

Massachusetts AmeriCorps State Programs

FY17-18 Request for Proposals

-- CONCEPT PAPER STAGE --

Technical Assistance Session

August 2016



What is AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is a national service program that connects more than 85,000 Americans (approximately 2,500 in MA) each year in intensive service to meet our country's critical needs, including:

- Tutoring and mentoring disadvantaged youth
- Fighting illiteracy
- Improving health services
- Building affordable housing
- Cleaning parks and streams and other public spaces
- Helping communities respond to disasters
- Assisting unaccompanied minors get legal status in US
- Building organizational capacity

What is AmeriCorps?

- A team of members addressing compelling needs
- A way to leverage local and federal resources
- Not just a grant or funding source but a PROGRAM
- A way to build organizational capacity to meet needs through volunteer generation and partnership building

Member Benefits

- A year of stipended service
- Education award upon successful completion
- Possibility for loan forbearance
- Child care and health care for full-time members

Who Can Serve?

AmeriCorps Member Eligibility

An AmeriCorps Member must:

- be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national or lawful permanent resident of the United States
- be at least 17 years of age (unless in a specifically designated youth corps)
- have a high school diploma or equivalent, or agree to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent before using an education award

CNCS AMERICORPS FOCUS AREAS:

Per the Kennedy Serve America Act:

- Disaster Services
- Economic Opportunity
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Healthy Futures
- Veterans and Military Families

Additional CNCS Priorities/Partnerships

- Disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation
- Opportunity Youth
- 21st Century Service Corps (21CSC)
- Opioid abuse reduction/prevention
- Veterans and military families
- Encore programs
- Mayor/Governor initiative partnerships
- My Brother's Keeper
- Multi-focus intermediaries
- Safer Communities

CNCS

The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

CNCS Strategic Plan

Goal #1

Increase the impact of national service on community needs in communities served by CNCS-supported programs.

Goal #2

Strengthen national service so that participants engaged in CNCS-supported programs consistently find satisfaction, meaning and opportunity.

Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE**



State and National



Massachusetts Service Alliance

The Massachusetts Service Alliance, established in 1991, is a private, nonprofit organization that serves as the governor appointed state commission on community service and volunteerism.



Our Mission

Our mission is to catalyze the innovation and growth of service and volunteerism by creating partnerships that maximize resources, expertise, capacity, and impact.

Massachusetts Service Alliance

How we achieve our mission:

- **Invest** public and private funds in community-based organizations.
- **Convene** and mobilize public and private entities to link strategies related to service and volunteerism.
- **Build capacity** of nonprofit agencies through training and technical assistance.
- **Advocate** for the development and promotion of public policies and private initiatives that incorporate service as an effective strategy.

MSA Funding Priorities

- Geographic and programmatic diversity
- Effective solutions that meet community needs
- Meaningful member service experiences
- Volunteer generation
- Demonstrable impact
- Early Childhood Literacy
- Reduction/prevention of use/abuse of opioids and prevention/reduction of fatal and non-fatal opioid overdoses

Applying for AmeriCorps

Timeline, Application Components



Eligible Applicants

- Public or private non-profit organizations including:
 - labor organizations
 - community organizations
 - faith-based organizations
 - institutes of higher education
 - state agencies
 - government entities within the state (e.g., cities, counties)
 - Indian Tribes
- Partnerships or consortiums of the above

Prohibited Activities

AmeriCorps members and the volunteers they recruit/coordinate may not engage in specific prohibited activities. As outlined in AmeriCorps Provisions, those include:

- Attempting to influence legislation
- Protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes
- Promoting or deterring union organizing
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements
- Engaging in political activities to influence outcome of an election or to advocate for or against political parties, candidates, or elected officials
- Conducting religious instruction or worship services
- Providing a direct benefit to a for-profit
- Voter registration drives
- Providing or making referrals for abortion services

Prohibited Activities

All prohibited activities outlined in the AmeriCorps Regulations/
Terms and Conditions and Application Instructions:

http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/manage/index.asp

***Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may ***
participate in the above activities on their initiative, on non-
AmeriCorps time, and using non-Corporation funds.
The AmeriCorps logo should not be worn while doing so.

Timeline

Concept Papers are due to MSA by
Tuesday, September 13, 2016 by 12:00pm

- August 9, 2016 AmeriCorps Concept Paper RFP Released
 - August 18 and August 19, 2016 Technical Assistance Sessions
 - August 31, 2016 Intent to Apply Form Due (optional online form)
 - **September 13, 2016** **Concept Papers due to MSA by noon**
 - Late September/Early October Community review of all Concept Papers
 - Late October 2016* Notification of status
 - **Mid/late November 2016*** **Draft of Full Applications due to MSA**
 - Late December 2016* Full Application entered into eGrants
 - January 18 2017 MSA submits applications to CNCS
 - May/June 2017 Notification of Competitive Award
 - Late June 2017 Notification of Formula Award
- *TBD

General Submission Information

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Program Narrative
- III. Performance Measure Worksheet and Logic Model Worksheet
- IV. Budget
- V. Authorization, Assurances and Certifications
- VI. Additional Required Information (to upload)
 - a. Organizational Chart
 - b. Most recent audit (A-133, if applicable)
 - c. Proof of eligibility
 - i. 501(c)3 letter or MA Certificate of Tax Exemption (ST-2 or ST-4)

Submission Requirements

- Applications will be submitted online – no hard copies or email submissions accepted
- Submission link to online application portal can be found on the online RFP
- Each section will have character limits, no page limits
- **Concept paper submissions must be received by MSA by 12pm on Tuesday, September 13, 2016**

The Concept Paper - Narrative

A. Program Design (80%)

1. Problem/Need (5%)
2. Intervention (10%)
3. Theory of Change and Logic Model (20%)
4. Evidence Base (15%)
5. Member Training (10%)
6. Member Supervision (10%)
7. Member Experience (5%)
8. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identity (5%)

The Concept Paper - Narrative

B. Organizational Capability (20%)

1. Organizational Background and Staffing (10%)
2. Compliance & Accountability (10%)
3. Evaluation Summary/Plan (0%)

Problem/Need & Intervention

- Community Need
 - What is the community **need**? Data to support?
 - CNCS **Focus areas**?
 - How is it aligned with **your mission**?

- Intervention
 - Member activities that align with described community need

Theory of Change and Logic Model

- Member Activities
 - What is the proposed intervention and what are AmeriCorps members' roles
 - How will the proposed intervention lead to outcomes identified in theory of change
 - Why AmeriCorps
 - Ensure elements of logic model are aligned

Logic Model

- Community problem outlined in the narrative
- Resources necessary to deliver the intervention (# of members and # of sites they will serve)
- Member activities (duration and dosage of intervention)
- Target population
- Measurable outputs (# of beneficiaries served)
- Realistic but ambitious outcomes (demonstrated changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition)

Evidence Base

- Five tiered evidence levels
 - No evidence
 - Pre-preliminary evidence
 - Preliminary evidence
 - Moderate evidence
 - Strong evidence

Member Development & Training

Describe the plan to prepare members for service, provide ongoing personal/professional development, and promote a lifelong ethic of service

- **Orientation:**

- Timeline
- AmeriCorps/National Service, MSA, the community, and their placement site(s)
- Terms of Service
- Prohibited Activities
- Training/preparation for service activities
- Teambuilding/corps identity
- Additional topics for your organization and program

Member Development & Training

Ongoing Development/Training:

- Opportunities throughout the service year - timeframe
- Proposed topics: training to support service activities and member personal/professional development
- Fostering esprit de corps and a connection to the national service movement
- Promoting an ethic of service and a lifelong commitment to civic responsibility
- Planning/preparing for Life After AmeriCorps

Members' participation in AmeriCorps should be a meaningful and defining experience

Member Supervision

- Year-long supervision plan including frequency and structure (e.g., 1-on-1 or group supervision)
- Identify staff person(s) who will supervise members
 - If multi-site, explain how site partners are prepared to supervise members
- Plan for recognizing members' achievements

*AMERICORPS MEMBERS CANNOT SUPERVISE
OTHER AMERICORPS MEMBERS*

Member Experience

- Skills and experience gained
- Meaningful service experiences and opportunities for reflection
- Connections with the broader National Service network and building esprit de corps
- Efforts to recruit members from communities served

Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification

- Gear
- Logo
- Language

Organizational Capability

- Organizational Background and Staffing
 - Adequate staffing (programmatic and fiscal)
 - Provide sound programmatic *and* fiscal oversight
 - Select and oversee site partners (if applicable)
 - Support appropriate program and fiscal staff positions
 - Manage a federal grant
- Compliance and Accountability
 - Structures to detect programmatic and fiscal compliance issues
 - Systems in place to detect risk or non-compliance at service sites, if applicable
 - Accountability if issues arise

Evaluation Summary or Plan

- Different requirements based on status as:
 - First-time applicants and first-time re-competing applicants
 - OR
 - Applicants re-competing for subsequent funding
- See RFP page 16 for guidelines

Program Impact

What about the identified problem will change as a result of AmeriCorps members' service?

- Anticipated change by the end of the three-year grant cycle
- Measure and report on impact annually
- Measurable annual outputs and outcomes as a result of primary service activities
- Logic Model

Program Size/Structure

AmeriCorps members may:

- Serve in teams, pairs, or individually
- Serve in a single neighborhood, city-wide, regionally, or state-wide
- Serve through one organization or be placed with service partner organizations

Describe how many members will serve at each site

Your program should be large enough to make a significant impact in your community.

Member Service Years

Programs must request at least 10 Member Service Years

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	MSY
Full Time	1700	1.000
Half Time	900	0.500
Reduced Half Time	675	0.381
Quarter Time	450	0.2646
Minimum Time	300	0.2117

***Recommended minimum: 15-20 Member Service Years**

Program Size/Structure

EXAMPLE:

20 full-time members = 20 MSY

40 half-time members = 20 MSY

76 quarter-time members = 20.14 MSY

10 full-time, 5 part-time, and 29 quarter-time = 20.185 MSY

If different type(s) of members, clearly explain the roles and activities associated with each

Important to Consider:

- At least 80% of member service hours must be direct service
- Up to 20% of member service hours may be in education, training, or other member development activities
- 10% of member service hours (considered direct service) may be in fundraising activities directly related to the member's service (not for program operational funds)

Community Engagement

- Volunteer Generation
 - Utilize non-AmeriCorps community volunteers to expand the reach of the program
 - Role(s) of volunteers
 - Members' roles in recruiting and supporting community volunteers
 - State the number of volunteers your program will leverage
- Partnerships and Collaborations
 - Identify stakeholders in the AmeriCorps program, including existing or planned partnerships/collaborations
 - Identify stakeholders' role in implementing/evaluating program

Performance Measures

- Submit a Logic Model and a corresponding Performance Measure Worksheet related to members' Primary Service Activities.
 - Reflect activities of all members
 - Capture the impact of the entire program
- Programs may have more than one PM if additional need(s) served through program (e.g., member development).
 - PM worksheet required for each measure

National Performance Measures

- Within CNCS focus areas
- Not mandatory (unless opting into Education focus area)
- CNCS will prioritize programs utilizing national measures
- MSA will provide assistance on performance measures to programs invited to submit full application

Performance Measures

Performance Measures describe the measurable outputs and outcomes the program expects to achieve as a result of its service activities.

-Outputs: What evidence do you have that the activities took place?
-Measurable, tangible, direct products

-Intermediate Outcomes: What change do you expect to occur in the near future?
-Direct result of activities and outputs; steps toward desired ends

***End Outcomes**: Impact of the activities on the identified need

(* = OPTIONAL)

Performance measure worksheets should align with your narrative.

Performance Measure Worksheets

- Will need to describe instrument(s) - ensure ability to obtain/track data!
- Indicators
- Targets (# or %)
- Format is different from the Logic Model, will convey the same content
- CNCS uses this format in online grants system
- Not evaluated separately in the Community Review

Logic Models

- Theory of Change: “If...then”
- If = program design
 - Inputs
 - Activities
 - Outputs
- Then = program results
 - Outcomes: Short term, medium-term, long-term

Logic Model

Project Resources	Core Project Components	Evidence of Project Implementation and Participation	Evidence of Change		
INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES		
			<i>Short-Term</i>	<i>Mid-Term</i>	<i>Long-Term</i>
Resources that are necessary to deliver the program activities (interventions), including the number of locations/sites and number/type of AmeriCorps members.	The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including duration, dosage and target population.	Direct products from program activities	Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and opinions (measurable during the grant year).	Changes in behavior or action that result from participants' new knowledge (may or may not be measurable during the grant year).	Meaning changes, often in their condition or status in life (may or may not be measurable during the grant year)

Types of Grants

OPERATING GRANTS	EDUCATION AWARD PROGRAMS (EAP)
Organization receives federal funds for program/member support costs	Organization supports most program/member costs through non-CNCS funds
Maximum CNCS request per MSY is \$13,830	Maximum CNCS request per MSY is \$800
Members receive living allowance	Members do not receive living allowance
Members eligible for education award	Members eligible for education award
Financial match requirement	No match requirement
<p align="center">ALL grantees must follow the AmeriCorps Regulations, Provisions, and MSA Addendum to the Provisions</p>	

Budget – Operating Grant

- Maximum CNCS funding request \$13,830 per MSY
- Minimum 10 MSYs
- Items should correspond to what is described in the narrative
- Show calculation for each line item
- CNCS evaluates programs on cost effectiveness and budget adequacy
- Not evaluated separately in the Community Review process

Budget Sections

- Operational
 - Staff, staff benefits, training, travel, etc.
- Member Support
 - Living allowances, FICA, health insurance, etc.
- Administrative Costs
 - Administrative costs
 - Commission fee (2%)

Budget Items

Required:

- Living allowance for full time members
- Health insurance for full time members
- Criminal history checks for ALL members and any staff on grant (CNCS or match funds)
- 2% Commission Fee

Not required:

- Unemployment for members (unallowable)
- Education award – separate CNCS Trust
- Child care – separate CNCS Trust

Member Living Allowance

Term of Service	Minimum Number of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Living Allowance
Full Time	1700	\$12,630	\$24,930
One Year Half Time	900	N/A	\$13,199
Reduced Half Time	675	N/A	\$9,899
Quarter Time	450	N/A	\$6,599
Minimum Time	300	N/A	\$4,400

Sample Budget Overview

**20 FT members X \$13,830 (per MSY) =
\$276,600 (maximum CNCS request)
Minimum match: 24% (cash and in-kind)**

	CNCS	Grantee	Total
Section I	\$10,170	\$77,814	\$87,984
Section II	\$252,600	\$32,597	\$285,197
Section III	\$13,830	\$0	\$13,830
Total	\$276,600	\$110,411	\$387,011
% Share	71%	29%	

Matching Requirements

- Cash or in-kind contributions
- Federal*, state, local, private sector, and/or other funds in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements

	Years 1-3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Minimum Overall Share	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

* In rare cases, federal funds may be used to match CNCS resources. Prior written approval must be obtained from other federal agency.

Budget – Education Award Program (EAP)

- \$800 per Member Service Year
- Not required to pay living allowances
- Required to follow all AmeriCorps Regulations for grant, program, and member management
- **Program is reimbursed based on enrollment/retention of members**
- No matching requirement – program is not required to document match for reimbursement

Budget – Education Award Program (EAP)

EXAMPLE:

95 half-time members = 47.5 MSYs x \$800/MSY =
\$38,000 maximum CNCS request

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share
Program Grant Request	47.5 x \$800	\$38,000	\$38,000	N/A

Types of Awards

- Competitive
 - Funds awarded by CNCS
 - MSA submits Full Applications to CNCS
 - Submissions compete nationally against all single- and multi-state applicants

- Formula
 - Federal funds given to MSA based on AmeriCorps federal allocation and state population
 - No separate application process

Submission Requirements (online submission)

MSA **will not** review:

- Any application that fails to meet all Concept Paper submission requirements
- Any application that does not request the minimum number of Member Service Years (MSY)
- Supplemental materials such as brochures, newsletters, etc.

Writing the Concept Paper

- Follow the directions in the RFP
- Don't make assumptions
- Ask someone unfamiliar with your program/organization to review your narrative
- PROOFREAD!
- Contact MSA with any questions

Contact Information

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