



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
PLANNING GRANTS**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

**SOLICITATION NUMBER: 23AC-F
ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER: 94.006**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Description.....	3
Federal Award Information	5
RFP Requirements.....	6
Application Process.....	7
Timeline and Deadlines	8
Application Review Process.....	8
Federal Award Administration Information.....	9
Appeal Process.....	10

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, and applicable Application Forms.

Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

AmeriCorps brings people together to tackle some of the country's most pressing challenges through national service and volunteering. AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serve with organizations dedicated to the improvement of communities. 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.

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 AmeriCorps' 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.

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, whether they fit in the above focus areas or not. 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 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 communities.
- **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
- **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.

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 12-month pass-through grants.

The project start date may not occur prior to the date AmeriCorps awards the grant. Serve Alaska recommends a starting date of March 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.

Planning Applications: These types of grants are for organizations interested in applying for AmeriCorps program funding in the next 1-2 years and would like assistance in developing their program. These grants last for no longer than 1 year and applicants will fill out the planning grant application form and budget workbook.

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 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.

Cost Sharing or Matching

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%

[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.

Programs applying through Serve Alaska must submit requests for match waivers and alternative match to Serve Alaska, who will submit it to AmeriCorps on their behalf.

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.

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 September 1, 2023**.

Planning Grant Applicants

Project Summary describing how the applicant proposes to utilize an AmeriCorps Planning Grant to explore opportunities:

- for the future utilization of AmeriCorps members (proposed number)
- to address community needs (list your community needs)

- in the target communities of (list the communities) that will be engaged

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 will be held on **September 6**. A meeting invite will be sent out to those organizations having submitted the NOIA. If you have any questions, contact Serve Alaska at serve.alaska@alaska.gov.

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 is **October 20, 2023**, by **5:00 pm via email to** serve.alaska@alaska.gov.

Application Content

- Planning Grant Application Form
- Budget Workbook
- Required Additional Documents

Required Additional Documents:

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

All applicants regardless of funding level are required to submit an Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS). Please submit the online form using the link [[Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey \(office.com\)](#)] provided, where applicants will be requested to submit responses electronically. The link can also be found here: [Manage Your Grant | AmeriCorps](#). Once submitted, forward the completion confirmation email to serve.alaska@alaska.gov.

Following the first application 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

Timeline for 2023-24 Planning Grant Funding (FY23AC-F)	Dates
Serve Alaska RFP Released	August 21, 2023
Notice of Intent to Apply Due by 5pm	September 1, 2023
Mandatory Pre-Application Meeting	September 6, 2023
Preliminary Application Submission to Serve Alaska by 5pm	October 20, 2023
Application Clarification Period	November 3-17, 2023
Final Application Submission in eGrants by 5pm	November 20, 2023
Serve Alaska Commission Decision on Funding	December 8, 2023
Applicants Notified of Status	December 11, 2023
Funding Appeals Due by 5pm	December 15, 2023
Planning Grant Start Dates	March 2024

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.

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 answering questions from the committee. 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](#).

AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this *formula planning grant 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 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 Manage Your Grant | AmeriCorps webpage: <https://www.americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/manage-your-grant>.

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 for an appeal to occur. 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 December 15.
 - 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.
- 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.