, must be associated with one or more interventions (service activities). Applicants are expected to use the system-defined intervention categories if they appropriately represent the applicant's program activities. Applicants may not create user-defined intervention labels that duplicate existing intervention categories.

[2021 Mandatory Supplemental Information](#): Reading and utilizing this document is required. The document provides detailed definitions of certain terms included in the Notice, as well as additional details regarding how to properly prepare and file an application under the Notice. The document is incorporated by reference in the Notice, and applicants must comply with any requirements stated in it.

[Create an AmeriCorps eGrants Account](#): Applicants need an eGrants account to submit an AmeriCorps application. Applications must include a [Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System](#) (DUNS) number and an Employer Identification Number (EIN) during the account setup process. The DUNS number does not replace an EIN.

[System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#): All applicants must register with SAM and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If an applicant is awarded a grant, it must maintain an active SAM registration throughout the life of the award. See the [SAM Quick Start Guide for New Grantee Registration](#) for more information. Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and address on all grant applications. The Federal government is implementing Unique Entity Identifiers (UEI) as part of the SAM registration process to eventually replace DUNS numbers. AmeriCorps may ask applicants to add the UEI to their application as part of the clarification period or pre-award process. AmeriCorps is adding a field to capture the UEI in eGrants. If an applicant already has a UEI and the UEI field is available in eGrants, the applicant can enter it at the time when it submits an application.