



State of Alaska
Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic
Development
Division of Community and Regional Affairs
Serve Alaska, State Service Commission

**FY 2023 FORMULA FUNDED
AMERICORPS STATE AND NATIONAL GRANTS**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

**SOLICITATION NUMBER: 23AC-F
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Description.....	3
Federal Award Information	5
RFP Requirements:.....	8
Application Process.....	8
Timeline and Deadlines – New and Recompete Program Applications	9
Continuation Application Process.....	10
Application Review Process.....	10
Federal Award Administration Information.....	11
Appeal Process.....	12
Appendix 1 – AmeriCorps Focus Areas.....	14

Program Description

This Serve Alaska RFP is an overview of the process for submitting AmeriCorps applications in Alaska to the state service commission, Serve Alaska. The federal agency that oversees and funds AmeriCorps programs is the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). CNCS works in partnership with Serve Alaska to bring AmeriCorps programs to Alaska.

This document is to be read and followed, along with the provided Notice of Intent to Apply, Budget Instructions, Cost Reimbursement Budget workbook, Supplemental Information, applicable Application Forms, and Supplemental Documents Checklist.

Purpose of AmeriCorps Formula Funding

AmeriCorps improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps brings people together to tackle some of the country's most pressing challenges through national service and volunteerism. AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serve with organizations dedicated to the improvement of communities and those serving. AmeriCorps helps make service a cornerstone of our national culture.

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 that they can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

Serve Alaska Funding Priorities

A prime focus of Serve Alaska, as directed by the State Service Commission, is to address the unmet needs of underserved communities. 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.

AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

AmeriCorps' priorities for this grant competition are:

AmeriCorps recently released its [2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#) which defines the agency's goals, objectives, and strategies to both meet and exceed the agency's mission to improve lives and strengthen communities. Over the next 5 years, AmeriCorps will execute the following goals to better position the agency to respond to national and local needs and help the communities it serves prosper: partner with communities to alleviate poverty and advance racial equity; enhance the experience for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers; unite Americans by bringing them together in service; effectively steward federal resources; and make AmeriCorps one of the best and most equitable places to work in the federal government.

Over the next five years, AmeriCorps will invest in existing and new partnerships with nonprofit, faith-based, and Tribal organizations, and state service commissions, to get things done for America. AmeriCorps will prioritize investment in the most critical issues of our time — public health, climate and the environment, and education and economic opportunity — within AmeriCorps' Focus Areas ([Appendix 1](#)) and they will increase their efforts to ensure our AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Senior volunteers reflect the communities where they serve. AmeriCorps will target investments toward communities where the need is greatest, particularly those with populations that face racial inequality and poverty. These steps will enable more Americans than ever to strengthen the communities that need it most across the nation through their service.

AmeriCorps' priorities for this funding opportunity are:

- **New** Organizations leading service in communities with concentrated poverty, rural communities, tribal communities, and those organizations serving historically underrepresented and underserved individuals, including but not limited to communities of color, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, people who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community, people with arrest and/or conviction records, and religious minorities;
- Evidence-based interventions on the [AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange](#) that are assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence. Please note that many of these interventions have demonstrated effectiveness in improving outcomes for individuals living in underserved communities and that the agency has committed resources to supporting grantees seeking to replicate and evaluate these interventions in similar communities;
- Veterans and Military Families, Caregivers, and Survivors – a program model that improves the quality of life of veterans and improves the well-being of military and veteran families, caregivers, and survivors;
- Faith-based organizations;
- **New** Programs that provide additional benefits to AmeriCorps members aimed at enhancing member experience and bolstering member recruitment and retention such as paying more than the minimum living allowance, transportation, housing, food, etc.;
- **New** Programs that create workforce pathways for AmeriCorps members, including deliberate training, certifications, and hiring preferences or support; and
- Faith-based organizations communities.
- **New** Environmental Stewardship, including supporting communities to become more resilient through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve land and water, increase renewable energy use and improve at-risk ecosystems, especially in underserved households and communities.
- Economic Mobility Corps.

Performance Measures

Using the Performance Measures Instructions included with this RFP, applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (an output and an outcome for the AmeriCorps program) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. This may be a National Performance Measure (see Performance Measures Instructions) or an applicant-determined measure.

Federal Award Information

Estimated Available Funds

Serve Alaska reserves the right to prioritize providing funding to existing awards for continuation of AmeriCorps projects/programs in Alaska over making new awards. The actual level of funding is subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

Period of Performance

Serve Alaska anticipates making three-year pass-through grants. An initial award is made for the first year of the period of performance, based on a one-year budget. Continuation awards for subsequent years are not guaranteed; they depend upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance.

The project start date may not occur prior to the date AmeriCorps awards the grant. AmeriCorps member applicants may not enroll prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps member applicants 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 an applicant performs prior to the applicant becoming a member in the system of record and the beginning of the member enrollment period. Serve Alaska recommends a starting date of August 1 or later to ensure that awards are made prior to start.

Types of Grants

Funding available with this RFP is for AmeriCorps program planning grants and full programmatic AmeriCorps grants. AmeriCorps grants can be awarded on a cost reimbursement or full-cost fixed amount basis (see Supplemental Information). New applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement grants only.

New or Re-compete Program Applications: These types of programmatic grants are applying for first-year funding (New applications) of a new program, or fourth-year funding (Re-compete applications) of an existing program. Both types of grants will go through a complete review by Serve Alaska.

Continuation Applications: Organizations that have awards that are currently in their first or second year of operation must apply to be eligible to receive funding for the consecutive year (years two and three of the anticipated three-year grant timeline). These grants will fill out the continuation application form and update the budget workbook. Performance Measure edits may be allowed upon request to Serve Alaska.

Eligibility Information

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

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

Applicants must have a valid SAM registration and DUNS and/or Unique Entity Identifier to receive an award. Serve Alaska staff can assist with this if applicant is unsure of status.

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

Member Living Allowance

Many AmeriCorps projects/programs offer a living allowance to the national service volunteers (members). 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. 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 should indicate that amount in the application.

Service Term (MSY Value)	Minimum # of Hours	*Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time (1.0 MSY)	1,700	\$17,600	\$35,200
Three Quarter-time (0.7000 MSY)	1,200	\$12,320	\$24,640
Half-time (0.5000 MSY)	900	\$8,800	\$17,600
Reduced Half-time (0.3809524 MSY)	675	\$6,705	\$13,376
Quarter-time (0.26455027 MSY)	450	\$4,656	\$9,152
Minimum-time (0.21164022) MSY)	300	\$3,725	\$7,392
Abbreviated-time (0.05627705 MSY)	100	\$990	\$2,112

**AmeriCorps programs are not required to provide a living allowance to members serving in less than full-time capacity. However, Serve Alaska recommends programs provide at least the minimum living allowance listed in the table above.*

Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

The AmeriCorps cost per MSY is determined by dividing the Federal AmeriCorps share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include childcare or the value of the Education Award a member may earn. The maximum amount of AmeriCorps federal dollars an applicant may request from AmeriCorps per MSY is \$28,000.

Segal AmeriCorps Education Award

AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will be eligible for an Education Award from the National Service Trust. The amount of the Education Award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant. A member has up to seven years after the term of service to use the Education Award. AmeriCorps will provide the updated Education Award amounts at the time of federal grant award. Education Award amounts for this grant period can be found [here](#).

Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Reimbursement Applicants are required to match Federal grant funds based on the chart below. The applicant's match can be non-AmeriCorps cash and/or in-kind contributions.

Applicants must indicate whether the match is proposed or secured. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet the match requirement at the time of application submission.

A first-time successful applicant is required to match the federal award 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. All match must be recorded and reported.

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

There is no cost share or matching requirement for Fixed Amount grants. AmeriCorps does not provide all the funds necessary to operate the program, therefore organizations should raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.

[Section 121\(e\)\(5\) of NCSA \(42 U.S.C. §12571\(e\)\)](#) requires that grantees that use other Federal funds as matching funds for an AmeriCorps grant to report those amounts and sources. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout. Serve Alaska will provide a form for grantees to report this match.

Match Waiver

Please see the Match Waiver information for AmeriCorps State and National Grantees located on the AmeriCorps website's [Manage Your Grant](#) webpage.

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 45 CFR 2521.60(b). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined in the Application Instructions. Applicants who plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request at the time the application is submitted. Programs applying through Serve Alaska must submit requests for alternative match to Serve Alaska, who will submit it to AmeriCorps on their behalf.

Requirements Specific for Serve Alaska State Programs

When submitting the required application documents, use the relevant forms from the RFP packet to describe how you will fulfill any of the Serve Alaska requirements or focus areas:

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 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 being the choice of the program. Less than year-round programs will have this requirement reduced by Serve Alaska on a sliding scale.

Staff Capacity: Serve Alaska requires one dedicated employee to manage the programmatic aspect of an AmeriCorps program up to 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 described in the grant and budget narratives.

RFP Requirements:

State of Alaska Contact Person:

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) 269-4537

Notice of Intent to Apply (NOIA)

Each program that will be applying through Serve Alaska for an AmeriCorps grant **must** complete a Notice of Intent to Apply (NOIA). Submit the NOIA utilizing the applicable form attached to this RFP to Serve.Alaska@alaska.gov by **5 pm AKST on February 14, 2023**.

New and Recompete Program Grant Applicants

- Summary (one or two brief paragraphs) of what the program is proposing
- Number of AmeriCorps members the program is expecting to enroll
- Total expected federal budget request (not detailed)
- Names and amounts of anticipated match source(s)

Continuation Applicants do not need to submit a NOIA

The NOIA does not commit an organization to apply but ensures that organizations interested in applying receive all documents and information from Serve Alaska.

Mandatory Pre-Application Teleconference

A mandatory Pre-Application Teleconference for **new** and **re-competing** applications will be held on **February 21, 2023**. A meeting invite will be sent out to those organizations having submitted the NOIA.

Application Process

For the first review period, applicants will NOT enter their application in eGrants, the official AmeriCorps application and grants management online portal. Applicants will fully complete the applicable application form; a budget workbook; and submit all additional documents via email. All documentation included in this RFP is mandatory to review and consult before applying to ensure that all applications are filled out completely and correctly.

Application Submission

The deadline for the applications (new and recomplete program and continuation) is **March 31, 2023**, by **5:00 pm via email to serve.alaska@alaska.gov**.

Application Contents

- Applicable Fillable Application Form (Program or Continuation)
- Budget Workbook
- Required Additional Documents

Required Additional Documents

- Most recent single audit report or financial statements
- Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS)*

*All applicants regardless of funding level are required to submit an OFMS located at: [Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey \(office.com\)](#). New for 2023-24, the format is in Office Forms, to complete online. The link can also be found here: [Manage Your Grant | AmeriCorps](#).

Following the first review, applicants will be sent feedback from the Serve Alaska review committee. Applicants will then be required to enter and submit all information for official submission into eGrants—per Serve Alaska’s instructions provided at that time.

Timeline and Deadlines – New and Recompete Program Applications

Timeline for 2023-24 Funding	Dates
Serve Alaska RFP Released	February 1, 2023
Notice of Intent to Apply Due by 5pm	February 14, 2023
Mandatory Pre-Application Meeting	February 21, 2023
Preliminary Application Submission to Serve Alaska by 5pm	March 31, 2023
Application Clarification Period	April 13-19, 2023
Application Clarification Response Submitted by 5pm	April 20, 2023
Approved Application Submission in eGrants by 5pm	May 1, 2023
Serve Alaska Commission Decision on Funding	May 9, 2023
Applicants Notified of Grant Status	May 10, 2023
Funding Appeals Due by 5pm	May 15, 2023
AmeriCorps Funding Announcements and Grants Awarded	June-July 2023

Deadlines

Deadlines listed in this RFP must be followed. If a deadline cannot be met, applicants must submit an email prior to the deadline explaining the extenuating circumstance causing the delay. Such notice must be sent to Serve Alaska via email to serve.alaska@alaska.gov. If email is not available, use the phone number listed above in the Contact Person section. Missed deadlines are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Any exceptions/approval of extension requires written approval by Serve Alaska.

Continuation Application Process

Applications applying for the second or third year of funding are considered Continuation applications. If the program is in good standing with Serve Alaska, e.g., 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.

Timeline for 2022-23 Continuation Funding (FY22AC-F)	Dates
Serve Alaska RFP Released	February 1, 2023
Preliminary Application Submission to Serve Alaska by 5pm	March 31, 2023
Continuation Changes Submitted in eGrants by 5pm	May 1, 2023
Applicants Notified of Status	May 10, 2023
AmeriCorps Funding Announcements and Grants Awarded	June-July 2023

Application Review Process

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

Serve Alaska's Review Committee will review submitted applications and give feedback to the applicant. Some of the feedback requires edits to the application, while other feedback may be suggestions for strengthening the application. This process is called Application Clarification Review (see timeline). During clarification, the applicant will take the Review Committee comments and incorporate them into the application.

After the applicant then submits their final application into AmeriCorps's eGrants online portal, the Review Committee will assess the applications a final time to ensure required elements have 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 applications, will recommend applications to advance to the Serve Alaska Commission for a funding vote.

Pre-Award Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are a requirement under [2 CFR 200.206](#) regulations. The information contained in the risk assessment is intended to help the Serve Alaska Commission understand the agency/organization and evaluate its overall operational and financial controls.

Serve Alaska will conduct a pre-award risk assessment regarding financial and organizational capacity to administer federal grants with each new agency/organization submitting an AmeriCorps application for funding. While not part of the official application process, Serve Alaska will review all risk assessments prior to awarding a grant. If Serve Alaska determines that an applicant's operational and financial controls are deficient, it 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.

Federal Award Administration Information

Awards under this RFP are authorized by the [National and Community Service Act of 1990](#), as amended, by the Serve America Act of 2009 ([42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.](#))

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All awards made under this RFP 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](#).

Documents that Govern the Grant

The Notice of Grant Award incorporates the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant as well as the AmeriCorps regulations and grant provisions. Serve Alaska RFP and Grant Agreement are also included in the governing documents.

AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this *Formula funding* will be subject to the FY 2023 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, and the FY 2023 AmeriCorps Program Specific Terms and Conditions for the particular program (when applicable). These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the AmeriCorps General and Program Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at the [AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant](#) webpage: <https://americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/manage-your-grant#financial>.

National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

See [45 CFR 2540.200–2540.207](#) and [National Service Criminal History Check Resources](#) for complete information and FAQs.

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a specific screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. We encourage grantees to minimize barriers to service without putting their program beneficiaries at genuine risk.

- In general, award recipients and subrecipients must conduct an NSCHC for AmeriCorps members, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers, and staff funded under, or whose salary is reflected as match on, the award.
- AmeriCorps strongly encourages applicants to review the regulations and additional guidance to fully understand how to comply with the requirements. See the [NSCHC Regulations and Guidance](#). AmeriCorps also strongly encourages funded applicants to utilize the two AmeriCorps-approved vendors to conduct the required NSCHCs.
- Failure to conduct a compliant NSCHC may result in significant disallowed costs.
- The cost of conducting NSCHC is an allowable expense under the award and the individual subject to the NSCHC may not be required to cover the cost without being reimbursed.

A NSCHC consists of a check of the:

1. National Sex Offender Public website through [NSOPW.gov](#) (nationwide check);
2. State criminal history record repository or agency-designated alternative for the individual's State of residence *and* State of service; and

3. Fingerprint-based check of the FBI criminal history record database through the State criminal history record repository or agency-approved vendor.

All checks must be conducted, reviewed, and an eligibility determination made before the individual begins work or service.

An individual is not eligible to serve or work in a position subject to the NSCHC requirements if:

- the individual refuses to consent to a criminal history check;
- makes a false statement in connection with a criminal history check;
- is registered, or is required to be registered, on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; or
- has been convicted of murder.

Reporting

Once the grant is awarded, subrecipients will be expected to have in place data collection and data management policies, processes, and practices that provide assurance that they are reporting high quality performance measure data. At a minimum, subrecipients should have policies, processes, and practices that address the following five aspects of data quality for subrecipients:

- data measures what it intends to measure
- data reported is complete
- subgrantee collects data in a consistent manner
- subgrantee takes steps to correct data errors
- subgrantee actively reviews data for accuracy prior to submission.

Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

All applicants **must** register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov/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 Guide for Grantees](#).

SAM registration must be renewed annually. AmeriCorps suggests that applicants finalize a new registration or renew an existing one at least three weeks before the application deadline, to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. **The legal applicant's name and physical address in eGrants must match exactly the applicant's SAM-registered information.**

Appeal Process

In the event the Serve Alaska Commission does not recommend funding an application, or a deadline has been missed without prior approval, the following appeal procedure must be followed. All correspondence must be sent to the contact person listed above.

The appeal procedure of Serve Alaska is as follows:

Missed Deadline:

- A request for appeal of a missed deadline must be made prior to May 18th.
 - Appeals must be sent via email to the Contact person listed above.

Funding:

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

- If the applicant has substantive objections to the results of the Application Review and/or the Serve Alaska Commission decision, the applicant may request an appeal.
- A request for appeal must be made to Serve Alaska by the due date noted in this RFP.
 - Appeals must be sent via email to the contact person listed above.
- 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 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Appendix 1 – AmeriCorps 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's intent and to maximize the impact of investment in national service, and to achieve the goals laid out in our Strategic Plan (2022-2026), AmeriCorps has the following Focus Areas:

Disaster Services

Helping individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of disasters and increase community resiliency.

Economic Opportunity

Improving the economic well-being and security of underserved individuals.

Education

Improving educational outcomes for underserved people, especially children. AmeriCorps is particularly interested in program designs that support youth engagement and service learning as strategies to achieve high educational outcomes.

Environmental Stewardship

Supporting communities to become more resilient through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve land and water, increase renewable energy use and improve at-risk ecosystems, especially in underserved households and communities.

Healthy Futures

Supporting for health needs within communities, including mitigating the impacts of COVID-19 and other public health crises, access to care, aging in place, and addressing childhood obesity, especially in underserved communities.

Veterans and Military Families

Improving the quality of life of veterans, military families, caregivers, and survivors.