ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service
Funding Opportunity Title: Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps FY 2015
Announcement Type: Final Announcement
CFDA Number: 94.006

Key Dates

Submission of a Notice of Intent to Apply is due by **Monday, April 20, 2015.** Single State applicants should not provide this information directly to CNCS, but instead to the Commission in the state or territory where the applicant intends to operate the program (unless directed by the Commission to apply directly to CNCS). The State/Territory Commissions' deadlines may be earlier than this deadline.

Applications are due **Wednesday, May 20, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time** to CNCS. State/Territory Commissions' deadlines may be significantly before the CNCS deadlines, so prospective Single State applicants are encouraged to contact the Commission in the state or territory where they intend to apply as soon as possible.

CNCS expects that successful applicants will be notified no later than **August 31, 2015**.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This funding opportunity is a program jointly sponsored by the Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to create a Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps. This program is consistent with the missions of OJJDP and CNCS, and within the objectives of the My Brother's Keeper initiative. CNCS defines Opportunity Youth as economically disadvantaged[1] individuals age 16-24 who are disconnected from school or work at least six months prior to service. CNCS defines "disconnected from school or work" as unemployed, underemployed, and not in school for at least six months prior to service. This program is specifically targeting Opportunity Youth that have been adjudicated in the juvenile justice system. This program will provide Disconnected Youth with the opportunity to participate in a national service program and provide them with meaningful mentoring while they are serving. Disconnected Youth is defined as individuals at least 17[2] but under 25 years old who have been adjudicated in the juvenile justice system, convicted in the criminal justice system, or have been identified as at risk of incarceration.

The mission of CNCS is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic participation through service and volunteering. CNCS - through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, the Social Innovation Fund, and the Volunteer Generation Fund - has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

Through all its programs, CNCS seeks to expand economic opportunity by helping Americans acquire the skills, education, and training they need for productive employment. By helping more Americans graduate, pursue higher education, and find work, national service can provide immediate and long term benefits by expanding individual opportunity, building family stability, and creating more sustainable, resilient communities.

[1]Economically disadvantaged is defined as those receiving or meeting the income eligibility requirements to receive: TANF, Food Stamps (SNAP), Medicaid, SCHIP, or Section 8 housing assistance.
[2] Unless grantee/recipient has an approved program design that engages 16 year olds as well.

The mission of OJJDP is to provide national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to juvenile delinquency and victimization. OJJDP supports states, communities, and tribes in their efforts to develop and implement effective and coordinated prevention and intervention programs and to improve the juvenile justice system so that it protects public safety, holds offenders accountable, and provides treatment and rehabilitative services tailored to the needs of juveniles and their families.

OJJDP envisions a nation where our children are healthy, educated, and free from violence. If they come into contact with the juvenile justice system, the contact should be rare, fair, and beneficial to them. On any given day, there are approximately 60,000 youth confined in juvenile detention and correctional facilities across the country. Youth who have had contact with the juvenile justice or adult corrections system are in need of comprehensive support services to prepare them for successful transition back to their schools, families and communities upon release.

As such, OJJDP believes that reentry is a multi-phase process that begins upon initial contact with the juvenile justice system and continues through release to ensure that youth have access to a broad range of social and emotional supports that assist them in becoming productive and law abiding citizens. Reentry planning encompasses an assessment of support services needed and includes short and long-term goals with dedicated linkages to core services in the community to address these needs, which might include access to employment training and job placement support, educational transition and support services, access to affordable housing, transportation assistance as well as referrals to services that promote physical and mental well-being.

Section 211 of the Second Chance Act (P.L. 110-199) authorizes grants to nonprofit organizations (including faith-based, tribal, and community organizations) to provide mentoring and other transitional services, family programming, and employment assistance to help juvenile ex-offenders transition successfully from out of home placement or confinement to the community.

This program furthers the mission of OJJDP by supporting efforts – including mentoring – to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for at-risk youth, including those returning to their communities after out of home placement. Mentoring promotes positive behaviors, attitudes, and outcomes for youth and reduces risk factors. It has been shown to improve academic performance and/or social or job skills, support behavioral or other personal development, and reduce consumption of alcohol or other drugs.

Publication of this *Notice* does not obligate CNCS to award any specific number of grants or to obligate the entire amount of funding available.

1. Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible applicants proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions to strengthen communities. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust that members can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

Grant funding and member slots[3] will be awarded to successful applicants to enroll Disconnected Youth, specifically individuals who are at least 17 but under 25 years old who have been adjudicated in the juvenile justice system, convicted in the criminal justice system, or identified as at-risk of incarceration,

[3] Slots are AmeriCorps member positions (full-time or less than full-time)

to serve as AmeriCorps members. Recipients will also need to enroll additional members to provide mentoring and coaching to the Disconnected Youth members throughout their service.

Programs should target recruitment of two distinct types of AmeriCorps members:
1. Disconnected Youth who will be engaged in direct service to address a compelling community need. Disconnected Youth may serve as full-time or less than full-time members.

2. Individuals who will have mentoring experience and/or applicable life experience to serve as mentors for Disconnected Youth. In addition to providing direct service that addresses the community need, these AmeriCorps members will provide direct service as coaches and mentors to guide and to support the successful participation of the Disconnected Youth members in the program and position them for success after their service ends. The program may enroll individuals over age 25 in this capacity, and members may be full-time or less than full-time.

Program objectives will include:

- Engaging AmeriCorps members in an evidence-based or evidence-informed approach to provide a service intervention that will result in intended solutions to community problems.
- Matching Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members with the one-on-one mentoring and support services needed to establish a self-sustaining, law abiding life and successfully reintegrate into the community.
- Developing and implementing comprehensive and collaborative member development strategies that address the challenges posed by offender reentry, recidivism reduction, and youth at risk of incarceration.
- Stabilizing communities by reducing recidivism and reintegrating offenders into the community.

Proposed programs should:

- Establish and maintain a mentoring relationship between the experienced member(s) and the Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members.
- Be cognizant of and collaborate with other entities that also provide reentry or reentry-related activities. This includes engagement with probation and parole offices for partnerships, collaboration, and sharing of data and information if the members are court involved.

2. Background

Currently over one million youth are at-risk of being incarcerated due to America's current school to prison pipeline, where predominantly minority children who have school disciplinary problems are funneled to the criminal justice system as an alternative to the infraction being dealt with in the school setting. While the number of youth incarcerated is staggering, what is even more alarming is the decrease in opportunities that exist for these young people after leaving prison or jail. With many state unemployment rates above 50 percent for youth of color, participating in illegal activity to earn income becomes far too common among these youth who are incarcerated at a young age.

With a criminal record, little or no connection to an academic institution, and often limited employment opportunities, the rate of recidivism for this population is nearly 50 percent. The United States cannot compete globally if a significant portion of the next generation is left behind. AmeriCorps service opportunities will offer these young people an alternative to help them avoid recidivism and successfully re-integrate into the community.

3. Characteristics of Successful Applicants

Recognizing the value of service in fostering civic participation, as well as future economic opportunity like education and employment, CNCS and OJJDP are partnering to support the Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps funding opportunity. Successful applicants will:

Recruit Disconnected Youth as AmeriCorps members

Successful applicants must have processes in place to identify, recruit, screen, and support Disconnected Youth as AmeriCorps members. Program designs should offer these AmeriCorps members mentoring, skills and leadership training, and educational possibilities such as earning GEDs or high school diplomas, with the overarching goal of helping the members reintegrate into the community and become successful, productive adults. Because AmeriCorps regulations include an aggregate 20% cap on the number of hours that AmeriCorps members may spend on education and training activities, successful applicants will plan their member slots and activities accordingly.

Recruit individuals with appropriate mentoring and/or life experience as AmeriCorps members

Successful applicants must have processes in place to identify individuals with experience in mentoring and/or appropriate life experience to serve as AmeriCorps members. In addition to providing direct service to the community, these members will also mentor Disconnected Youth members and provide the support services necessary to ensure that this target population has a successful AmeriCorps experience. Successful applicants will ensure that these "mentor members" receive high-quality training in mentoring, describe how they will provide effective mentoring and support to the targeted group of Disconnected Youth, and follow established best practices for mentoring relationships. Applicants should have a supervisory structure that will provide needed oversight and support for both types of AmeriCorps members.

For the purpose of this *Notice*, mentoring occurs between young persons (i.e., mentees) and older or more experienced persons (i.e., mentors) who are acting in a non-professional helping capacity to provide support that benefits one or more areas of the mentee's development. Applicants should refer to the OJJDP National Mentoring Resource Center for more information on available best practices for high quality mentoring. Please visit www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org

Utilize AmeriCorps member service to strengthen communities and address compelling community needs

Successful applicants will engage both Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members and mentor AmeriCorps members in high-quality evidence-based or evidence-informed service interventions that will result in intended solutions to community problems. Service activities must meet compelling community needs in one of CNCS' six Focus Areas (see page 5) and result in meaningful outputs and outcomes for program beneficiaries.

Clearly demonstrate the impact of AmeriCorps member experience and share best practices among recipients and/or project sites

In addition to reporting outcomes and progress toward approved Performance Measures, the Recipient will collect and report member impact data. Successful applicants will have clear sources of data to address performance indicators and will seek and obtain appropriate access to such data (*i.e.*, having well-defined agreements with data owners such as probation and parole offices if possible). Applicants must also have appropriate mechanisms in place to protect the confidentiality and security of project data; plans for collecting and sharing information (with CNCS facilitation) about promising practices with other recipients; and, in the case of a recipient administering more than one project site, plans for collecting and sharing information among project sites.

This *Notice* should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550, the *Notice* Glossary, Application Instructions, and the Performance Measure Instructions which are incorporated by reference. The documents can be found at http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities. The full regulations are available online at www.ecfr.gov. The TTY number is 800-833-3722. For a printed copy of related material, call 202-606-7508.

4. CNCS Focus Areas

In order to carry out Congress' intent and to maximize the impact of investment in national service, CNCS has the following focus areas:

Disaster Services

Grant activities will provide support to increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters, improve individuals' readiness to respond to disasters, help individuals recover from disasters, and/or help individuals mitigate disasters. Recipients also have the ability to respond to national disasters under CNCS cooperative agreements and FEMA mission assignments.

Economic Opportunity

Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people; help economically disadvantaged people, including youth identified in My Brother's Keeper, to have improved access to services that enhance financial literacy, transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable housing, and/or have improved employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.

Education

Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children; improved school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children; improved educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools; and/or help economically disadvantaged students prepare for success in post-secondary educational institutions.

Environmental Stewardship

Grants will provide support for increased individual behavioral change leading to increased energy efficiency, renewable energy use, and ecosystem improvements particularly for economically disadvantaged households and communities. Grant activities will decrease energy and water consumption; improve at-risk ecosystems; increase behavioral changes that lead directly to decreased energy and water consumption or improved at-risk ecosystems; and/or increase green training opportunities that may lead to decreased energy and water consumption or improved at-risk ecosystems.

Healthy Futures

Grants will provide support for activities that will improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities served by CNCS-supported programs; increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible; and/or increase physical activity and improve nutrition in youth with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity.

Veterans and Military Families

Grants will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength; increase the number of veterans, military service members, and their families served by CNCS-supported programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS-supported programs.

5. Funding Priorities

CNCS and OJJDP seek to prioritize funding programs that will recruit Disconnected Youth in those areas with the most underserved youth and those with the highest need. Based on the work of the Attorney General's Task Force on American Indian/Alaska Native Children Exposed to Violence, Native youth experience alarmingly high rates of poverty, homelessness, drug abuse, alcoholism, suicide and victimization. These societal and environmental factors can contribute to the likelihood that these youth will become involved in the juvenile or criminal justice systems and are disconnected from available resources.

OJJDP also recognizes that preventing youth violence requires a shared framework to address the factors that impact violence and victimization at the individual, peer, family, community and societal levels and promote well-being. To facilitate progress, better support youth violence prevention , and promote well-being in localities nationwide, OJJDP has funded three signature youth violence prevention initiatives – the Defending Childhood, National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention, and Community-Based Violence Prevention initiatives. For the purposes of this *Notice*, applicants that propose to serve American Indian/Alaska Native youth and those youth living in communities participating in the three signature OJJDP violence prevention initiatives will be given priority consideration.

In order to receive priority consideration, applicants must demonstrate that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes, and must include a high quality program design. Applicants proposing programs that receive priority consideration are not guaranteed funding.

6. National Performance Measures

CNCS expects organizations to use National Performance Measures as part of a comprehensive performance measurement strategy that relies on both performance and evaluation data to learn from its work as well as make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve its goals. Recipients must provide data that reflects the outputs and outcomes achieved by the program, with respect to both the Disconnected Youth members and the community beneficiaries. Recipients must also report on specific performance indicators related to Disconnected Youth members.

Required performance measures and performance indicators are listed below. In addition to these required measures, applicants must also select at least one performance measure (output and outcome) from one of CNCS's six focus areas that is aligned with the primary service intervention and reflects the community impact of the program.

For more information about performance measures, please refer to the National Performance Measure Instructions.

Required Performance Measures (all of these measures should be entered under the "Find Opportunity" objective in the eGrants Performance Measure Module)		
Title	**Output**	**Outcome**
Increased Educational Opportunities for Disconnected Youth Members	National Performance Measure O13: Number of economically disadvantaged National Service Participants who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalent prior to the start of their term of service.	National Performance Measure O16: Number of economically disadvantaged National Service Participants that obtain a GED/diploma while serving in a CNCS program or within 30 days after finishing the program.

Decreased Recidivism for Disconnected Youth Members	Number of Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members that successfully complete the program* * This is an unduplicated count of individuals who are entered into CNCS' National Service Trust database, who complete their term of service, earn an education award, or leave service due to compelling circumstances (see 45 CFR §2522.200). Individuals who are not enrolled in the National Service Trust, or who are dismissed, will not be counted.	Number of Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members that avoid court or criminal involvement (technical violation of supervised release, diversion program, conviction, revocation, re-incarceration) during their term of service.
Increased Positive Engagement for Disconnected Youth Members		Number of Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members that demonstrate resiliency, attitudinal and/or belief-system changes (e.g., sense of positive belief in the future, positive self-esteem, connection to positive social, educational, workforce and community networks, goal-setting).

Required Performance Indicators (these do not have to be entered as part of the application, but successful applicants must report on these indicators annually)	
Title	**Definition**
Clear Drug Testing Record	Unduplicated count of AmeriCorps members that maintained a drug free status or engaged in drug treatment and/or substance abuse education.
Sanctions or Diversion Program Completion	Unduplicated count of AmeriCorps members that had a positive substance abuse test, and participated in community supervision sanctions or diversions.
Number of National Service Participants that complete job readiness training and other skill development services.	Unduplicated count of Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps members completing job training or skill development. (This is a count of individuals who are entered into CNCS' National Service Trust database, who complete their term of service, earn an education award, or leave service due to compelling circumstances (see 45 CFR §2522.200). Individuals who are not enrolled in the National Service Trust, or who are dismissed, will not be counted.) These include: • Soft skills training that provides information about appropriate workplace behavior or job search skills. • Transferable Skills (computer, customer service skills, time management) • Basic work skills such as attendance, punctuality, teamwork and conflict resolution skills that may help members succeed in subsequent jobs.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

CNCS expects a highly competitive Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps FY 2015 grant competition. A total of $2.3 million dollars is available for new programs.

Grant awards for programs have two components: operating funds and AmeriCorps member positions. Grant award amounts vary – both in the level of operating funds and in the type and amount of AmeriCorps member positions.

1. Award Period

Unless otherwise specified, a program grant generally covers a two-year project period. In approving a multi-year project period, CNCS generally makes an initial award for the first year of operation. The application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding is not guaranteed. Factors considered in awarding continuation grants include satisfactory performance, demonstrated capacity to manage the grant, compliance with grant requirements, agency priorities, and the availability of appropriated funds. CNCS reserves the right to adjust the amount of a grant or elect not to continue funding for subsequent years.

2. Project Period

The project start date may not occur prior to the date CNCS awards the grant. For program grants, AmeriCorps members may not enroll prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply: public or private nonprofit organizations (including faith-based and other community organizations); institutions of higher education; government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); government-recognized veteran service organizations; labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; and Indian Tribes.

An Indian Tribe is defined as a federally recognized Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Native village, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation, as defined under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. §1602). Indian Tribes also include tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by one of the entities described above. A nonprofit that desires to apply for a grant as a tribal organization on behalf of a federally-recognized tribe, or multiple specific federally-recognized tribes, must submit a sanctioning resolution adopted by the Tribal Council (or comparable tribal governing body) of each tribe. The resolution must identify the nonprofit by name as a tribal organization. It must authorize the nonprofit organization to act on behalf of and include the tribe in a CNCS grant application for the purpose of conducting the activities and providing the services described in the application.

Previously receiving funds from CNCS, OJJDP, or another federal agency is not a prerequisite to applying to this *Notice*.

Organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in this *Notice*. Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(4), that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

New Applicants

CNCS and OJJDP encourage eligible organizations that have never received funding from CNCS or OJJDP to apply for the grants described in this *Notice*. New organizations should submit applications with the understanding that the general practice is to award no more than 50 member slots for new recipients. New applicants are not eligible to receive Full-Time Fixed Amount grants. Fixed Amount grants (non EAP) are available for programs that enroll full-time members or less than full-time members that are serving in a full time capacity only. These grants provide a fixed amount of funding per Member Service Year (MSY) that is substantially lower than the amount required to operate the program. Organizations use their own or other resources to cover the remaining cost.

New applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants. Existing sub recipients/operating sites of Fixed Amount recipients that can demonstrate a track record and capacity to manage a Fixed Amount grant are considered to have AmeriCorps experience and therefore can apply for Fixed Amount grants.

Continuation applicants

Organizations that have current Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps awards that do not end in FY15 must submit a continuation application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. **Please see the Application Instructions.** Requests by existing continuation applicants for increases in the level of funding or number of positions will be assessed using the criteria under this *Notice*.

2. Type of Applicants

Single State Applicants

Organizations that propose to operate in only one state or territory must apply through the Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions. Each state and territory administers its own selection process and puts forward to CNCS the applicants it selects to compete for funding. Applicants operating in one state must contact their State Commissions to learn about their state or territory processes and deadlines which may be significantly before the CNCS deadlines and may have additional requirements. The list of State and Territory Commissions can be found here: http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact-us/state-service-commissions

Direct Applicants

Single State Applicants directed by their State Commission to apply directly to CNCS should do so. Please note that, after reviewing applications, CNCS may discuss with the State Commission awarding the grant to the Commission in order for the Commission to award a sub-grant to the applicant. Alternatively, CNCS may award the grant directly to the successful applicant, but also may work cooperatively with the State Commission to oversee and monitor performance of the grant.

Multi-state: Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state or territory apply directly to CNCS.

Federally-recognized Indian Tribes*:* As defined above on page 8; may apply directly to CNCS or through a state commission.

Territories without Commissions*:* Applicants in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands apply directly to CNCS because these Territories have not established a State Commission.

3. Cost Sharing or Matching

Fixed Amount Grants and Education Award Program Grants
There is no specific match requirement for Fixed Amount and Education Award grants, but CNCS does not provide all the funds necessary to operate the program. Applicants must raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.

Cost Reimbursement Grants

A first-time successful applicant is required to match federal funds at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR §2521.60 and Pub. L. 113-235, Division G, Title IV, § 402 https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/83/text

Section 121(e)(5) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to CNCS on a Federal Financial Report. Recipients must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout.

Alternative Match
Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at 45 CFR §2521.60(b). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined in the Application Instructions. Applicants that plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request by **May 20, 2015** directly to ACAlternateMatchScheduleRequests@cns.gov.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package
Organizations should refer to the CNCS website to obtain the necessary information to apply.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission
What are the steps that organizations need to take to apply?

- Determine whether you should apply directly to CNCS or through a State Commission
- Submit a request for an alternative match schedule, if applicable
- Submit a Notice of Intent
- Get a DUNS number
- Establish an eGrants account
- Coordinate with either State Commission or National Direct applicant
- Write a high quality application responsive to the *Notice*
- Provide required supplemental materials via email, if applicable
- Submit the application via eGrants by the deadline

Please note that state applicants that apply to a State Commission may have different deadlines (likely earlier than those listed in this *Notice)*, may have additional narrative questions and/or supplemental materials to submit as determined by the State Commission, and may have different directions and/or systems in which to submit their applications.

Coordination among State Commissions and Multi-State Applicants

CNCS expects State Commissions and National Direct applicants to consult and coordinate activities at the local level, as specified in Section 131 of the NCSA [42 U.S.C. § 12583]. This consultation is designed to ensure the most effective use of national service resources and lead to enhanced coordination. The list of State and Territory Commissions can be found here: http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact-us/state-service-commissions. To ensure coordination:

Multi-State applicants, *except* federally-recognized Indian Tribes, must:
Before application submission:

- Consult with the State/Territory Commission of each state and/or Territory in which the organization knows it will operate and describe this consultation in their applications. Contact the State/Territory Commissions for details about the consultation process. Provide information that connects the proposed activities to the current State/Territory Service plan and/or State logic model.

After Award:

- Provide the State/Territory Commission with contact information for Multi-State programs in the state and/or Territory and update these lists on an annual basis.
- Participate in the State/Territory Commission's annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of its state/territory service plan, as well as appropriate training and other events.
- Include the State/Territory Commission on the Multi-State's mailing list and invite it to appropriate training and other events.

State/Territory Commissions must:
Before application submission:

- Consult in a timely manner with the Multi-State applicants, except Indian Tribes, that contact them prior to application submission.

After Award:

- Consider the schedules and needs of Multi-State applicants, including Indian Tribes, operating in their states when planning annual events and technical assistance activities.
- Include Multi-State programs, including Indian Tribes, in their annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state/territory service plan.
- Add staff of multi-state programs in their state/territory to their mailing/email distribution list and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

CNCS will solicit State/Territory Commission input on Multi-State applicants, except Indian Tribes, proposing to operate in their state/territory. Via eGrants, Commissions have the opportunity to select support, do not support, or neutral and provide comments. Participation by State/Territory Commissions in providing this input is strongly encouraged.

How to Submit an Application in eGrants

Applicants must submit their applications electronically via the CNCS web-based system, eGrants. Because eGrants is a unique system, it is recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application creation process at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document and copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline. Please note the length of a document in word processing software may be different than what will print out in eGrants.

Contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask if a problem arises while creating an account or while preparing or submitting an application in eGrants.

National Service Hotline hours are Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET. If you contact the Hotline, be prepared to provide the application ID, organization name, and the *Notice* to which your organization is applying.

If technical issues prevent an applicant from submitting an application on time, please contact the National Service Hotline prior to the deadline to explain the technical issue and receive a ticket number. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, the applicant must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants.

An application is only complete if it includes all required documentation and is received by the application due date. Incomplete applications will not be considered. All additional required documents should include the applicant organization name and Application ID number at the top of the page and are due by the application deadline at AdditionalDocuments@cns.gov. Emails should include in the Subject line the applicant organization name and Application ID number.

Additional documents may include (if applicable): evaluation reports and up to two evaluation briefs, reports, and/or peer reviewed articles if the applicant has a moderate or strong evidence base.

If extenuating circumstances make the use of eGrants impossible, applicants may send a hard copy of the application and include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via eGrants to the address provided in Section G. Agency Contacts, via overnight carrier. Applicants must use a non-U.S. Postal Service carrier because of security-related delays in receiving mail from the U.S. Postal Service. All deadlines and requirements in this *Notice* apply to hard copy applications. CNCS does not accept applications submitted via fax or email.

Application Fields and Page Limits

In eGrants, applicants will enter text in the following fields

- Executive Summary
- Program Design
- Organizational Capability
- Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
- Evaluation Plan

Applications may not exceed 15 pages for the Narratives, including the Executive Summary and SF 424 Facesheet, as the pages print out from eGrants. The page limit on the Narratives does not include the narrative portion of the evaluation plan or the Logic Model, budget, performance measures, or the supplementary materials, if applicable. However, the Logic Model may not exceed three landscape-formatted pages as the pages print out from eGrants. CNCS strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the "Review and Submit" page prior to submission to check that the application does not exceed the page limits for the Narrative and Logic Model portions of the application.

Reviewers will not consider submitted material that is over the page limits in the printed report, even if eGrants allows an applicant to enter and submit text over the limit. Do not submit other items not requested in the *Notice* or Application Instructions. CNCS will not review or return them.

Assessment Criteria

Each applicant must clearly describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to address a compelling community need and also provide mentoring and support to Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members. CNCS urges applicants to submit high quality applications that carefully follow the guidance in this *Notice* and in the Application Instructions. The quality of an application will be an important factor in determining whether an organization will receive funding.

Threshold Issues
Applications should reflect that they meet the threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying. For example: If an applicant is applying for a Full-Time Fixed Amount grant, the application should reflect that only full-time or less than full-time positions serving in a full-time capacity will be permitted. If the proposed service activities require specialized member qualifications and/or training (for example, tutoring programs: 45 CFR §2522.910-.940), the applicant must clearly describe how the program will meet these requirements.

CNCS will assess an applicant's strategic considerations. Applicants must check the relevant boxes in the Performance Measure tab in eGrants in order to be considered for CNCS's assessment of the strategic considerations. Applicants should only check the boxes if the strategic consideration is an intentional part of their program design and they have implementation strategies described in the application.

Application Fields

Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary.

> The [Name of the applicant] proposes to have [Total number of] AmeriCorps members, including [Number of] Disconnected Youth members, who will [what the members will be doing] in [the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome(s) of project, including community outcomes and Disconnected Youth outcomes]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional [number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable] who will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing.]
>
> This Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)].* The CNCS investment of $[amount of request] will be matched with $[amount of projected match], $[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and $[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding.

*If the program is not operating in a CNCS focus area, omit this sentence. CNCS focus areas are listed on page 5.

Fixed Amount grant applicants should list their external resources because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still must raise significant additional resources to operate the program.

CNCS will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on **www.nationalservice.gov** in the interest of transparency and Open Government.

Program Design (50 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.

1. Problem/Need (9 points)

- The applicant clearly describes how the community need/problem is prevalent and severe in communities where members will serve and the need has been well documented with relevant data.
- The applicant clearly describes how the community problem/need will be addressed by the program.
- The applicant clearly describes the scope of the need/problem related to Disconnected Youth in communities where the program will operate.

2. Theory of Change and Logic Model (17 points)

- The applicant clearly describes the proposed intervention (service activities) including the roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) the roles of leveraged volunteers.
- The applicant clearly describes how the intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's theory of change.
- The applicant clearly describes how the AmeriCorps members will produce significant and unique contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.
- The applicant clearly describes how AmeriCorps mentor members will provide effective mentoring and support to Disconnected Youth members.

The Logic Model shall depict:

- Logical alignment of all elements.
- A summary of the community problems outlined in the narrative.
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including:
    - Number of locations or sites where members will provide services
    - Number of AmeriCorps members that will deliver the intervention
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members 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 Youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level, description of who/what is being served).
- The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries from the target population served.) Identify which National Performance Measures or other measures will be used as output indicators, including required output measures related to Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members.
- Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur as a result of the intervention.

Programs may include short, medium, or long-term outcomes in the Logic Model. While performance measure outcomes should be consistent with the program's theory of change, programs are not required to measure all outcomes that are included in the Logic Model. The Logic Model should identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators, including required outcome measures related to Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members.

Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention.

3. Evidence Base (8 points)

Applicants will be awarded up to 8 points for providing evidence that their proposed intervention will lead to the community outcomes (NOT the required outcomes related to Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members) identified in the theory of change. Applicants shall provide a description of the studies and evaluations conducted that provide evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the proposed population and community challenge, and should describe how this evidence places them in one of the five evidence levels listed below. Applicants must fully describe how they meet the requirement of that level, using results from studies and evaluations. Applicants are strongly encouraged to describe the evidence that supports the strongest evidence tier, and all relevant evidence presented must be included in this section. This section must include specific citations of studies and/or evaluation and research reports. Applicants classifying their evidence as Moderate or Strong must submit up to two studies, evaluation reports, briefs, or peer-reviewed articles cited in this section as separate attachments. Studies should be

sent to AdditionalDocuments@cns.gov by the application deadline and include in the subject line the application ID and "evaluation studies."

For each report cited, include the date of the report, a description that shows its relevancy to the proposed program model, the methodology used in the study, and the strength of the findings (e.g. confidence level.)

For current recipients that are required to submit an evaluation report: The evaluation report will be considered as part of the evidence base of the program. Recipients may opt to include that evaluation report as one of the two studies, or submit two separate studies in addition to the evaluation report. In the latter case, all three studies will be reviewed against this criterion.

Reviewers will assess one of the five tiered evidence levels as follows:
No evidence (0 points): The applicant has not provided evidence that they have collected any qualitative or quantitative data to date.

Pre-preliminary evidence (1 point): The applicant presents evidence that it has collected quantitative or qualitative data from program staff, program participants, or beneficiaries that have been used for program improvement, performance measurement reporting, and/or tracking. An example could be gathering feedback from program participants following their receipt of the intervention.

Preliminary evidence (2 points): The applicant presents an initial evidence base that can support conclusions about the program's contribution to observed outcomes. The evidence base consists of at least one non-experimental study conducted on the proposed program (or another similar program that uses a comparable intervention). A study that demonstrates improvement in program beneficiaries over time on one or more intended outcomes OR an implementation (process evaluation) study used to learn and improve program operations would constitute preliminary evidence. Examples of research that meet the standards include: 1) outcome studies that track program beneficiaries through a service pipeline and measure beneficiaries' responses at the end of the program; and 2) pre- and post-test research that determines whether beneficiaries have improved on an intended outcome.

Moderate evidence (4 points): The applicant presents a reasonably developed evidence base that can support causal conclusions for the specific program proposed by the applicant with moderate confidence. The evidence base consists of one or more quasi-experimental studies conducted on the proposed program (or another similar program that uses a comparable intervention) with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes OR two or more non-experimental studies conducted on the proposed program with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes OR one or more experimental studies of another relevant program that uses a similar intervention. Examples of research that meet the standards include: well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental studies that compare outcomes between the group receiving the intervention and a matched comparison group (i.e. a similar population that does not receive the intervention).

Strong evidence (8 points): The applicant presents an evidence base that can support causal conclusions for the specific program proposed by the applicant with the highest level of confidence. This consists of one or more well-designed and well-implemented experimental studies conducted on the proposed program with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes.

The description of evidence in this section should include as much detailed information as possible. Applicants are advised to focus on presenting high-quality evidence from their strongest studies rather than only cursory descriptions of many studies. Reviewers will examine criteria that may include: a) how closely the program model evaluated in the studies matches the one proposed by the applicant; b) the methodological quality of the studies presented (e.g., statistical power, internal and/or external validity,

sample size, etc.); c) the recency of the studies, with a preference towards studies that have been conducted within the last six years; and d) strength of the findings, with preference given to findings that show a large and persistent positive effect on participants demonstrated with confidence levels.

4. Notice Priority (3 points)

- The applicant clearly describes how its proposed program is within one or more of the 2015 Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps funding priorities as outlined on pages 5-6.

5. Member Training (4 points)

- The applicant clearly describes how the Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members and mentor AmeriCorps members will receive high quality training to provide effective service to the community.
- The applicant clearly describes how members and volunteers will be aware of, and will adhere to, the rules including prohibited activities. The prohibited activities (45 CFR §§ 2520.65) can be accessed here: http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/page/AmeriCorps_Regulations_9_11_13.pdf

- The applicant clearly describes how the mentor members will receive high quality training in mentoring that aligns with established best practices for mentoring relationships.

6. Member Supervision (3 points)

- The applicant clearly describes how supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations.
- The applicant clearly describes how supervisors will provide members with excellent guidance and support throughout their service.
- The applicant clearly describes how the supervisory structure will provide needed oversight and support for both Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members and mentor members.

7. Member Experience (3 points)

- The applicant clearly describes how AmeriCorps members will have access to meaningful service experiences and opportunities for reflection.
- The applicant clearly describes how AmeriCorps members will have opportunities to establish connections with each other and the broader National Service network to build esprit de corps.
- The applicant clearly describes how the program will recruit both Disconnected Youth AmeriCorps members and mentor AmeriCorps members from the communities in which the programs operate.
- The applicant clearly describes how AmeriCorps members will gain skills and experience as a result of their training and service that can be valuable to future employers after their service term is completed.
- The applicant clearly describes how AmeriCorps members will develop an ethic of and skills for active and productive citizenship including continuing to engage in public and community service after their AmeriCorps term.
- The applicant clearly describes how the program's member development strategies will address the challenges posed by offender reentry and recidivism.

8. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification (3 points)

- The applicant clearly describes how members will know they are AmeriCorps members.
- The applicant clearly describes how the staff and community members where the members are serving will know they are AmeriCorps members.
- The applicant clearly describes how AmeriCorps members will be provided with and will wear service gear that prominently displays the AmeriCorps logo daily.

Organizational Capability (25 percent)

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

1. Organizational Background and Staffing (7 points/10 points for new applicants)

- The applicant clearly describes how it has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program.
- The applicant clearly describes how it has adequate experience administering AmeriCorps grants or other federal grants.
- The applicant clearly describes how it has sufficiently engaged community members and partner organizations in planning and implementing its intervention.
- The applicant clearly describes how it will collaborate with other entities that also provide reentry or reentry-related activities, including engagement with probation and parole offices for partnerships, collaboration, and sharing of data and information if the members are court involved.

2. Compliance and Accountability (11 points/15 points for new applicants)

- The applicant clearly describes how, in implementation and management of its AmeriCorps program, it will prevent and detect compliance issues.
- The applicant clearly describes how it will hold itself, subrecipients, and service site locations (if applicable) accountable if instances of risk or noncompliance are identified.
- The applicant clearly describes how it will comply with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities at the recipient, subrecipient, and service site locations (if applicable).

3. Past Performance for Current Recipients and Former Recipients Only (7 points for recompeting applicants): **Any applicant that has received competitive or state formula funding for the same project in any of the past three years must address this criteria.**

- The applicant clearly describes how it has met performance measurement targets during the last three years of program operations, or, if not, has an adequate corrective action plan in place.
- The applicant clearly describes how it achieved 100% member enrollment in the most recent full year of program operations, or if not, has an adequate corrective action plan in place.
- The applicant clearly describes how it achieved 100% member retention in the most recent full year of program operations, or, if not, has an adequate corrective action plan in place.
- The applicant clearly describes any compliance issues or areas of weakness/risk identified during the last three years of program operations (if applicable) and describes an effective corrective action plan that was implemented.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)

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

1. Cost Effectiveness (18 points)

- The budget is sufficient to carry out the program effectively.
- The budget aligns with the applicant's narrative.
- The program design is cost effective and the benefits justify the cost.
- The applicant has raised or describes an adequate plan to raise non-CNCS resources to fully support the program. This applies to all Fixed Amount and Cost Reimbursement grants.
- The applicant, if recompeting, has a lower cost per Member Service Year (MSY – see Glossary) than approved in previous grants, or provides a compelling rationale for the same or increased cost including why this increase could not be covered by the recipient share.

Having a low cost per Member Service year (MSY) is a competitive advantage. New applicants that propose a low cost per MSY and recompeting applicants that submit with a lower cost per MSY than previously funded may receive higher priority for funding. Applicants requesting a higher cost per MSY than in previous years must justify their requests. If an applicant requests above the maximum cost per MSY (see Section 5.C.), it must justify its request.

2. Budget Adequacy (7 points)

- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors.
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.

Applicants must fill out the budget and ensure the following information is included:

- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project.
- Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash) and the sources of these commitments.

Evaluation Plan (Required for recompeting recipients - 0 percent)

If the applicant is competing for the first time, please enter N/A in the Evaluation Plan field since it pertains only to recompeting recipients. If the applicant is recompeting for AmeriCorps funds for the first time (see definition of "recompeting" below) the program must submit its evaluation plan in the Evaluation Plan field in eGrants. If the applicant is recompeting for a subsequent time, the program must submit its evaluation report via email to AdditionalDocuments@cns.gov by the application deadline, as well as an evaluation plan for the next three-year period in the Evaluation Plan field in eGrants.

Evaluation plans must include the following:

- A description of the theory of change, or why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results.
- Clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation.
- Concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes.
- A proposed research design for the evaluation.
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator.
- The estimated budget for evaluating the program.

The evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of the grant, as described in 45 CFR §2522.710:

- If the applicant has an average annual CNCS program grant of $500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in §2522.730 of this subpart.
- If the applicant has an average annual CNCS program grant of less than $500,000 it must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in §2522.730 of this subpart.

A program will be considered a recompeting application if it satisfies the CNCS definition of "same project" (see Glossary) and has been funded competitively for at least one complete three-year cycle. If the project satisfies the definition of same project and the applicant has completed one three-year cycle, it will be required to submit an evaluation plan. If the project satisfied the definition of same project and the applicant has completed two or more three-year cycles, the applicant will be required to submit an evaluation report as well as an evaluation plan. If the project does not satisfy the definition of recompeting, it will not be required to submit an evaluation plan, summary, or completed evaluation.

The Evaluation Plan field of eGrants does not count towards the page limit of the application; however, it does have a set character limit. Applicants should print out the report to ensure the narrative is not cut off.

Recipients with an average annual CNCS program grant of $500,000 or more that are recompeting for funds are eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. Recipients requesting approval of an alternative evaluation approach should submit a request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach along with their evaluation plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in eGrants. The request should clearly explain: (a) the evaluation constraints faced by the program, (b) why the proposed approach is the most rigorous option feasible, and (c) how the proposed alternative approach will help the recipient build their evidence base. Evaluation plans should include, at a minimum, the required elements listed in this *Notice*. The evaluation plan must be consistent with the information submitted in the competitive funding application and in the request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. More information on alternative evaluation approaches can be found at: https://www.nationalserviceresources.gov/files/guidance_for_grantees_approval_of_alternative_evaluation_approach.pdf.

Amendment Justification (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used if the applicant is awarded a grant and needs to amend it.

Clarification Information (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period.

Continuation Changes (0 percent)

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter changes in the application narratives in continuation requests.

3. Dun and Bradstreet University Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM)

Applications must include a DUNS number and an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.The website indicates a 48-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, CNCS suggests registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants must be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM) at https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/.

SAM collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid SAM registration, which must be renewed annually. Applicants that are not already registered with SAM are urged to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a DUNS number in order to register with SAM. To register online go to https://www.sam.gov/portal/pulbic/SAM/.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Notice of Intent to Apply

Submission of a Notice of Intent to Apply is encouraged, but optional for this competition and is due **Monday, April 20, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.** Please send the intent to by using this link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YouthOpportunityNoticeofIntent

Single State Applicants should not provide this information directly to CNCS, but rather to the Commission in the state or territory in which the applicant intents to operate. The State/Territory Commissions' deadlines are earlier than this deadline.

Direct Applicants: The Notice of Intent to Apply should include contact information (name of the applicant organization, address, contact person, email address, and phone number).

State/Territory Commissions: The Notice of Intent to Apply should include an estimate of the number of applications planned for submission.

Application Submission Deadline

Applications are **due Wednesday, May 20, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time** to CNCS.

CNCS will not consider applications received after the deadline, except as noted below. CNCS reserves the right to extend the submission deadline and any notice of such extended deadline will be posted. This deadline applies to new, recompeting, and continuation applicants.

Late Applications

CNCS may, at its discretion, consider an application received after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter to LateApplications@cns.gov explaining the extenuating circumstance that caused the delay. Communication with CNCS staff, including the program officer of a current grantee/recipient, is not a substitution for the above protocol. The letter must be received no later than one business day after the application deadline. If the applicant experiences technical difficulties with eGrants that are unresolved, the correspondence must include the National Service Hotline ticket number. CNCS determines whether or not to accept a late application for review on a case-by-case basis.

If extenuating circumstances make the use of eGrants impossible, applicants may send a hard copy of the application and include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via eGrants to the address provided in Section G. Agency Contacts, via overnight carrier. Applicants must use a non-U.S. Postal Service carrier because of security-related delays in receiving mail from the U.S. Postal Service. All deadlines and requirements in this *Notice* apply to hard copy applications. CNCS does not accept applications submitted via fax or email.

5. Funding Restrictions

A. Types of Grants

AmeriCorps grants can be awarded on a Cost Reimbursement or Fixed Amount basis. CNCS will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year. See Glossary.

General Summary

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement			Fixed Amount		
Available Subtypes	Traditional	Professional Corps		Full-Time/Less than FT serving in a full time capacity	EAP	Professional Corps
Maximum Cost per MSY (see section	$13,730	Up to $1,000*		$13,430	$800	Up to $1,000*

3)						
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	All	All		Full-Time or Less than Full-Time serving in a Full Time capacity Only	All	Full-Time Only
Budget Submission Required	Yes			No		Yes, if requesting operating funds
Availability of Funds linked to enrollment and/or retention of awarded MSY	No			Yes		
Special Requirements	N/A	Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries must be paid entirely by organization where member serves and not included in the budget.		N/A	N/A	Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. No CNCS funds may be used to pay member living allowance or salary.
Match Requirements	Yes	Yes; Living allowance or salary paid to members may not be counted toward the match requirement.		No, but organizations must raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.		
Financial Tracking Requirements	Yes			No		
Available to New Applicants	Yes			No	Yes	Yes

*CNCS assumes that Professional Corps will be covering the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non CNCS funds and thus will not be requesting operating funds as part of their applications. CNCS will consider operating funds of up to $1,000 per MSY if an applicant is able to demonstrate in its narrative and supporting budget materials significant organizational financial need and substantial challenges to raising non CNCS resources.

B. Member Living Allowance

The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members that is between $12,530 (minimum) and $25,060 (maximum) per member except as noted below. A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage.

Cost Reimbursement programs are not required to provide a living allowance for members serving in less than full-time terms of service. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to a less than full-time member, it must comply with the maximum limits in Table 1 below. For Cost Reimbursement grants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either CNCS or grantee/recipient share. (EXCEPTION: as noted in Section B.1.)

While Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements to members. Most Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to indicate that amount in the application and should request those positions as “without living allowance” in the budget.

Table 1: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1700	$12,530	$25,060
One-year Half-time	900	n/a	$13,265
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	$9,950
Quarter-time	450	n/a	$6,635
Minimum-time	300	n/a	$4,420

Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements (for programs existing prior to September 21, 1993)
If a program existed prior to September 21, 1993, a living allowance is not required. If such an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement of $12,530, but not the maximum requirement of $25,060.

EAP Recipients are not required to provide a living allowance, but if a living allowance is provided, it must comply with the maximum requirements set forth in the Living Allowance Table above.

Professional Corps Recipients must provide members a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance set in the Living Allowance Table above. Professional Corps member salaries and benefits are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget.

C. Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

Maximum costs per MSY are set forth in Table 2 below. The CNCS cost per MSY is determined by dividing the CNCS share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum cost per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

Table 2: 2015 Maximum Cost per MSY Grant Program	Maximum
Individual Competitive State/Territory Program (Cost Reimbursement)	$13,730
Multi-state (Cost Reimbursement)	$13,730
Professional Corps Grant (Cost Reimbursement)	Up to $1,000*
Professional Corps Fixed Amount Grant	Up to $1,000*
Education Award Program Fixed Amount Grant	$800
Full-time Fixed Amount Grant	$13,430
State/Territory Commission Average (of all its subrecipients)	$13,730

*CNCS' assumption is that Professional Corps programs will be covering the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non CNCS funds and thus will not be requesting operating funds as part of their applications. CNCS will consider operating funds of up to $1,000 per MSY if an applicant is able to demonstrate in its narrative and supporting budget materials significant organizational financial need and substantial challenges to raising non CNCS resources.

Programs operating in rural communities (as defined in the Glossary) and programs that recruit opportunity youth as AmeriCorps members may request up to $13,930 cost per MSY for the AmeriCorps members that will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth. The applicant must include a compelling case as to why the applicant's cost per MSY must be higher.

D. Amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award for FY 2015

AmeriCorps members serving in programs funded with FY 2015 dollars who successfully complete a term of service will receive an Education Award from the National Service Trust of $5,730 for a year of full-time service, with correspondingly smaller awards for less than full-time service. The amount of the Education Award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant. A member has up to seven years after his or her term of service to use the Education Award.

Table 3: Term of Service and FY15 Education Award

Term of Service	Minimum # of Hours	FY15 Education Award
Full Time	1700	$5,730.00
One-Year Half Time	900	$2,865.00
Reduced Half Time	675	$2,182.78
Quarter Time	450	$1,515.55
Minimum Time	300	$1,212.44

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

The assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. CNCS and OJJDP staff will apply their experience and expertise in evaluating applications. In the end, the review and selection process will produce a diversified set of high-quality programs that represent the priorities and selection factors described in this *Notice.*

Specifically, the review and selection process will:

Identify eligible applications that satisfy the following considerations:

- High alignment with narrative assessment criteria
- High alignment with priorities outlined in the *Notice*
- Relative risk and opportunity

Yield a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:

- Meaningful representation of
  - Geographic diversity
  - Rural communities (see definition in Glossary)
  - Small and medium sized programs
- Focus area representation
- Programs that recruit and engage traditionally underrepresented populations as AmeriCorps members

2. Review and Selection Process

Compliance Review

CNCS staff will review all applications submitted to CNCS to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completeness requirements. In order to be compliant, an applicant must satisfy all the following requirements:

- Submit an application and all required additional documents by the application submission deadline.
- Submit an application that is complete, in that it contains all required elements and additional documents and follows the instructions provided in this *Notice*.

Selection of Applications for Blended Review

Applications will advance to Blended Review based on the results of the Compliance Review.

Blended Review
Panels comprised of CNCS staff and OJJDP staff will assess grant applications. The panels will assess the quality of each application against the criteria described in this *Notice*.

Some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information and/or make changes to their application including changes to the budget. This information is used by CNCS and OJJDP staff in making final recommendations. Applications may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked clarification questions. During clarification, CNCS may ask an applicant to submit a budget for a planning grant. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to requests for additional information in a timely fashion will result in the removal of applications from consideration.

Reviewers will determine which applications to recommend for selection based on their assessment of the applicants in Blended Review and clarification in light of the *Notice*'s priorities and strategic considerations.

Risk Assessment Evaluation

CNCS staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds. This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding or the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If CNCS determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. In evaluating risks, CNCS may consider the following:

- Financial stability;
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance;
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant's record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
  - Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements, and
  - If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards;
- Information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as—
  - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS),
  - Dun and Bradstreet, or
  - "Do Not Pay";
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under OMB Circular A-133 and findings of any other available audits;
- IRS Tax Form 990;
- An applicant organization's annual report;
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website; and
- The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

Selection for Funding

With the goal of a diversified portfolio based on the *Notice* priorities and strategic considerations and after consultation with OJJDP, the Chief Executive Officer of CNCS will select the final portfolio based on the results of the application review process, after consultation with representatives from OJJDP. In

selecting grantees (recipients), CNCS and OJJDP will factor in strategic considerations to ensure there is a number of quality programs that involve and serve Disconnected Youth.

Feedback to Applicants

Following grant awards, each applicant will receive summary feedback on their application. Feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect any information that may have been provided during clarification.

CNCS is committed to transparency in grant making. The following information pertaining to this competition for new and recompeting applications will be published on the CNCS website (http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open-government-initiative/transparency/results-grants-competition) within 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

- A list of all compliant applications submitted.
- Executive Summaries of all compliant applications submitted by the applicants as part of the application.
- Data extracted from the Standard Form 424 Face Sheet (SF424) and Program Narrative submitted by applicants for successful applications.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

CNCS will award grants following the grant selection announcement. We anticipate announcing the results of this competition depending on the availability of appropriations. CNCS expects that successful applicants will be notified **no later than August 31, 2015**.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Applicants will be notified via email as to funding decisions. This notification is not an authorization to begin grant activities. The Notice of Grant Award signed by the grant officer is the authorizing document for grant activities.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Documents that Govern the Grant
The Notice of Grant Award incorporates the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant as well as the AmeriCorps Regulations and grant terms and conditions.

Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

Grants under this program are subject to 2 CFR Chapter I, Chapter II, and XXII supersedes and streamlines OMB Circulars A–21, A–87, and A–122 (the former Cost Principles), the Administrative Requirements in Circulars A-102 and A-110, the Circulars A-50 and A-133 (Audit) and Circular A-89 on the CFDA.

National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires recipients to conduct and document

NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend or education award through a program receiving CNCS funds. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives such CNCS funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award.

Recipients must perform the following checks –

All award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based search of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW); *and*
2. *Either*
    - A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work *or*
    - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

Special Rule for Persons Serving Vulnerable Populations. Award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers *with recurring access to vulnerable populations* (i.e., children age 17 or younger, individuals age 60 or older, or individuals with disabilities) must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based check of the NSOPW; *and*
2. *Both*

- A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *and*
- A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

See 45 CFR § 2540.200–§ 2540.207 and http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check for complete information and FAQs.

Use of Material

To ensure that materials generated with CNCS funding are available to the public and readily accessible to recipients and non-recipients, CNCS 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.

3. Reporting

Cost reimbursement recipients are required to provide mid-year and end of year progress reports, semi-annual financial reports, and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740.

Fixed Amount recipients are required to provide mid-year and end of year progress reports and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§2522.500-2522.540 and 45 CFR §§2522.700-2522.740.

Recipients will be required to report on the Performance Indicators (pages 6 and 7) on a periodic basis as set forth in the *Notice* and/or grant provisions.

All recipients, including Fixed Amount recipients, submit quarterly financial reports to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Payment Management System.

If you receive an award directly from CNCS, you will be required to report at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over $25,000 and may be required to report on executive compensation for your organization and for your subgrantees (subrecipients). You 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.

While applications will not be evaluated on these criteria, recipients will be expected to have data collection and data management policies and practices that provide reasonable assurance that they are providing CNCS with high quality performance measure data. At a minimum, recipients should have policies and practices which address the following five aspects of data quality:

- The data measures what it intends to measure.
- The recipient collects data in a consistent manner.
- The recipient takes steps to correct data errors.
- The recipient ensures that the data reported is complete.
- The recipient actively reviews data prior to submission.

Progress Report Data

In addition to semi-annual reporting outcomes and progress toward the grant approved performance measures, additional data must be reported annually (as applicable).

Re-Focusing of Funding

CNCS reserves the right to re-focus funding in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service. Also, applicants judged by reviewers to need additional time to complete planning for implementing a Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps program may be awarded a planning grant.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

This *Notice* is available at http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities. The TTY number is 202–606-3472. For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice*, call (202) 606-7508. For questions, please call (202) 606-7508 or send an email to americorpsgrants@cns.gov. The mailing address is:

Corporation for National and Community Service
ATT: Office of Grants Policy and Operations/Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps
1201 New York Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20525

H. OTHER INFORMATION

In addition to consulting the Application Instructions, Supplementary Materials, and AmeriCorps Regulations as directed in this *Notice*, applicants are encouraged also to consult the CNCS web site for a schedule of technical assistance conference calls and Frequently Asked Questions that are updated during the competition period.