

Overview of National Service

Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service (Frankfort)
State Office, Corporation for National and Community Service (Louisville)

Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) – engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to help strengthen communities through AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America and the Senior Service Corps

<u>AmeriCorps</u>	<u>Learn and Serve America</u>	<u>Senior Service Corps</u>
State and National	School-based programs	Retired and Senior Volunteers
VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America)	Community-based programs	Foster Grandparents
NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps)	Higher education	Senior Companions
Education Award Only		

AmeriCorps, often referred to as the *domestic* Peace Corps, is a national service network that provides full- and less-than-full-time opportunities for participants, called members, to serve their communities and address local needs.

So... What do AmeriCorps programs/members do???

AmeriCorps programs provide grants to initiate, improve or expand the abilities of organizations and communities to address unmet local environmental, educational, public safety (including disaster preparedness and response) and other human needs.

AmeriCorps supports organizations that use volunteer service as a strategy to address national, state and local needs, while fostering an ethic of civic responsibility and connecting Americans of all ages and backgrounds with opportunities to serve their communities and country.

AmeriCorps Member Benefits

- Living Allowance - approximately \$11,400 (before taxes) for 1,700 hours (MSY-Member Service Year) of service within a 12-month period.
- Education Award – full-time members receive an education award of \$4,725 upon the successful completion of their service commitments.
- Childcare and Health Insurance - available for full-time members who meet eligibility criteria.

AmeriCorps Member Eligibility

- Must be at least 17 years of age at the time of enrollment
- A U.S. citizen, a U.S. national or lawful permanent resident alien.
- May serve only two terms in approved AmeriCorps member positions and receive only two educational awards.
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Request for Proposal Overview

CNCS will give special consideration to projects that address one or a combination of four strategic initiatives:

- **Mobilizing more volunteers.** CNCS will invest in organizations that can effectively recruit, train, manage and use volunteers who will ultimately have an impact on the success of their program. We will increase the capacity of faith-based and other community organizations to mobilize volunteers in communities to meet critical needs. We plan to support organizations that develop strong partnerships and collaborations with volunteer centers or other volunteer connector organizations in their service areas.

- **Ensuring a brighter future for all of America's youth.** CNCS will invest in organizations that provide caring adults as mentors for youth from disadvantaged circumstances, and opportunities for young people from disadvantaged circumstances to serve their communities. We plan to support organizations that recruit and manage at-risk youth serving in National Service Programs, and mentoring efforts, particularly those targeting children of prisoners.
- **Engaging students in communities.** CNCS will invest in organizations that implement effective strategies for connecting their school, faculty, staff, and administration within their community through service and volunteering. We plan to support K-12 and higher education institutions that effectively incorporate service-learning into their curricula, and the number of college students engaged in community service and service-learning. We will also help colleges and universities expand support for student service.
- **Harnessing baby boomers' experience.** CNCS will invest in programs that plan to capture the talents, skills, energy, and experience of baby boomers and older Americans to meet local and national needs. We plan to improve the capacity of nonprofits to attract and retain boomers via targeted training and technical assistance.

Additional programs and program models that may receive special consideration in the selection process are described in the AmeriCorps regulation § 2522.450. You will note that mobilizing volunteers, youth in disadvantaged circumstances, working with educational institutions, and baby boomers are priorities in the regulation as well as our strategic initiatives. You are encouraged to integrate the priorities and initiatives into your program design, as they logically align with your organizational mission and objectives.

Program requirements are located in the AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520 - 2550

(http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/45CFR_chapterXXV.pdf).

Changes to these regulations can be found in the AmeriCorps rule published in July of 2005 (www.americorps.gov/about/ac/rulemaking.asp). This *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity (Notice)* should be read together with the regulations and the AmeriCorps application instructions for the program to which you are applying (www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/funding).

Program Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Member Service Activities	§§ 2520.20-2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§ 2520.65
Tutoring Programs	§§ 2522.900-2522.950
Matching Funds	§§ 2521.35-2521.90
Member Benefits	§§ 2522.240-2522.250
Calculating Cost/Member Service Year (MSY)	§ 2522.485
Performance Measures	§§ 2522.500-2522.650
Evaluation	§§ 2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740
Selection Criteria and Selection Process	§§ 2522.400-2522.485

CNCS has set specific goals:

- Strengthening the capacity of non-profit organizations.
- Increasing the amount of volunteering and civic engagement.
- Achieving greater accountability and program performance.
- Expanding partnerships with public and private organizations at all levels: national, state and local.
- Leveraging resources and investing strategically, to make contributions of CNCS more effective.

CNCS has established the following funding criteria to achieve these goals:

- Performance measurement, accountability and evaluation;
- Recruitment and management of volunteers;
- Support for faith- and community-based organizations;
- Citizenship;
- Literacy and tutoring programs;

- Capacity building and sustainability;
- Audit and financial information;
- Student service; and
- On-line grant application submission.

Performance Measurement, Accountability and Evaluation

- All programs selected will negotiate specific performance measures with CNCS that will be included in the grant.
- Programs will be held accountable for meeting these performance measures in continuation and future funding decisions.
- Evaluation of program outcomes must be conducted at least once every four years.

Recruitment and Management of Volunteers

- All programs are required to recruit and engage volunteers in their programs.

Support for Faith- and Community-Based Organizations

- All programs must demonstrate partnerships with faith-, small and community-based organizations.
- Partnerships may include many types of relationships such as direct grantee, sub grantee, host site, volunteer recruitment partnerships.

Citizenship

- All programs must include citizenship in their member development plans.
- CNCS has developed and enhanced citizenship curriculum as a resource for programs.

Literacy and Tutoring Programs

- Programs that provide tutoring and other support to assist children in learning to read must address:
 - Curricula
Must be *scientifically-based* and include National Reading Panel *five components of reading instruction*, or Demonstrate that your activities are part of a broader program that provides individuals with *systemic instruction* and *practice the five basic reading components*.
 - Tutor Training
Must occur before or during service and must include five components for reading instruction
 - Standards for Tutors
Identify standards the program proposes to used to qualify tutors

Capacity Building and Sustainability

Capacity Building is a process that helps an organization gain greater independence and sustainability.

- Applications must demonstrate how capacity will be improved and sustainability achieved.
- Demonstrated progress toward sustainability will be a criterion in making new and continuation awards.
- AmeriCorps members may assist organizations in capacity building activities.

Audit and Financial Information

We will review some financial information about applicants, such as audits or financial statements, in conjunction with an application to assess potential for sustainability and financial capacity.

Student Service

Institutions of higher education must provide information about their compliance with the requirement to devote at least 7 percent of federal work-study funds to community service and describe their efforts to support community service under federal work study. This will be considered in grant decisions.

On-line Grant Application Submission

Applications for funding will be submitted using eGrants, CNCS' on-line grant application and management system.

Evaluation Criteria for Applications

All CNCS programs must use the same criteria to evaluate and select new grantees, sub-grantees or projects.

1. Program Design: 50%
 - a. Rationale and approach: 10%
 - b. Member output and outcomes: 20%
 - c. Community output and outcomes: 20%
2. Organizational capacity: 25 %
3. Cost effectiveness and budget adequacy: 25%
 - a. Cost Effectiveness: 15%
 - b. Budget Adequacy: 10%

Additional Considerations

- Programs that are high-quality, innovative, replicable and can sustain themselves or the service activities with other resources when the grant period ends;
- Programs that collaborate with or propose to foster federal work-study students that meet community needs;
- A wide range of program designs and approaches that meet community needs;
- Programs that are geographically diverse across the state;
- Programs that sponsor AmeriCorps activities in areas of high concentrations of low-income individuals.

What you need to know:

- The needs of the community;
- These grant funds DO NOT buy bricks and mortar;
- These grant funds DO provide the grantee the person power to address critical community needs;
- funding is for a three-year period BUT, KCCVS/CNCS provides and enters into an agreement for one year of funding only; the second and third years of funding are contingent upon the availability of funds, satisfactory progress in meeting performance measures and meeting established objectives.

Who is eligible to apply?

- Non-profit organizations with 501(c)3 status
- Educational institutions (local school districts, colleges, universities, etc.)
- Local government entities
- State agencies

Responsibilities of Managing an AmeriCorps Grant

- Requires a full-time staff member for every 30 MSYs (member service year) AmeriCorps members (KCCVS requirement)
- Requires knowledge of federal grants management
- Requires sound financial systems in place and the agency general ledger

- Requires annual audits of your agency and an audit review by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services on all grant funds
- Must have source documentation to verify all match funds
- Must have a clear audit trail of records
- Must not have been disbarred by any federal agency in the past seven years
- Must have e-mail and Internet access

Additional Responsibilities

- Recruitment, training and supervision of members
- Management of day-to-day operations
- Assurance of program quality
- Timely and accurate documentation of member eligibility and service hours
- Submission of quarterly reports reflecting progress toward performance goals
- Submission of monthly and quarterly expense reports
- Participation in all program directors' meeting/trainings and statewide AmeriCorps member events

\$\$\$\$ Needed

- Cash and in-kind match of 24% (non-federal match)
- Cash match for the member living allowance (non-federal funds), health insurance and other member associated costs
- The cost per MSY (Member Service Year) *cannot exceed \$12,600 per member* (KCCVS requirement)
- Ability to front expenditures for invoice-based reimbursement
- Certification of on-hand operating capital sufficient for 60 days of project operation for program start-up (KCCVS requirement)

Additional Information from the Commission

- One grant process for both Competitive and Formula
- Fiscal agent must be located within the Commonwealth.
- Ranking during competitive grant review will not be sole factor in formula decisions. There will be a re-evaluation of each applicant.
- Formula funding will be recommended by the Program Committee and approved by the Commission

The Commission is awarded monies/member slots based on population = formula programs.

After the competitive awards are made by CNCS, sub-applicants are given the opportunity to re-apply for a formula grant.

Factors to be considered by the Commission when determining formula funding:

- Geographic/Congressional districts
- Alignment with Governor's Initiatives
- True community need
- Return on investment
- Commission identified need
- Ranking in competitive process
- Number of members requested
- Potential for sustainability
- Beale Code
- Collaboration/Partnerships formed
- Innovation

Continuation formula programs have the opportunity to submit a competitive application. Submission of a competitive application will not cause forfeiture of their formula status in the event they do not achieve competitive status.

Proposed Timeline for Grant Application Process

- After September 15, 2008 - Grant application training
- September 30, 2008 - eGrant Prime opens for sub-applications
- October 15, 2008 C.O.B. – “intent to apply” email due to KCCVS staff
- November 12, 2008 C.O.B. - Request for Proposal process closes
- November 13 - 17, 2008 - KCCVS Staff RFP review
- November 18 - 19, 2008 - Peer Review and Commission meeting
- November 20 – 25, 2008 - Aggregated feedback to approved applicants
- December 19, 2008 – Revised applications due C.O.B. in eGrants
- December 24, 2008 - Approved State*Competitive applications in eGrants
- January 13, 2009 – CNCS due date
- May 31, 2009 – Grant awards announced by CNCS

Other Important Stuff

Notice of funding availability and application instructions from CNCS:
http://www.americorps.org/for_organizations/funding/nofa_detail.asp?tbl_nofa_id=31

Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service:
<http://www.chfs.ky.gov/dhss/kccvs/>

Answers to all inquiries will be posted at: <http://www.chfs.ky.gov/dhss/kccvs/>

Completed Applications will include:

1. **Completed application in eGrants by C.O.B. November 12, 2008.**
2. **Completed Fiscal Risk Assessment (attachments will be requested upon acceptance for grant award).**
3. **Most recent completed Audit received by C.O.B. November 12, 2008.**

Fiscal Risk Assessment and Audit are to be mailed to KCCVS at the address below.

Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service

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