NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Federal Agency Name: **AmeriCorps**

Funding Opportunity Title: **Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Program (SCP) Replacement and Expansion Opportunity**

Announcement Type: Final Announcement

Assistance Listing Number: 94.016

Summary Statement: This funding announcement is for the expansion of AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Program projects to previously unserved geographic service areas and to return Senior Companion Programs to relinquished geographic service areas.

Organizations that have been approved by AmeriCorps Seniors to add a temporary geographic service area in 2022 or 2023, must submit an application to this Notice and be selected in order to permanently maintain that geographic service area. If these organizations fail to apply and be selected, the temporary geographic service area will end twelve months from approval date.

Disclosure: Publication of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (Notice) does not obligate AmeriCorps to award any specific number of grants or to commit any particular amount of funding. The actual level, timing, and process of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

Important Dates

- Applications are due not later than **Thursday, February 1, 2024, by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.**
- Successful applicants will be notified by **April 2024**.
- Successful applicants will be issued awards by **June 2024**.

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A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.1. Purpose of AmeriCorps Seniors' Senior Companion Program 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.

Established in 1974, the AmeriCorps Seniors' Senior Companion Program engages adults aged 55 and over to provide companionship and support to other adults in need of extra assistance to remain at home or in the community for as long as possible. AmeriCorps Seniors' volunteers in the Senior Companion program serve with most of the volunteer service taking place in the homes of their clients. Among other activities, they provide companionship to ease loneliness and social isolation, assist with transportation and light chores, help to serve as eyes and ears to professionals who can intervene in the case of medical or other deterioration on the part of the clients, and give support to informal caregivers. While serving, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in the Senior Companion Program improve their own lives by staying active and civically engaged.

A.2. Funding Priorities

AmeriCorps' 2022-2026 Strategic Plan defines the agency's goals and objectives to advance its mission to improve lives and strengthen communities. 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.

AmeriCorps will invest in existing and new partnerships with non-profit, faith-based, and Tribal organizations, and state service commissions, to get things done for America. The agency 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 B: National Performance Measure Instructions) and will increase its efforts to ensure AmeriCorps members, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers, and community-based volunteers reflect the communities where they serve. We will target our 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.

The Senior Companion Program focuses grantmaking in the healthy futures focus area. Under this focus area, grants must establish programming that engages adults fifty-five (55) years and older to serve as volunteers who help seniors live independently. Activities may include providing support and/or facilitating access to services and resources that contribute to independent living.

Senior Companion Programs that include the following programmatic characteristics will receive priority consideration:

- 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, and religious minorities.
- Projects that propose to raise public awareness about the challenges and needs of family caregivers and the role that older adult volunteers can play in helping to overcome some of those challenges. Innovative service projects that can be executed by older adults will be given priority consideration. These projects can include those that:
    - Advance partnerships that promote greater engagement for older adult support for family caregivers.
    - Optimize well-being of family caregivers by strengthening services and supports, i.e., services to help caregivers manage their own health/emotions/physical stress, helping to find and secure other trustworthy/affordable services or supports, and those that prevent caregiver isolation.
    - Develop volunteer roles that integrate older adults as volunteers who serve as part of a care coordination for clients and ongoing support for family and other caregivers.
    - Develop interventions where elders can support caregivers in tribal communities.
    - Spur innovations that engage older adults in intergenerational activities that help increase access to information and services for caregivers.
- Projects that propose to serve states listed in Appendix A: Priority States and Territories.
- Support organizations that serve people with arrest and conviction records and provide meaningful reentry opportunities.
- Programs that support civic bridgebuilding projects (meaning projects that foster respect among diverse communities, strengthen relationships across lines of difference, forge a sense of common civic purpose, and seek to solve a community

program and diminish polarization) and provide training in civic bridgebuilding skills and techniques to AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers.

To receive priority consideration, applicants must show that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes and must include a high-quality program design. Proposing programs that receive priority consideration does not guarantee funding.

Geographic Service Areas

Grant applicants must propose to serve one or more geographic service areas. There is no maximum number of service areas that applicants may propose to serve. All geographic service areas that an applicant proposes to serve can be included in one application.

- For example, an applicant could propose to serve only one geographic service area in their application (for example, ABC County, FL). Or an applicant could propose to serve multiple open geographic service areas in their application (for example, ABC County, MNO County, and XYZ County, FL).

A.3. Performance Goals or Expected Outcomes

National Performance Measures

AmeriCorps Seniors expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of a comprehensive performance measurement strategy that relies on both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work and make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals.

Applicants are required to use the specific performance measures outlined in this Notice. For more information, please refer to the National Performance Measures Instructions found in Appendix B: AmeriCorps Seniors SCP Performance Measure Instructions.

Applicants must identify Healthy Futures as the Primary Focus Area. Work plans must include at least one service activity in the selected Primary Focus Area of Healthy Futures. The Primary Focus Area represents the area in which the incumbent aims to make the most impact.

All proposed volunteers and the intended impact of their service must be represented in the narratives, in a work plan, and in the budget.

This funding opportunity requires applicants to demonstrate cost-effective practices in achieving performance goals through the services described in the proposed work plan. Applications must include work plans that meet the following minimum requirements:

- National Performance Measure outcomes using Healthy Futures as the primary focus area.
- Federal funding requests cannot exceed $9,000 per Volunteer Service Year (VSY*.) At least one Volunteer Service Year per $9,000 of federal funds must be placed in a work plan that results in national performance measure outcomes for selected focus areas. Appendix F: Cost per Volunteer Calculator can be used to determine a minimum number of VSYs for a funding request.

**Volunteer Service Year (VSY) is a budget term which equals 1,044 hours of volunteer service activity. The standardized stipend cost per VSY is calculated by multiplying the number of hours served by the current cost per hour for the stipend (1,044 hours x $4.00 per hour).*

A.4. Program Authority

Awards under this Notice are authorized by the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, (42 U.S.C. §§ 12501 et seq.) and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 4950 et seq.).

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1. Estimated Available Funds

AmeriCorps anticipates approximately $2 million for (FY) 2024 AmeriCorps Seniors SCP Replacement and Expansion awards. The actual level of funding is subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

B.2. Estimated Award Amount

Award amounts will vary as determined by the scope of the projects.

B.3. Period of Performance

Successful applicants will be issued awards in **June 2024**.

AmeriCorps anticipates making three-year grant awards. AmeriCorps generally makes an initial award 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. For fully funded awards (those who have received more than one year of funding), those funds are guaranteed.

B.4. Type of Award

FY 2024 SCP grants will be awarded on a cost reimbursement basis.

Award recipients will be assigned to an AmeriCorps Portfolio Manager, who will be responsible for assessing recipient performance, providing training and technical assistance, and serving as the agency's primary point of contact.

AmeriCorps Seniors SCP grants will be awarded if an application is successful.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1. Eligible Applicants

The following non-federal entities (all of which are defined in 2 CFR 200.1 or 42 U.S.C. 12511(21)) are eligible to apply:

- Indian tribes
- institutions of higher education
- local governments
- nonprofit organizations
- state service commissions
- states and US Territories

In addition to Indian tribes as defined in 2 CFR 200.1, tribal organizations that are controlled, authorized, or chartered by federally recognized Indian tribes are also eligible to apply. If an entity applies for an award as a tribal organization that is controlled or chartered by one or more Indian tribes [and the organization does not meet any of the other applicant eligibility types] the organization must provide copies or links to documentation which demonstrates that the organization is controlled or chartered by a federally recognized Indian tribe. If an entity applies as an organization authorized by a federally recognized tribe, or multiple specific federally recognized tribes, it must submit a resolution or other authorization, adopted by the Tribal Council (or comparable tribal governing body) of each Indian tribe. The authorization(s) must identify the entity applying for an AmeriCorps award by name as a tribal organization that is authorized by the Indian tribe(s) for the purpose of applying for AmeriCorps funding (or federal grant funds generally).

Applicants must have a valid and active SAM registration and Unique Entity Identifier to receive an award. See Section D.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) for more information.

New Applicants

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

C.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Applicants are required to match funds equal to 10 percent of their total requested 1-year program budget. The applicant's match can be cash and/or in-kind contributions. Applicants must indicate whether the match is proposed or secured. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to meet the applicable percent match requirement at the time of application submission. See Section *D.6. Funding Restrictions* for more information.

Non-AmeriCorps Federal Funds are allowed as match if the Federal agency that is the source of the funds approves its use as match. Applicants must maintain documentation of this approval.

Please see the Match Waiver information for AmeriCorps Seniors Grantees located on the AmeriCorps website's Manage Your Grant webpage.

C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements

Applications that propose to engage in activities that are prohibited under AmeriCorps' statutes, regulations, or the terms and conditions of its awards are not eligible to receive AmeriCorps funding.

Note that under appropriations provisions annually enacted by Congress, if AmeriCorps is aware that any corporation has any unpaid federal tax liability:

- that has been assessed;
- for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed; and
- that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability;

then that corporation is not eligible for an award under this Notice. However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation that a federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and determined that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the federal government.

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.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

This Notice should be read together with the AmeriCorps Seniors SCP regulations at 45 CFR Part 2551, AmeriCorps Seniors Grant Application Instructions, Appendix A: Priority States and Territories, and Appendix B: AmeriCorps Seniors SCP National Performance Measure Instructions. These documents are available online at AmeriCorps Funding Opportunities.

D.1. Address to Request an Application Package

All information associated with this funding opportunity is available through the AmeriCorps Funding Opportunities webpages. Applicants should refer to AmeriCorps Funding Opportunities for more information and instructions on how to fully respond to this Notice. Applicants can also send an email to FGPSCPReplacement@cns.gov for a printed copy of the Notice and Guidance.

D.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

D.2.a. Application Content

Complete applications must include the following elements:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet: This is automatically generated when applicants complete the data elements in the eGrants, AmeriCorps' web-based application system.
- Narrative Sections:
    - Executive Summary: This is a brief description of the proposed program. Executive Summaries **must** match the language templates as provided in the Notice. Executive Summaries of all compliant applications are made available to the public following grant awards.
    - Strengthening Communities
    - Recruitment and Development
    - Program Management
    - Organizational Capability
    - Other: Please provide response to Cost-Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy and Evaluation sections in the "Other" section of eGrants.
- Standard Form 424A Budget
- Performance Measures
- Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications

D.2.b. Page Limits

Applications may not exceed **17** double-spaced pages as according to the pages printed out from eGrants. The application sections that count toward the page limit are the:

- SF-424 Face Sheet;
- Executive Summary; and
- Strengthening Communities, Recruitment and Development, Program Management, Organizational Capability, and Other narrative. Please provide response to Cost-Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy and Evaluation sections in the "Other" narrative section of eGrants.

The application page limit does not include the Budget, Performance Measures, or any required additional documents.

Please note that the length of the application as a word processing document may differ from the length of the document printed out from eGrants. The character limits in eGrants do not align with page limits set in the Notice. **AmeriCorps strongly encourages applicants to**

print out the application from the "Review and Submit" tab in eGrants prior to submission in order to confirm that the application does not exceed the page limit.

AmeriCorps will not consider the results of any alternative printing methods when determining if an application complies with the page limit. Reviewers will also not consider material that is over the page limit, even if eGrants allows applicants to enter and submit additional text.

D.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

All applicants **must** register with the System for Award Management (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. **Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and physical address on all grant applications to AmeriCorps. The legal applicant's name and physical address in eGrants must match exactly the applicant's SAM-registered information.**

Applications must include a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), which is generated as part of the SAM registration process. AmeriCorps will not make awards to entities that do not have a valid and active SAM registration and UEI.

Applications must include an Employer Identification Number. The UEI and Employer Identification Number must be entered by the organization's Grantee Administrator as an organization attribute, and this will apply the information to all applications for the organization.

If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the time AmeriCorps is ready to make a federal award, AmeriCorps may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

D.4. Submission Dates and Times

D.4.a. Application Submission Deadline

Applications are due not later than **Thursday, February 1, 2024, by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.**

AmeriCorps will not consider applications submitted after the deadline, except as noted in Section *D.4.c. Late Applications*. AmeriCorps reserves the right to extend the submission deadline. AmeriCorps will post a notification in the event of an extended deadline on AmeriCorps' website.

D.4.b. Additional Documents Deadline

Additional documents are due by the application submission deadline. See *Sections D.4.a. Application Submission Deadline* and *D.7.b. Submission of Additional Documents* for more information.

D.4.c. Late Applications

All applications received after the submission deadline published in this Notice, **Thursday, February 1, 2024, at 5:00 pm Eastern Time,** are presumed to be non-compliant. To overcome this presumption, the applicant must:

- submit a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay to FGPSCPReplacement@cns.gov, including:
    - the timing and specific cause(s) of the delay
    - the ticket number if a request for assistance was submitted to the AmeriCorps Hotline
    - any information provided to the applicant by the AmeriCorps Hotline
    - any other documentation or evidence that supports the justification.
- ensure that AmeriCorps receives the written explanation or justification and any other evidence that substantiates the claimed extenuating circumstance(s), via email to FGPSCPReplacement@cns.gov no later than 24 hours after the application deadline as stated in the Notice.

Communication with AmeriCorps staff, including an applicant's portfolio manager, is not a substitute for a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance that caused the delay as outlined above. Applicants are required to continue working in eGrants, AmeriCorps' web-based application system, and with the AmeriCorps Hotline to submit the application. AmeriCorps will determine whether or not to accept a late application on a case-by-case basis.

Applicants that do not meet the application submission deadline and do not submit a written explanation or justification or any other evidence to overcome the presumption of non-compliance within the published timeframe will be deemed noncompliant. If AmeriCorps sustains a noncompliant determination, the application will not be reviewed or selected for award.

AmeriCorps will *not* consider an advance request to submit a late application. Please carefully review and follow the guidance in this section and submit your application as soon as possible.

D.5. Intergovernmental Review

This Notice is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

D.6. Funding Restrictions

D.6.a. Award Funding Requirements

Awards under this Notice are subject to cost share or matching requirements. The amount of funding AmeriCorps provides will be limited to 90 percent of the total allowable costs for the funded activity, as determined under 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E-Cost Principles.

There are also limitations on the use of Federal funds to recover indirect costs. As provided in 2 CFR 200.306(c), unrecovered indirect costs may be included as part of an applicant's cost sharing or matching requirements.

D.6.b. Indirect Costs

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants may either use a Federally approved indirect cost rate or a 10 percent *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly, as outlined in 2 CFR 200.413. States, local governments, and Indian Tribes may use previously approved indirect cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across all Federal awards. Applicants that have a federal negotiated indirect cost or de minimis rate must enter that information in the Organization section in eGrants.

The instructions for how to enter the organization's indirect cost rate are located here: eGrants Indirect Cost Rate User Instructions. Applicants should not submit documentation addressing the indirect cost rate agreement via email.

Please note: To request a federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, when AmeriCorps is the applicable cognizant agency for an organization's indirect costs, the applicant must submit a request to IndirectCostRate@cns.gov. The applicant may also obtain instructions and additional information by contacting the email address above.

D.6.c. Pre-Award Costs

Pre-award costs, where authorized, are allowed after receiving written approval from AmeriCorps.

D.7. Other Submission Requirements

D.7.a. Electronic Application Submission in eGrants

Applicants must submit applications electronically via eGrants, AmeriCorps' web-based application system. AmeriCorps recommends that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a Word document, then copy and paste the text into the appropriate eGrants field no later than 10 days before the deadline.

The applicant's authorized representative must be the person who submits the application. The authorized representative must use their own eGrants account to sign and submit the application. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office. The authorized representative and the project director may not be the same person and may not have the same email address. Please ensure different names are entered in your eGrants program information. Applications will be returned for corrections if the authorized representative and the project director have the same contact information.

Applicants should contact the AmeriCorps Hotline at (800) 942-2677 if they have a problem when they create an account, prepare, or submit the application. AmeriCorps Hotline hours are also posted on the website.

Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the name of the Notice to which the organization is applying. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, applicants must continue working with the AmeriCorps Hotline to submit via eGrants.

If circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit in eGrants, applicants may send a paper copy of the application via overnight carrier to the address below. Applicants must include a written explanation and any other documentation or evidence that support their inability to submit their application electronically.

AmeriCorps
ATTN: Office of AmeriCorps Seniors/FY 2024 SCP Replacement Application
250 E Street, SW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20525

Please use a non-U.S. Postal Service carrier to avoid security-related delays. **All deadlines and requirements in this Notice also apply to paper applications. AmeriCorps does not accept applications submitted via fax or email.**

D.7.b. Submission of Additional Documents

Applicants are required to submit the following additional documents by the application submission deadline:

1. All applicants regardless of funding level are required to submit an Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS). Please submit the OFMS using the link to the online form, where you will be required to submit your response electronically. Forms submitted as a Word document, PDF, or any other document format may not be accepted.
2. Tribal organization eligibility documentation (See Section *C.1 Eligible Applicants*), if applicable.

Additional tribal organization eligibility documents must be emailed to FGPSCPReplacement@cns.gov with the following subject line: *"Legal Applicant Name" – "Application ID Number."* Emails should include:

- the legal applicant's name and its point of contact information

- the application ID number
- a list of documents that are attached to the email by filename, labeling each document type according to the above numbered list
- individually attached files that are clearly labeled, and that include the legal applicant's name and application ID number within the file name and heading of each document.

Failure to submit the required additional documents, following the instructions in this section, by the deadline may have a negative effect on the assessment of your application.

Do not submit any items that are not requested in this Notice. AmeriCorps will not review or return them.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1. Selection Criteria

Applications should include a well-designed plan with clear and compelling justifications for receiving the requested funds. Reviewers will assess the quality of applications by using the selection criteria described below and will rate them accordingly.

See Section *D.2.a Application Content.*

Categories/Subcategories	Percentage
Executive Summary (not scored but evaluated for following instructions)	**0**
Program Design	**30**
• Strengthening Communities	19
• Recruitment and Development	11
Organizational Capability	**30**
• Program Management	8
• Organizational Capability	22
Other	**11**
• Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	4
• Evaluation	7

Work Plan/ Performance Measures	**18**
Budget Section 1 and Section 2	**11**

E.1.a. Executive Summary (0 percent, but evaluated on meeting instructions)

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. **Do not deviate from the template below**. If applicant does not follow the template below, the application will be returned for correction before an award can be made. Update number of unduplicated volunteers if adjusted to reflect actual unduplicated volunteers in performance measures.

> "The [Name of the organization] proposes to have [Number of unduplicated] AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers who will [specific service activities] in [the locations the AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers will serve]. AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers will serve [XX number volunteer service hours (VSY)] each year. The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. [(If applicable) Other priorities include [List priority areas to be addressed.] AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers will be responsible for [fill in the anticipated outcome (s)]. The AmeriCorps investment of $ [fill in the annual AmeriCorps grant amount or the requested amount] will be supplemented by $ [fill in the anticipated level of non-AmeriCorps resources]."

An example of a compliant executive summary is *The ABC Senior Service Center proposes to have 12 AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers provide companionship and respite services to older adults in their homes and the Lake View Senior Center in Crystal County, VA. AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers will be trained in best practices related to family support and respite care. AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers will serve 15 volunteer service years (VSY) each year. The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures.* Other priorities include programming that focuses on aging in place, access to care, and raising awareness about the importance of respite care. *AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers will be responsible for reducing isolation and providing respite services for 150 seniors. The AmeriCorps investment of $250,000 will be supplemented by $50,000 private-sector funds.*

E.1.b. Program Design (30 percent)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

E.1.b.i. Strengthening Communities - narrative section of eGrants (19 percent)

The proposed interventions are responsive to the identified community need(s).

- Describe the community need; include data on the community need, and any relevant details and sources.

- Provide details on the proposed communities to be served by the project, including race, gender, income, and other demographics relevant to the community to be served.
- Outline the project and interventions that address the stated community need. Include information about the target population and the roles of the volunteers.
    - Demonstrate how the project activities and goals align with one or more of the priority areas listed in section A.2.
- Provide rationale for engaging AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers to deliver the intervention(s) and how they will make a significant contribution to address the stated need(s).
- List your organization's definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility and clearly describe how these values will be embedded in program implementation.

E.1.b.ii. Recruitment and Development - narrative section of eGrants (11 percent)

Ensure your proposed project demonstrates the organization's ability to effectively recruit and manage volunteers by responding to the following:

- The applicant provides a description of budget expenses to support successful recruitment of AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers best suited to serve the community, for example from geographic or demographic communities in which the program operates.
- Detail plans to ensure volunteers receive training needed to comply with regulations and succeed in the service activities described in the Performance Measures.
    - Include trainings related to selected priority areas.
- Describe a plan to retain and recognize volunteers. Include:
    - strategies to foster an inclusive service culture where all identities, backgrounds, talents, and capabilities are welcome.
    - plans to keep volunteers engaged in their service activity over the course of grant funding.

E.1.c. Organizational Capability (30 percent)

E.1.c.i Program Management - narrative section of eGrants (8 percent)

Reviewers will consider the extent to which applications:

- Describe plans to develop volunteer stations to provide meaningful service opportunities that address stated community needs. Include strategies to recruit external partners if applicable.
- Describe your volunteer station management plan, including how you will ensure volunteer stations are:
    - providing guidance and training to volunteer station supervisors and volunteers.
    - meeting program regulations, priorities, and expectations.

- providing training and assistance to volunteer station staff that fosters the creation of safe, inclusive spaces for volunteers of all identities, backgrounds, talents, and capabilities.

E.1.c.ii Organizational Capability - narrative section of eGrants (22 percent)

Reviewers will consider the extent to which applications:

- Provide applicant's experience developing and implementing internal policies and operating procedures; include governance and risk management, such as accounting, personnel management, and purchasing. Prioritize any history with managing federal grants in your response.
- Describe the organizational infrastructure to ensure sound programmatic and fiscal oversight including:
  - Staffing, training, and data and financial management software.
  - Compliance with internal organizational policies as well as program regulations, priorities, and expectations (statutes, the Code of Federal Regulations, and related policies.)
- Describe the extent to which the organization has sufficient policies, procedures, controls, and staff training in place to:
  - prevent, detect, and mitigate the risk of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.
    - This can include an assessment of appropriate segregation of duties, internal oversight activities, measures to prevent timekeeping fraud, etc.
  - report, without delay, any suspected criminal activity, waste, fraud, and abuse to both the AmeriCorps Office of Inspector General and AmeriCorps.
  - prevent and detect non-compliance and enforce compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited activities and criminal history checks at the grantee and service site locations.
- Outline a plan to develop and implement a policy to comply with National Service Criminal History Check regulations.
- List titles and position descriptions for all staff assigned to this project and explain how these positions will ensure the accomplishment of program objectives. Include names of any staff who may already be employed by your organization and plans to recruit staff for any open positions.
- Describe the applicant's experience with and plans to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within their organization.
  - Include DEIA efforts and policies related to project staff, the board of directors, and addressing community needs.

E.1.d. Other (11 percent)

E.1.d.i. Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy -enter your response in Other section of eGrants (4 percent)

Detail plans to secure non-federal support to ensure program sustainability.

- Include dedicated staff, grant proposal processes, development of in-kind support, fundraising efforts, and other relevant plans.

E.1.d.ii. Evaluation - enter your response in Other section of eGrants (7 percent)

Evaluation is a tool for improvement and increases your program's ability to serve people more efficiently and effectively. To ensure there is a quality evaluation plan:

- Describe the applicant's data collection system and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data. If the applicant does not yet have a data collection system, describe the plan and timeline for developing a high-quality system during the proposed planning period.
- Explain how the applicant will use data to track and measure the outputs and outcomes and to make data-informed decisions about the project.

For more information about evaluation plans and data collection methods, please visit the AmeriCorps Evaluation Resources website.

E.1.e. Work Plan/ Performance Measures (18 percent)

Performance Measures should include:

- a description of the community problem being addressed by the individual performance measure.
- a description of the service activities that address the community problem.
- a description of the intended outcome of the service activity.
- Performance Measures that logically connect the following four major elements to each other and are aligned with National Performance Measures:
    1. The community need(s) identified
    2. The service activities that will be carried out by AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers
    3. The instrument description and data collection plans
    4. Target numbers that lead to outcomes or outputs, and are appropriate for the total number of volunteers assigned to the Performance Measure
- Service activities that are defined in each Performance Measure must include the intervention the AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers will implement or deliver, including:
    - the duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions, or months of the intervention)
    - the dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)

- the target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected seniors/youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level)
- the measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e., number of beneficiaries served, types and number of activities conducted). If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as output indicators
- outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur because of the intervention. If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators.

Work plan may include some combination of National Performance Measures and other community priorities. For every $9,000 in annual base federal funding, at least one volunteer service year (VSY) must be placed in work plan that result in National Performance Measure outcomes. See Appendix B: National Performance Measure Instructions and Grant Application Instruction for assistance in completing the Work Plan section of eGrants. For more information about AmeriCorps' National Performance Measures, please review AmeriCorps National Performance Measurement Core Curriculum.

E.1.f. Budget Section 1 and Section 2 (11 percent)

Budgets will be evaluated based on the following items:

- The budget demonstrates that costs are reasonable, allocable, allowable, and necessary and conform to the Uniform Guidance.
  - the budget is complete with all costs itemized.
  - the extent to which match has been secured or the quality of the plan to raise match.
  - the extent to which match will deepen the impact of the proposed project.
  - the quality of the financial management system.
  - cost per Volunteer Service Year is not more than $9,000.
  - budget includes costs associated with National Service Criminal History Checks, volunteer insurance, and volunteer recognition.
- The non-AmeriCorps share must be a minimum of 10% of total project costs. If needed, you may request a match waiver.
- All AmeriCorps Seniors grantees must budget for one staff person, primarily the Project Director, to attend the AmeriCorps Seniors annual convening.
  - Grantees may budget for an additional staff member to attend the event if funds permit.
  - The recommended amount for budgeting purposes is $2,000. Long distance travel funds may be re-budgeted later in the year depending on actual training activities.

See Grant Application Instructions for guidance on completing the Budget Section 1 and Section 2 of eGrants. See Fiscal Year 2024 AmeriCorps Seniors FGP/SCP sample budget narrative.

E.2. Review and Selection Process

AmeriCorps will engage staff reviewers with relevant knowledge and expertise to assess and provide input on the eligible applications. The review and selection process is intended to produce a diversified set of high-quality programs that represent the priorities and strategic considerations described in this Notice. The determinations made by AmeriCorps reviewers may be different from what the applicant self-determined upon submission of its application. The stages of the review and selection process follow:

E.2.a. Initial Application Compliance and Eligibility Review

AmeriCorps will conduct an initial Compliance and Eligibility Review to determine if an application meets the eligibility requirements published in this Notice and advances to the next stage of the review process.

An application is compliant if the applicant:

- is an eligible organization
- submitted an application by the submission deadline

Reviewing for eligibility is intended to ensure that only those applications that are eligible for award are further reviewed. However, determinations of eligibility can take place at any point during the application review and selection process. Applicants that are determined to be ineligible will not receive an award.

E.2.b. Application Review

Internal Review

AmeriCorps Staff Reviewers will assess the applications based on the Program Design, Organizational Capability, Other, Work Plan, and Budget sections (E.1). Staff Reviewers will also consider the priorities and strategic considerations detailed in this Notice. AmeriCorps will recruit and select Staff Reviewers on the basis of demonstrated expertise in AmeriCorps Seniors SCP programming and/or the Focus Areas, as well as experience assessing applications. All Staff Reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

E.2.c. Applicant Clarification

AmeriCorps may ask an applicant for clarifying information. AmeriCorps staff will use this information to make funding recommendations. A request for clarification does not guarantee an award. Applicants may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked for clarifying information. An applicant's failure to respond to a request for clarification adequately and in a timely manner may result in the removal of its application from consideration.

E.2.d. Pre-Award Risk Assessment

AmeriCorps staff will assess the risks to the program posed by each applicant to determine an applicant's ability to manage Federal funds. This evaluation is in addition to those about the applicant's eligibility and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria (E.1.). Results from this assessment will inform funding decisions. If AmeriCorps determines that an award will be made to an applicant with assessed risks, special conditions that correspond to the degree of assessed risk may be applied to the award. Applicants may not be selected for funding if AmeriCorps determines that the applicant's risks cannot be mitigated.

In assessing risks, AmeriCorps may consider the following criteria:

1. Due Diligence, including:
    - Federal debt delinquency
    - suspension and debarment
    - information available through Office of Management and Budget (OMB)- designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
        - U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
        - System for Award Management (SAM)
        - "Do Not Pay"
    - reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance and findings of any other available audits or investigations
    - IRS Tax Form 990
    - Oversight.gov
    - Public Litigation Records
2. Operational and Financial Management, including:
    - financial stability
    - Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS)
3. Past Performance, including:
    - an applicant's record in managing previous AmeriCorps awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
        - timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements
        - accuracy of data reported
        - validity of performance measure data reported
        - conformance to the terms and conditions of previous Federal awards

- applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients
- timely closeout of other awards
- meeting matching requirements
- the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) compliance. See section F.2.d. National Criminal History Check Requirements and the NSCHC webpage for more information

4. Other Programmatic Risks, including:
   - publicly available information, including from the applicant organization's website
   - amount of funding requested by the organization
   - if the proposed program will engage in prohibited activities

Applicants will find information to help them understand pre-award due diligence checks in the AmeriCorps Due Diligence Review Process and Compliance training available on the Manage Your Grant website. This content will help applicants obtain due diligence compliance and remain compliant throughout the grant life.

E.2.e. Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information

Prior to making any award that exceeds $250,000, AmeriCorps is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (See 41 U.S.C. §2313). Additionally, AmeriCorps may expand upon these requirements and use its discretion to review and consider information about any applicant receiving an award, including those under $250,000.

Any applicant may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM.gov and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov.

AmeriCorps may consider comments by any applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing its review of risk posed by the applicant under the Risk Assessment Evaluation section of this Notice.

E.2.f. Selection for Funding

The review and selection process are designed to:

- identify how well eligible applications are aligned with the application selection criteria (E.1.)

- build a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
    - AmeriCorps Funding Priorities (See Section *A.2. Funding Priorities*)
    - meaningful representation of
        - geographic diversity
        - rural communities
        - small and medium programs
        - faith-based organizations
        - focus areas
        - innovative community strategies for identified funding priorities
    - AmeriCorps Seniors Director's discretion to advance strategic goals

In selecting applicants to receive awards under this Notice, the AmeriCorps Seniors Director will endeavor to include a diverse portfolio of applications based on staff recommendations, alignment with selection criteria, and strategic considerations.

AmeriCorps reserves the right to award applications in an amount other than at the requested level of funding and will document the rationale for doing so.

AmeriCorps reserves the right to adjust or make changes to the review process, if unforeseen challenges or urgent circumstances make it impossible, impracticable, or inefficient to conduct the review process as planned. Any such adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria (E.1.) that will be used to assess applications.

E.3. Feedback to Applicants

Each compliant applicant will receive feedback from the Staff Review of its application. This feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect information provided during clarification or resolution.

E.4. Transparency in Grant-making

AmeriCorps is committed to transparency in grant-making. A list of all approved applications for new and re-competing applications will be published on AmeriCorps Funded Grants within 90 business days after all grants are awarded.

Submitted program narratives and executive summaries for successful applications will be available upon request via email to AmeriCorpsOGA@cns.gov.

Further information about funded grants and subgrants is also available in *USASpending.gov*.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1. Federal Award Notices

AmeriCorps will make awards following the selection announcement. AmeriCorps anticipates announcing the results of this funding opportunity in April 2024 contingent on the availability of congressional appropriations. All applicants, successful or not, will be notified of funding decisions via email.

Notification of an award is not an authorization to begin activities. The Notice of Grant Award signed by the Office of Grant Administration Grant Award Specialist is the authorizing document. An awardee may not expend Federal funds until the start of the Period of Performance identified on the Notice of Grant Award.

F.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

F.2.a. Uniform Guidance

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.

F.2.b. Requests for Monitoring or Payment Integrity Information

AmeriCorps will request documentation from award recipients in order to monitor the grantee and award to ensure compliance with legal requirements, including the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on manual hold, reimbursement only status, or other remedies may be applied as appropriate.

F.2.c. AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this Notice will be subject to the FY24 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, and the FY24 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 on the AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant webpage.

F.2.d. 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. We encourage grantees to minimize barriers to service without putting their program beneficiaries at genuine risk. 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.

- Award recipients must conduct an NSCHC for AmeriCorps members, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers, and all staff funded under, or whose salary is reflected as match on, the award. Limited exceptions are described in 45 CFR § 2540.201.
- AmeriCorps strongly encourages applicants to review the regulations and additional guidance to fully understand how to comply with the requirements. See NSCHC regulations and guidance.
- AmeriCorps also strongly encourages award recipients to utilize the two AmeriCorps-approved vendors to conduct the required NSCHCs.
- The cost of conducting NSCHC is an allowable expense under the award and individuals subject to the NSCHC must not be required to cover the cost.
- Failure to fully comply with all NSCHC requirements will result in significant disallowed costs.

Recipients must complete the following criminal history checks:

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, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 1111.

See 45 CFR 2540.200– 2540.207 and National Service Criminal History Check Resources for complete information and FAQs.

F.2.e. Official Guidance

AmeriCorps' active guidance is available on the agency's guidance webpage. The contents of these documents do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way unless incorporated into a contract or grant agreement. These documents

are intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

F.3. Use of Material

To ensure that materials generated with AmeriCorps funding are available to the public and readily accessible to recipients and non-recipients, AmeriCorps reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so (2 CFR §200.315).

F.4. Reporting

Recipients are required to submit a variety of reports that are due at specific times during the life cycle of an award. All reports must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time.

Recipients are required to provide annual progress reports and semi-annual financial reports through eGrants, AmeriCorps' web-based grants management system.

In addition, at the end of the award period, a grantee must submit final financial reports that are cumulative over the entire award period and consistent with the closeout requirements. The final reports are due 120 days after the end of the period of performance.

Award recipients will be required to report at Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) on all subawards over $30,000, and may be required to report on executive compensation for the recipient organization and its subrecipients. Recipients must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 CFR Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

Once the grant is awarded, recipients 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, recipients should have policies, processes, and practices that address the following five aspects of data quality for themselves and for subrecipients (if applicable):

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

Failure to submit accurate, complete, and timely required reports may affect the recipient's ability to secure future AmeriCorps funding.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

For more information, email FGPSCPReplacement@cns.gov.

For technical questions and problems with the eGrants system, call the AmeriCorps Hotline at (800) 942-2677 Option 3. AmeriCorps Hotline hours are also posted. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the name of the Notice to which the organization is applying.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

H.1. Technical Assistance

AmeriCorps will host technical assistance calls to answer questions about the funding opportunity and eGrants. AmeriCorps strongly encourages all applicants to participate in these sessions. Information for these technical assistance calls is available on the AmeriCorps' Funding Opportunities website.

Resources you need to effectively manage your award, including eGrants instructions, terms and conditions, individual match waiver, pre-award requirements, financial reporting requirements, and training and technical assistance materials are found on the Manage Your Grant website.

H.2. Re-Focusing of Funding

AmeriCorps reserves the right to re-focus program dollars under this Notice in the event of disaster or other compelling needs.

I. IMPORTANT NOTICES

Public Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for collection of information under this Notice of Funding is estimated to average six hours per submission, including reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing the application and reporting forms. AmeriCorps informs people who may respond to this Notice of Funding that they are not required to respond unless the OMB control number and expiration date are currently valid. (See 5 C.F.R. 1320.5(b)(2)(i).) This collection is approved under OMB Control *#:* 3045-0035, Senior Corps Grant Application, Expiration Date: November 30, 2024.

Privacy Act Statement: The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C §552a) requires that AmeriCorps notify applicants that the information requested under this Notice of Funding is collected pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§12592 and 12615 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended, and 42 U.S.C. §4953 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 as amended.

- Purposes and Uses - The information requested is collected for the purposes of reviewing grant applications and granting funding requests. Routine uses may include disclosure of the information to federal, state, or local agencies pursuant to lawfully authorized requests. In some programs, the information may also be provided to Federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to determine the existence of any prior criminal convictions. The information may also be provided to appropriate Federal agencies and contractors that have a need to know the information for the purpose of assisting the government to respond to a suspected or confirmed breach of the security or confidentiality or information maintained in this system of records, and the information disclosed is relevant and unnecessary for the assistance.
- Effects of Nondisclosure - The information requested is voluntary; however, to be a recipient of this award program, disclosure of personal or sensitive information is required to receive federal benefits.

Appendix A: Priority States and Territories

Applicants are not limited to this list of states and territories to apply for, but AmeriCorps Seniors is prioritizing projects that designate Geographic Service Areas operating in these states and territories due to relinquishments. Applicants can apply for one or more counties.

- *Arkansas*
- *California*
- *Colorado*
- *Florida*
- *Idaho*
- *Illinois*
- *Kentucky*
- *Massachusetts*
- *Mississippi*
- *Montana*
- *North Carolina*
- *Ohio*
- *Oklahoma*
- *Puerto Rico*
- *South Carolina*
- *South Dakota*
- *Virginia*

Appendix B: Performance Measure Instructions

Please refer to Appendix B: Performance Measure Instructions for guidance for performance measures selection, output and outcome pairings, and required information for Work Plan in eGrants.

APPENDIX C: Terms and Definitions

Terms and Definitions provides information for terms most commonly used in AmeriCorps Seniors.

Appendix D: Grant Application Instruction

Grant Application Instructions provides step by step guidance for submitting your application in eGrants.

Appendix E: Cost Per Volunteer Calculator

The Cost Per Volunteer Service Year Calculator is a tool to help calculate and confirm your volunteer service year (VSY) requirements for funding and performance measures.