



**Office of Children  
and Family Services**

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Acting Commissioner



# **Commission on National and Community Service**



**New York State  
Office of Children and Family Services**

**Grant Procurement**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
RFP# - 1706**

**2017-2018 New York State  
AmeriCorps Request for Proposals (Competitive Pool)  
Procurement**

**Issued: November 1, 2016**

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## **1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION/CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

The New York State Commission on National and Community Service (hereafter “the Commission”) is a governor-appointed commission. It is a diverse, non-partisan body of, among others, representatives of business, labor, education, government, human service agencies and community-based organizations. The Commission directs national service policy for the state and directly administers funding awarded by the Corporation for National & Community Service (hereafter “the Corporation”) to support New York State AmeriCorps and Volunteer Generation programs.

The Commission, while independent, is hosted by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (hereafter “OCFS”) for ease of administration. OCFS provides valuable and critical support to the Commission and is the designated state agency for purposes of issuing Commission Requests for Proposals and administering grant contracts. Therefore, you will see instances within this Request for Proposal (hereafter “RFP”) of documents, forms and other information requested by OCFS. You must submit all documents and forms requested by OCFS and, if awarded a grant, you must agree to comply with all OCFS contract and reporting procedures. OCFS is not responsible for the review or evaluation of applicants. However, all decisions made to either recommend or not recommend a proposal for funding, or any other actions by New York State with regard to proposals submitted in response to this RFP, are within the discretion of the Commission.

### **What is AmeriCorps?**

AmeriCorps is a federally funded service program that provides citizens the opportunity to engage in full or part-time service to their community.

The Commission anticipates that 2017-2018 AmeriCorps competitive grant funding will be highly competitive. New York State AmeriCorps grants are awarded to public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; state agencies or other government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); Native American Tribes; labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; and intermediaries that will operate solely in New York State (See NOFO for Eligible Applicants located on page 5) and focus on one or more of the six focus areas identified by The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. These focus areas are: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and Veterans and Military Families.

Each of these organizations and agencies, in turn, use their AmeriCorps funding to recruit, place, and supervise AmeriCorps members who engage in intensive service to address pressing community problems. After successful completion of their term of service, AmeriCorps members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award that can be used to pay for college or graduate school at Title IV schools, or to repay qualified student loans. Most AmeriCorps members also receive a modest living allowance, health care benefits, and child care assistance.

In order to maximize the impact of the public investment in national service, applications will be recommended for funding which demonstrate community impact and solve community problems using an evidence-based or evidence-informed approach (e.g. performance data, research, theory of change).

**THIS PROPOSAL IS FOR COMPETITIVE FUNDING ONLY**

This RFP is for a pool of AmeriCorps national service funding (hereafter the “competitive pool”) that is determined on the basis of a national competition and selected by the Corporation. The Commission’s RFP is designed only to identify those proposals that New York State recommends for consideration and ultimate selection by the Corporation. The actions taken by the Commission are not binding on the Corporation, which has sole authority to select which proposals to fund.

Any application in response to this RFP is for this national competitive pool of funding. The proposals forwarded to the Corporation by the Commission will compete with proposals from states across the country and from United States territories. They will also compete with proposals from organizations that operate and provide services in more than one state (hereafter “national direct organizations”) for the same limited and extremely competitive pool of funds.

You should only respond to this RFP if you are proposing an AmeriCorps program that will operate and provide service solely within the geographic borders of New York State. If your proposal encompasses programming that will cross these borders, or if it proposes place AmeriCorps members funded under this proposal at sites outside of New York State, DO NOT RESPOND TO THIS RFP. You are proposing a national direct program and must respond directly to the Corporation’s national RFP, which can be found at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities/2017/ameri-corps-state-and-national-grants-fy-2017>.

#### **AMERICORPS PLANNING GRANT APPLICATIONS:**

For the 2017-2018 program year, the Commission will also accept applications for funding for Planning Grants, for amounts of no more than \$75,000 per application. These grants will be used to develop new national service models that seek to integrate AmeriCorps members in innovative ways into evidence-based interventions.

A body of evidence that supports the role of national service in effective education interventions is emerging. Many of these service education interventions are currently being funded by AmeriCorps. The purpose of these planning grants is to identify new evidence-based service interventions in focus areas with less evidence such as Economic Opportunity and Healthy Futures.

#### **SUMMARY**

All **Competitive** AmeriCorps Applications (including Planning Grants) are due in eGrants (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/egrants>) and all supporting documents must be received by the Commission by **Tuesday, November 29, 2016, 5 p.m. EST.** Applications submitted after this date will not be considered for funding (Exception: See Section 1.6, Applications Submitted Outside of eGrants.)

**THE COMMISSION REQUIRES A NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY FOR ALL PLANNING GRANT APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO THIS RFP.** Please submit this notice via email to [AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov](mailto:AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov) with “**AmeriCorps PLANNING GRANT**” IN THE SUBJECT LINE no later than **November 9, 2016**. This notice must indicate the amount of money for which you intend to apply, and must be signed by the chief executive officer or other responsible official (e.g., CFO, COO, Board Chair or the equivalent).

The Commission serves as the state commission referenced in AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY 2017 Notice of Funding Opportunity (hereafter “the NOFO”) and Application Instructions. **However, the federal NOFO is not the Commission’s RFP, and the Commission’s deadlines are earlier than those stated in the NOFO. (Please see the deadlines listed on page 5 of this RFP).**

For additional application information, review the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) Notice of Funding Opportunity, Application Instructions, Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, School Turnaround Appendix and Performance Measure Instructions:

To access the AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY 2017 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), [click here.](#)

To access the FY 2017 NOFO Application Instructions, [click here.](#)

To access the FY 2017 NOFO Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, [click here.](#)

To access the CNCS National Performance Measures Instructions, [click here.](#)

To access the CNCS Technical Assistance Information, [click here.](#)

Applicants are required to create an eGrants account in order to submit an application for this funding opportunity. For instructions on creating an eGrants account, see “Creating an eGrants Account” under the “Resources” section.

An application is only complete if it includes all documentation required under this RFP and is received by the application due date. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Applications are due in eGrants and additional required documents are due via email to [AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov](mailto:AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov)

Application components required to be submitted via eGrants (<https://egrants.cns.gov/>)

- Application narrative (required)
- Performance measures (required)
- Logic Model (required)
- Budget (required)

Throughout this document, the terms proposals, bids, offers, and applications are used interchangeably, as are applicants, bidders, and offerers.

If the offerer discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other error in this Request for Proposals (RFP), the offerer shall immediately notify OCFS of such error in writing and request clarification or modification of the document. (See **Section 1.1 Procurement Integrity/Restrictions on Communications.**)

If, prior to the deadline for submission of proposals, an offerer fails to notify OCFS of a known error with the RFP, or of an error with the RFP that should have reasonably been known to the offerer, the offerer agrees that it will assume such risk if awarded funds, and that it will not be entitled to further administrative relief or additional compensation by reason of such error or its correction.

### **1.1 Procurement Integrity/Restrictions on Communication**

This procurement is subject to, and shall be conducted in accordance with, New York State Finance Law to include Article IX. Contracts §§ 139-j. and 139-k.

In addition, state law prohibits any vendor from exerting or attempting to exert any improper influence relating to its proposal. "Improper influence" means any attempt to achieve preferential, unequal, or favored consideration of a proposal based on considerations other than the merits of the proposal, including but not limited to, any conduct prohibited by the Ethics in Government Act, as set forth in Public Officers Law §§ 73 and 74.

All inquiries concerning this procurement must be addressed via email to [AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov](mailto:AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov) or hard copy mail to:

Questions for RFP# -1706 2017-2018  
NYS AmeriCorps RFP (Competitive Pool)  
New York State Office of National & Community Service  
52 Washington Street, North Building - Suite #338  
Rensselaer, New York 12144-2796  
**Attn: Stefanie Perez**

"Restricted period" means the period of time commencing with the earliest posting, of written notice, advertisement, or solicitation, to include but not limited to on a governmental entity's website, in a newspaper of general circulation, or in the NYS Contract Reporter, of a Request for Proposals (RFP) intending to result in a procurement contract with OCFS and ending with the final contract award by OCFS or, where applicable, final contract approval by the NYS Office of the State Comptroller, Bureau of Contracts.

During the "restricted period," as defined above, no offerer-initiated contact with any OCFS official shall be permitted regarding this procurement, except as provided herein. This prohibition applies to any oral, written, or electronic communication under circumstances where a reasonable person would infer that the communication was intended to influence this procurement. Violation of any of the requirements described in this section entitled "Procurement Integrity/Restrictions on Communications," may be grounds for a determination that the offerer is non-responsible and therefore ineligible for this contract award. Two violations within four years of the rules against impermissible contacts during the "restricted period" may result in the violator being debarred from participating in an OCFS procurement for a period of four years.

## 1.2 Calendar of Events

<b>RFP# - 1706 2017-2018 NEW YORK STATE AMERICORPS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (COMPETITIVE POOL)</b>	
<b>EVENT</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Issuance of Request for Proposals	<b>November 1, 2016</b>
Informational Meeting/Technical Assistance Sessions/Bidders Conference ( <i>optional</i> )	<b>November 4, 2016 11:00am EST</b>
Notice of Intent to Submit Planning Grant	<b>November 9, 2016</b>
<b>Deadline for Submission of Written Questions</b>	<b>November 9, 2016 5:00 p.m. EST</b>
Responses to Written Questions Posted in GGS	<b>November 16, 2016</b>
<b>Recommended Deadline to Prequalify in GGS</b>	<b>November 16, 2016</b>
<b>Deadline for Submission of Proposals</b>	<b>November 29, 2016 5:00 p.m. EST</b>
<b><i>Anticipated</i></b> Notification of Award (not earlier than)	<b>June 30, 2017</b>
<b><i>Anticipated</i></b> Contract Start Date (not earlier than)	<b>July 1, 2017</b>

## 1.3 Informational Meeting/Technical Assistance Session

The Commission is committed to providing the most current application information available and will rely primarily on the New Yorkers Volunteer website ([www.NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov](http://www.NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov)) to keep applicants abreast of changes. Applicants are encouraged to monitor this website frequently for training and technical assistance resources, updates to the application process, and other information.

### **AmeriCorps Informational Technical Assistance Conference Call**

A 2017 State AmeriCorps Technical Assistance call will be available for applicants. The following is a list of the call dates and times.

The conference call number is (866) 394-2346; Participant Code: 2539442268.

**Note: The RFP is required pre-call reading material.**

**Conference Call: (General Technical Assistance): Friday, November 4, 2016, (11:00 am) EST**

**Additional technical assistance resources including conference calls and a webinar for those interested in applying for AmeriCorps state and national grants can be found on the Corporation’s website:**

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities/2017/ameri-corps-state-and-national-grants-fy-2017>

#### **1.4 Submission of Written Questions**

All questions and requests for clarification of this RFP should cite the particular RFP section and paragraph number and must be submitted via email (preferred) to [AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov](mailto:AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov) with the subject line “2017- 2018 AmeriCorps Competitive RFP” or mail your hard copy request to: New York State Office of National and Community Service, 52 Washington Street, North Building - Suite #338 Rensselaer, New York 12144-2796, Attn: Stefanie Perez no later than the “Deadline for Submission of Written Questions” specified in **Section 1.2 Calendar of Events**, November 9, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. Questions received after the deadline will not be answered. The comprehensive list of questions and responses will be posted on the New Yorkers Volunteer website, [www.NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov](http://www.NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov) and in the solicitation announcement in the New York State Grants Gateway System (“GGS” or “Grants Gateway”) on November 16, 2016, as specified in **Section 1.2. Calendar of Events**.

To view the comprehensive list of questions and responses:

- Log onto the Grant Opportunity Portal by clicking the icon that says, “Click Here for the Grants Gateway.” Click on “Grant Opportunity.”
- Then click the icon for “Questions and Answers Link or Upload.”
- When you click the link, you will be directed to either a link that will take you to an internet location where the questions can be found, or the questions will be available there to download.

#### **1.5 Deadline for Prequalification in the Grants Gateway**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to prequalify in the Grants Gateway by the date specified in the table in Section 1.2, and **MUST** prequalify by the date of submission. (See **Section 3.2 Prequalification Process** for further information.)

#### **1.6 Submission of Proposals**

**All proposals must be submitted electronically through the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) web-based system, eGrants.** It is recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application creation process as soon as possible before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word document and copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline. See Section 5.4 How to Submit a Proposal.

Please note the length of a document in word processing software may be different than what will print out in eGrants. Following the deadline for submissions, Commission staff will review each proposal to determine if it meets the minimum criteria for consideration.

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### **Proposal Due Date**

The due date and time for the submission of the 2017-2018 New York State AmeriCorps Request for Proposals (Competitive Pool) Cost Reimbursement, Education Award, & Fixed-Cost Grant Procurement Proposal into the eGrants system is November 29, 2016 at 5:00 pm EST.

### **Additional Required Documents**

If the Commission recommends your application to the Corporation, you may be required to provide additional documents including a labor union concurrence (if necessary), a federally approved indirect cost agreement (if applicable), and other required documents as necessary. You will be provided with detailed instructions by Commission staff.

### **1.7 OCFS Reserved Rights**

See Section 6.6

## **2.0 EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction/Description of Program Objectives and Background**

See Section 1.0

### **2.2 OCFS Statewide Considerations**

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### **2.3 Purpose and Funding Availability**

The Commission anticipates that 2017-2018 AmeriCorps competitive grant funding will be highly competitive. New York State AmeriCorps grants are awarded to public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; state agencies or other government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); Native American Tribes; labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; and intermediaries that will operate solely in New York State and focus on one or more of the six focus areas identified by The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. These focus areas are: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and Veterans and Military Families. In order to maximize the impact of the public investment in national service, applications will be recommended for funding which demonstrate community impact and solve community problems using an evidence-based or evidence-informed approach (e.g., performance data, research, theory of change).

All New York State AmeriCorps programs are required to budget for travel to attend the annual New York State AmeriCorps kickoff (date in late 2017 to be announced) and to work collaboratively with other national service programs in your region on the national and state service days of September 11, MLK Day and “I Love My Park Day” (first Saturday in May of each year).

The grant awards made under this RFP have two components: 1. operating funds; and 2. AmeriCorps member positions. Grant award amounts made under this RFP vary – both in the level of operating funds and in the type and amount of AmeriCorps Member positions. Eligible organizations must propose engaging 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. AmeriCorps members will be recruited, trained, supervised and managed by the funded organization. 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.

The actual level of national funding from the Corporation will be subject to the availability of annual congressional appropriations which have not yet been enacted. In the 2016-2017 program year, \$228 million was available nationally to eligible applicants through the competitive funding processes.

## **2.4 Term of Contract**

The contracts awarded in response to this RFP will be for no more than 39 months consisting of three 15-month contract periods that are programmatically and fiscally independent with a start date no earlier than July 1, 2017 and an end date no later than December 31, 2018. Applicants who receive awards of federal funding under this RFP will be subject to applicable federal laws, rules and regulations to include AmeriCorps program regulations found under 45 CFR Part 2522.

The 15-month contract periods allow the contractor a covered period to recruit members and remain compliant with federal regulations which provide full-time AmeriCorps members up to twelve months to complete their term of service. The start date for each fifteen month contract period may be adjusted should a revised scope and approved program plan deem it operationally justified. Expenses incurred in a 15-month contract period may only be reimbursed with funds granted for that same 15-month contract period. Contract start dates should be October 1, 2017 or later and the contract end date may not be after December 31, 2018. Programs with an education focus may propose a contract start date no earlier than July 1, 2017 with written approval from the Commission.

In approving a multi-year project, the Commission will approve initial funding for the first 15-month contract period. 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 federal funds. The Commission

and the Corporation reserve the right to adjust the amount of a grant or elect not to continue funding for subsequent years.

Annual funding will be contingent upon availability of funds and satisfactory contractor performance.

The New York State Commission on National and Community Service reserves the right to reallocate funding at any time if the Commission determines that a contractor is not able to expend all their funds during a contract period.

**Contractors may not begin to provide services prior to the contract start date; OCFS has no obligation to pay for services rendered prior to that time.**

### **3.0 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS TO PROPOSE AND PREQUALIFICATION PROCESS**

#### **3.1 Minimum Qualifications**

New York State AmeriCorps grants are awarded to public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; state agencies or other government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); Native American Tribes; labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; and intermediaries that will operate solely in New York State (See NOFO for Eligible Applicants located on page 5).

The Corporation has determined that organizations that have been convicted of a Federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in this State RFP. Pursuant to the *Lobbying Disclosure Action 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.

***OCFS will only contract with organizations whose governing board of directors includes a minimum of three (3) members.***

#### **3.2 Prequalification Process**

New York State has instituted key reform initiatives to the grant contract process that require not-for-profits to register in the New York State Grants Gateway System (GGS) and complete the Vendor Prequalification process in order for proposals to be evaluated. Not-for-profit organizations will only have to prequalify once every three years, with the responsibility to keep their information current throughout the three-year period.

**Proposals received from not-for-profit applicants that are not prequalified in the Grants Gateway on the proposal due date and time listed in Section 1.2, Calendar of Events will be disqualified from further consideration.**

Below is a summary of the steps that must be completed to meet registration and prequalification requirements. The [Vendor Prequalification Manual](#) on the [Grants Reform website](#) details the requirements and an [online tutorial](#) is available to walk users through the process.

### 3.2.1 Register for the Grants Gateway

- On the Grants Reform website, download a copy of the [Registration Form for Administrator](#). A signed, notarized original form must be sent to the Division of Budget at the address provided in the instructions. You will be provided with a username and password allowing you to access the Grants Gateway.
- If you have previously registered and do not know your username, email [grantsreform@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@its.ny.gov). If you do not know your password, click the [Forgot Password](#) link from the main log in page and follow the prompts.

### 3.2.2 Complete Your Prequalification Application

- Log into the [Grants Gateway](#). If this is your first time logging in, you will be prompted to change your password at the bottom of the “Profile” page. Enter a new password and click “SAVE.”
- Specific questions about the prequalification process should be directed to the Grants Reform Team at [grantsreform@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@its.ny.gov).

### 3.2.3 Submit Your Prequalification Application

- After completing your “Prequalification Application,” click the “Submit Document Vault” link located below the “Required Documents” section to submit your “Prequalification Application” for state agency review. Once submitted, the status of the document vault will change to “In Review.”
- If your prequalification reviewer has questions or requests changes, you will receive email notification from the GGS.
- Once your “Prequalification Application” has been approved, you will receive a GGS notification that you are now prequalified to do business with New York State.

**Vendors are strongly encouraged to begin this process as soon as possible and no later than the date specified in Section 1, Calendar of Events, in order to participate in this opportunity.**

### Proposal Submittal Process

If you are an applicant, and have problems complying with this provision, please contact the GGS help desk via email: [helpdesk@agatesoftware.com](mailto:helpdesk@agatesoftware.com) -- OR -- by telephone: 1-800-820-1890.

Specific questions about the Prequalification process should be referred to the Grants Reform Team at [grantsreform@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsreform@its.ny.gov). The Grants Reform help desk/hotline can be reached at (518) 474-5595.

After review, applications proceeding to the next stage must be submitted electronically using eGrants, The Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation) online grants management system. Electronic submission is the required submission method.

### **3.3 Vendor Responsibility Requirements**

Section 163(9) (f) of the State Finance Law requires that a state agency make a determination that a bidder is responsible prior to awarding that bidder a state contract. Vendor responsibility will be determined based on the information provided by the bidder, on-line, through the New York State VendRep System Questionnaire or through a paper copy of the *Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire*. OCFS will review the information provided before making an award.

OCFS reserves the right to reject any proposal if, in its sole discretion, it determines the bidder is not a responsible vendor. All proposals are subject to a vendor responsibility determination before the award is made, and such determination can be revisited at any point up to the final approval of the contract by the New York State Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). Vendors must maintain their vendor responsibility throughout the duration of the contract.

Enrolling and completing the questionnaire online through the New York State VendRep System is the best method because both the questionnaire and answers are stored in the system. Thus, subsequent questionnaires in response to contracts or Request for Proposals from any state agency would only need to be updated in the VendRep System.

To access or enroll in the VendRep System or update your existing online questionnaire, click [On-line Questionnaire](#). Questionnaires in the VendRep System that have been completed in the last six months in response to contracts or bid announcements do not need to be updated. If the vendor is using the hardcopy notarized questionnaire, then it also has to be current within six months of the due date of the proposal.

Vendors opting to complete a paper questionnaire, can access the questionnaire by clicking the following link: [Paper Questionnaire](#). Please note that there are separate questionnaires depending on the contractor status. Not-for-profit vendors must use the *Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire Not-For-Profit Business Entity* form. For-profit vendors must use the *Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire For Profit Business Entity* form.

Vendors are also encouraged to have subcontractors file the required *Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire* online through the New York State VendRep System. These subcontractors are required to submit a questionnaire when the value of the subcontract is \$100,000 or more.

Prior to executing a subcontract agreement, the contractor must provide the information required by OCFS to determine whether a proposed subcontractor is a responsible vendor.

Vendors must provide their New York State Vendor Identification Number when enrolling. To request assignment of a Vendor Identification Number or for direct VendRep System user assistance, the OSC Help Desk may be reached at 866-370-4672 or 518-408-4672 or by email at [ciohelpdesk@osc.state.ny.us](mailto:ciohelpdesk@osc.state.ny.us).

The New York State VendRep System offers the following benefits:

- Ease of completion, filing, access to and submission of the questionnaire. Efficiencies are multiplied for vendors who bid and contract with the state frequently or with multiple state agencies.
- Questionnaire updates are easily filed by updating only those responses that require change from the previously saved questionnaire (as opposed to a paper copy where a new questionnaire is required each time there is a change).
- The stored questionnaire information eliminates the need to re-enter data for each subsequent questionnaire submission.
- Reduction of costs associated with paper documents including copying, delivery and filing.
- Online questionnaire information is secure and accessible to authorized vendor users only. State agencies can only view certified and finalized questionnaires.
- VendRep question prompts ensure that the correct forms are completed.
- The VendRep On-Line System contains links to all definitions of the terms used in the questionnaire.

Note: The *Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire* must be dated within six months of the proposal due date. Any subcontractors under that proposed contract must also complete a *Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire* when the value of the subcontract is projected to be \$100,000 or more for the contract term.

Confirmation of **completion** of the vendor responsibility process must be submitted with your proposal. This confirmation can take the form of registration in the VendRep system, or by submitting your completed hardcopy questionnaire. To submit this confirmation with your application, go to the bottom of your certified questionnaire, and click the button called "Form Overview." Print this page and upload it to the proposal. Upload the page into your proposal by going to the Pre-Submission Uploads section of the RFP in the GGS. While it is not recommended, you have the option of uploading a completed hardcopy *Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire* to the "Pre-Submission Uploads" section.

## **4.0 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

### **4.1 Desired Outcomes and Program Requirements**

#### **New Applicants**

The Commission and the Corporation encourage organizations that have never received AmeriCorps funding to apply for the AmeriCorps funding described in this RFP. The general practice is to cap the number of member slots for new grantees at 50 member slots. New applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants but are not eligible to apply for Fixed Amount Grants. Please see instructions, Section 4.1.

#### **Continuation applicants**

Organizations that have current AmeriCorps contracts not ending by December 31, 2017 must submit a continuation application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. Please see the Continuation instructions, Section 4.1

### **AmeriCorps Grant Award & Application Types**

### A. Overview

New York State AmeriCorps applications submitted to the Commission for recommendation may be structured on either a cost reimbursement or fixed amount basis. The Corporation will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year. (See **Section 9, Glossary** for an explanation of these two types of grants.)

New applicants are eligible to apply for cost reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants but not eligible to apply for fixed amount grants. Existing subgrantees/operating sites of fixed amount grantees 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 in response to this RFP.

**Applicants responding to this RFP must apply for a minimum of 20 members, which must total no less than 10 Member Service Years (MSY's), whether full-time or reduced time (see chart in Section D, below).** Applications requesting fewer than 20 members and 10 MSYs are not eligible to apply for this RFP and will not be reviewed. A chart to calculate MSYs is included below. Applicants filing a Request for Continuation are not subject to this requirement, but must have a minimum of 10 MSYs.

Grant requests may vary in size depending on the type and scope of a proposed program. The Commission allows applicants certain flexibility in developing their budgets within limitations. **The maximum cost per MSY for AmeriCorps grants through the Commission (full-time equivalent member) is \$13,700 for a Cost Reimbursement grant or \$13,430 for a fixed-amount grant request. This maximum cost per MSY is a New York State limit. The maximum cost per MSY is not to be confused with the maximum living allowance. (See Section 1.3, B and C).**

The following table illustrates the types of AmeriCorps state grants and gives brief outlines of the budgetary and program requirements. Applicants should review the detailed instructions to determine their eligibility for a particular type of AmeriCorps grant.

<b>AmeriCorps Grant Award Types</b>	
<b>Grant Award Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Cost Reimbursement Grants	Cost Reimbursement Grants: These grants fund a portion of program operating costs and member living allowances with flexibility to use all of the funds for allowable costs regardless of whether or not the program recruits and retains all AmeriCorps members. Cost reimbursement grants include a formal matching requirement and require the submission of a budget and financial reports.
Full-Time Fixed Amount Grants (Non-EAP)	These fixed amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members or less than full-time members that are serving in a full time capacity only, including Professional Corps. 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. Programs are not required to submit budgets or financial reports, there is no specific match requirement, and programs are not required to track and maintain documentation of match. Professional Corps programs applying for operational funding through a Fixed Amount Grant must submit a budget in support of their request for operational funds. However, the grant provides only a portion of the cost of running the program and organizations must still raise the additional resources needed to run the program. Programs can access all of the funds, provided they recruit and retain the members supported under the grant based on the MSY level awarded.
Education Award Fixed Amount Grants (EAP)	Programs apply for a small fixed amount per MSY, can enroll less than full-time members, and use their own resources to cover all other costs. Programs can access funds under the grant based on enrolling the full complement of members supported under the grant. As with full-time fixed amount grants, there are no specific match or financial reporting requirements.
Professional Corps Fixed Amount Grants	Programs apply for a fixed amount per MSY and enroll only full-time members. Programs can access all of the funds awarded if they recruit and retain all of their members. Professional Corps member living allowances and/or salaries are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve and are not included in the budget. As with stipended fixed amount grants, there are no match or financial reporting requirements. (Please see Section 1.3, Section B, below)

<b>TABLE</b>	
<b>Application Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
New	Applications submitted by an eligible organization that has not received AmeriCorps State funding from the Commission in the last five years. The New Competitive category includes Professional Corps, which is a program that recruits and places qualified participants to meet unmet human, educational, environmental, or public safety needs in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals.
Recompeting	Applications submitted by an eligible organization that (1) is completing a three-year New York State AmeriCorps contract cycle and is seeking a new, three-year grant. If your program is currently in the final year of its grant cycle, you must apply using the application instructions for

	new and recompeting programs.
Continuation	Applications submitted by an eligible organization that is currently managing a New York State AmeriCorps grant moving from year one to year two or from year two to year three of their three-year contract cycle.

**See the 2017 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the 2017 Mandatory Supplemental Guidance and the 2017 Application Instructions for more information. The Commission will not provide both cost reimbursement and fixed cost types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year.**

**B. Member Living Allowance**

The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members between \$12,630 (minimum) and \$24,930 (maximum) per member except as noted below. A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. However, funded organizations are responsible for withholding income tax and FICA. In New York State, funded organizations do not withhold unemployment insurance premiums for AmeriCorps members, in accordance with the New York Department of Labor’s memorandum issued in 1995 that service with AmeriCorps is not covered employment.

Cost reimbursement grants 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 the table below. For Cost Reimbursement grants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either Corporation or grantee/subgrantee share. (EXCEPTION: as noted in Sections B.1. and B.3.)

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 (EXCEPTION: as noted in sections B.2. and B.3.) 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.

**Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance**

**Table: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance**

Service Term	Minimum # of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Total Living Allowance
Full-time	1700	\$12,630	\$24,930
Half-time	900	n/a	\$13,199
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	\$9,899
Quarter-time	450	n/a	\$6,599
Minimum-time	300	n/a	\$4,400

**Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements**

**1. If a program existed prior to September 21, 1993,** a living allowance is not required. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement of \$12,630, but not the maximum requirement of \$24, 930.

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

**3. Professional Corps Grantees** 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 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 the table 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 amount an applicant may request from CNCS per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

New and re-competing State Commission subgrantees/applicants must not exceed the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type.

**2017 New York State Maximum Cost per MSY**

<b>Grant Program</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Individual Competitive State/Territory Program(cost reimbursement)	\$13,700
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
Fulltime Fixed Amount Grant	\$13,430

\*The Corporation assumes that Professional Corps will cover the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non-grant funds and thus will not be requesting operating funds as part of their applications.

**D. Amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award for FY 2017**

AmeriCorps members serving in programs funded through this RFP who successfully complete a term of service will receive an Education Award from the National Service Trust of \$5,815 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, and is therefore subject to change after 2017. A member has seven years after his or her term of service to use the Education Award.

**Term of Service and FY17 Education Award**

Term of Service	Minimum of Hours	#	FY17 Education Award
Full Time	1700		\$5,815.00
One-Year Half Time	900		\$2,907.50
Reduced Half Time	675		\$2,215.24
Quarter Time	450		\$1,538.36
Minimum Time	300		\$1,230.69

## Match Requirements

### *Fixed Amount Grants and Education Award Program Grants*

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

### *Cost Reimbursement Grants*

A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. If the program is re-funded after the first three-year period, and starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year 10, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR §2521.60 and Pub. L. 113-76, Division H, Title IV, § 402

<https://beta.congress.gov/113/plaws/publ76/PLAW-113publ76.htm>

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 the Corporation on a Federal Financial Report. To accomplish this, all New York State AmeriCorps grantees/subgrantees must track and be prepared to report on that match to the Commission on a schedule that will be included in your OCFS contract, should you be selected for competitive funding. The living allowance or salary provided to AmeriCorps members in Professional Corps programs (see Section 9, Glossary) does not count toward the matching requirement.

### *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. **Programs operating solely in New York State must send their requests to the Commission for review and approval via email to [AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov](mailto:AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov) on or before November 29, 2016. If your application is recommended to the Corporation for funding, the Commission will forward the request to the Corporation for consideration with the application. Requests for alternative match schedules are determined solely within the Corporation's discretion.**

## AmeriCorps Focus Areas

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended by the Serve America Act, emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on a core set of issue areas. In order to carry out Congress' intent and to maximize the impact of investment in national service, CNCS has the following six 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. Grantees 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 (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) 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 support 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.

## 2017 AmeriCorps Priority Funding Areas

The Corporation has designated the following as “priority funding” issue areas. **Please note that “priority funding” is not identical in all cases to the focus areas outlined above. The AmeriCorps Focus Areas are delineated in the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, while the priority funding issue areas are determined annually by the Corporation.** For 2017-2018 the Corporation seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in:

- **Disaster Services** - improving community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation
- **Economic Opportunity** - increasing economic opportunities for communities by engaging opportunity youth, either as the population served and/or as AmeriCorps members
- **Education** - improving student academic performance in Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Mathematics (STEM)
- **Environment - 21st Century Service Corps**
- **Healthy Futures – Reducing and/or Preventing Prescription Drug and Opioid Abuse**
- Veterans and Military Families -- positively impacting the quality of life of veterans and improving military family strength
- Programming that supports My Brother’s Keeper
- Multi-focus intermediaries that demonstrate measureable impact and primarily serve communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure. i.e. rural and other underserved communities
- Safer communities
- Evidence Based Intervention Planning Grants
- Encore Programs

(See **Mandatory Supplemental Guidance** for further information about some of the priorities).

In order to receive priority consideration and three points for submitting an application within a Notice priority(ies), 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. Responses that propose programs for the purpose of receiving priority consideration are not guaranteed funding.

### **National Performance Measures**

The Corporation expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance measurement strategy that relies on both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work as well as make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals. For more information, please refer to the National Performance Measure Instructions <http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-yourcapacity/grants/fundingopportunities>

All applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (output and outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. The Corporation does not expect applicants to select performance measures to correspond to each and every potential member activity or community impact. The Corporation values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures. As

described in the Application Instructions, applicants must include all their information about their proposed performances measure in the Performance Measure section of the applications in eGrants (the Corporations' web-based grants management system). All information requested in the National Performance Measure Instructions must be included in the text of the performance measures themselves, and it must be evident in the performance measure text that all definitions and requirements outlined in the National Performance Measures Instructions are met. Providing performance measures information elsewhere in the narrative cannot be in lieu of providing full information in the Performance Measures section of the application in eGrants.

**Encore Programs:** Congress set a goal that ten percent of AmeriCorps funding should support Encore service programs that engage a significant number of participants age 55 or older. The Corporation seeks to meet that target in this competition and encourages Encore programs to apply. Encore will provide an opportunity for current evidence-based Senior Corps Foster Grandparents Program and Senior Companion Program grantees to expand their programs through AmeriCorps funding.

### Review Process

This RFP will be reviewed by the Commission with two overall goals as guideposts:

- Any programs selected by the Corporation from within the competitive pool will be of value to New York State citizens and will achieve demonstrable results within the state and its communities.
- Only well-written, well-designed, quality proposals are forwarded to the Corporation for further consideration; and that in the view of the Commission will be competitive nationally and have a better than average chance to receive an award of grant funds.

Please design your proposed programming and write your proposal with these twin goals in mind.

To assist you, we have incorporated language from the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Corporation and the Corporation's application instructions; as well as the complete NOFO (Section 5.2). The NOFO explains the criteria and procedures by which the Corporation will review and select proposals for competitive funding that are recommended in response to this RFP. The NOFO is included in this RFP to help you understand the Corporation's national service priorities and the federal programming guidelines, statutes, rules and regulations as you design and submit your proposal. Should your proposal be forwarded to the Corporation, it will stand the best chance to compete nationally if you keep all of these factors in mind. However, the federal NOFO is not the Commission's RFP, **and the Commission's deadlines are earlier than those stated in the NOFO.** (Please see the deadlines listed in Section 1.2 of this RFP). Nor is the NOFO binding in any way on the Commission, except as the Commission determines within its discretion. **Your proposal must respond to this New York State RFP**, and must meet all the minimum requirements, deadlines and criteria called for in this RFP.

The Commission will use the following procedures to select programs for recommendation to the Corporation for competitive AmeriCorps funding:

1. **Not-for-profit organizations must prequalify within the New York State Grants Gateway System** (hereafter "GGS") to submit a proposal for consideration. The RFP

further explains how to prequalify within the GGS and who to contact for help regarding the GGS. (See Section 3.2).

2. **All applicants must submit their proposals electronically via the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) web-based system, eGrants.** It is recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application creation process as soon as possible before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word 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. Following the deadline for submissions, Commission staff will review each proposal to determine if it meets the minimum criteria for consideration
3. If a proposal meets the minimum criteria, it will be reviewed and scored by at least two readers selected by the Commission. These readers will review the proposal as a team and will be asked to agree on a consensus score sheet that will be used to rank proposals. The score sheet will align with the outline and points values specified in this RFP. If, and only if, the readers cannot come to consensus, an additional reader may be asked to review the proposal and to work with the original readers to submit a consensus score sheet.

For the 2017-2018 program year, the Commission will consider and rank applications for funding for **Planning Grants**, separately from applications for other types of grants, for amounts no more than \$75,000 per application. Special instructions for these grants appear below; please note that all New York State Grants Gateway pre-registration and pre-qualification requirements, as well as any other relevant minimum requirements apply to applications for Planning Grants. Planning Grant applications will be reviewed and scored by the same procedures, by reviewers trained in the special scoring criteria for Planning Grants.

**THE COMMISSION REQUIRES A NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY FOR ALL PLANNING GRANT APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO THIS RFP.**

Please submit this notice via email to: [AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov](mailto:AmeriCorpsRFP@NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov) with “AmeriCorps PLANNING GRANT” IN THE SUBJECT LINE no later than November 9, 2016. This notice must indicate the amount of money for which you intend to apply, and must be signed by the chief executive officer or other responsible official (e.g., CFO, COO, board chair or the equivalent).

4. The role of the Commission staff is to facilitate the best possible review by the readers, through technical assistance, training and support. Commission staff will be available to the readers for such support throughout the reading period.
5. At the conclusion of the reading period, the reviewers will submit their consensus score sheets for each proposal to the Commission and the proposals will be ranked according to score from highest to lowest. Planning Grant applications will be ranked separately from other applications, according to score from highest to lowest.
6. The Commission will then evaluate and act upon which proposals to recommend to the Corporation for funding. The proposals that are in the top 20 percent of all proposals scored will be recommended for funding to the Corporation, absent exceptional circumstances, about which the Commission reserves the right to make determinations in its discretion. The Commission reserves the right to recommend any proposal in the

second 20 percent of proposals scored, if in its determination the programming proposed will increase geographic diversity of the state's AmeriCorps portfolio, will increase opportunities for individuals with disabilities to serve in AmeriCorps and/or to receive AmeriCorps services, or will serve a population or focus on a need not otherwise addressed in its AmeriCorps programming. The Commission will determine, within its discretion, the number of proposals it will recommend to the Corporation, the amount of funding requested in total and for any one proposal it recommends, and any technical or other minor changes it determines are necessary before a proposal is recommended to the Corporation. Planning Grant applications will be evaluated and recommended following the same procedures, but separately from the other types of grants; i.e. the top 20 percent of all Planning Grant applications will be recommended for funding to the Corporation, absent exceptional circumstances, and the Commission reserves the right to recommend any proposal in the second 20 percent of all Planning Grant applications scored.

7. After the Commission determines its recommendations, the Commission staff will notify applicants via email if their proposals will be forwarded to the Corporation.
8. If your proposal is selected for recommendation, you may be asked to work with Commission staff to make technical and other minor changes in your proposal so that your proposal adheres to all applicable laws, rules and regulations, including AmeriCorps statutes and regulations, and to clarify any areas that are vague, nonresponsive, or confusing. No changes made during this period will affect the recommendations as previously determined by the Commission. You will also be asked to enter any changes in your proposal into the Corporation's eGrants online system by a date specified by the Commission. When you are crafting your proposal, please keep in mind the eGrants character and page limits to prevent the need to excise large portions of your proposal in eGrants.
9. The rankings, reviews and scores of the Commission are not binding on the Corporation as it determines which proposals to select for competitive funding, except as the Corporation may determine within its discretion. While the Corporation may take the Commission's rankings and recommendations into account, it is not obligated to do so. Essentially, once a proposal is forwarded to the Corporation, it will be evaluated anew, by the Corporation's selected reviewers and according to the Corporation's own criteria and by its own review process which is independent of the Commission's.
10. The Corporation is expected to announce its final grant selections in May 2017. However, that date is solely within the discretion of the Corporation and is subject to change.
11. If your proposal is selected for funding by the Corporation, you will need to contract with the Commission and with OCFS before programming can begin and before you can receive any funds. The Commission and its host agency, OCFS, will be the administrators of any grant you are awarded through this RFP.
12. If your proposal is not selected by the Commission for recommendation, and/or your proposal is not selected by the Corporation for funding, you may request feedback from the Commission, according to a process determined by the Commission. You will be notified, at a point subsequent to the announcement of final awards by the Corporation, on how to request feedback.

**Supplemental Technical Assistance Materials:**

The Commission has posted tables, charts, graphs and other supplemental materials on its website, [www.newyorkersvolunteer.ny.gov](http://www.newyorkersvolunteer.ny.gov), that may be helpful to you. **These materials must be read in conjunction with this RFP and are not a substitute for the instructions and information contained in this RFP. In the event of an actual or implied conflict between these supplemental materials and this RFP, the language of this RFP will in all cases be controlling.**

#### **4.2 Accessibility of Web-Based Information and Applications**

Any web-based Intranet and Internet information and applications development or programming delivered pursuant to this procurement must comply with New York State Enterprise IT Policy NYS-P08-005, Accessibility Web-Based Information and Applications, and New York State Enterprise IT Standard NYS-S08-005, Accessibility of Web-Based Information Applications, as such policy or standard may be amended, modified or superseded, which requires that state agency web-based Intranet and Internet information and applications are accessible to persons with disabilities. Web content must conform to New York State Enterprise IT Standards NYS-S08-005 as determined by quality assurance testing. OCFS will conduct such quality assurance testing and the test results must be satisfactory to OCFS before web content will be considered a qualified deliverable under the contract or procurement.

### **5.0 PROPOSAL CONTENT AND SUBMISSION**

#### **5.1 Technical Proposal Content/Work Plan**

##### **1. Criteria**

Each applicant must describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to solve a significant community problem 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.

##### **A. Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)**

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. Do not deviate from the template below.

The [Name of the organization] proposes to have [Number of] AmeriCorps members who will [service activities 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 of project]. 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 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.

Fixed Amount grant applicants (EAP, Fulltime Fixed, and Professional Corps Fixed) should list their Other Revenue (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, Section 5.2) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still must raise significant additional resources to operate the program. The Corporation will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov) in the interest of transparency and Open Government.

## **B. Program Design (50 percent)**

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

### **1. Need (2 points)**

- The community need is prevalent and severe in communities where members will serve and has been documented with relevant data.

"Community" can be a geographic region, a specific population of people, or a combination of both. The applicant organization must document the need it plans to address with its proposed program, whether it is a defined geographic community or a subset of individuals living in a particular area.

### **2. Intervention (3 points)**

- The proposed intervention is clearly described.
- The proposed intervention aligns with the identified community need.

### **3. Theory of Change and Logic Model (19 points)**

The Theory of Change shall address:

- The applicant's proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) leveraged volunteers.
- The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's theory of change. The theory of change should be either evidence-informed or evidence-based, meaning that the proposed intervention is guided by the best available research evidence that supports its effectiveness, as described in the *Evidence Base* section below.
- The proposed outcomes articulated in the application narrative and Logic Model represent meaningful progress in addressing the community need identified by the applicant. Applicants should provide rationale for selecting output and outcome targets. Note, recompeting applicants proposing to significantly increase or decrease output and outcome targets from their previous grant must provide a justification for this change.
- The applicant's AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.

The Logic Model shall depict:

- A summary of the community problem/need outlined in the narrative.
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
  - Number of locations or sites in which 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)
- The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served.) 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 as a result of the intervention. If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators.

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.

Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention. Logic model content that exceeds three pages will not be reviewed.

#### **4. Evidence Base (12 points)**

Applicants will be awarded up to 12 points for providing evidence that their proposed intervention will lead to the outcomes identified in the logic model. Applicants must 1) state the evidence tier in which they think they qualify; 2) clearly indicate and describe the evidence that supports the highest evidence tier for which they are eligible and 3) describe the complete body of evidence that supports their program intervention including evidence from lower tiers. Applicants should pay particular attention to the requirements for each tier of evidence. More points are awarded for higher tiers of evidence.

In 2016, the evidence tiers of funded AmeriCorps State and National competitive grantees' were as follows: Strong 17%, Moderate 9%, Preliminary 39%, and Pre-Preliminary 24%. The Corporation expects the programs it funds to be progressing along the evidence continuum. Thus, do not be deterred from applying for funding due to your current evidence level.

Applicants classifying their evidence as preliminary who propose to replicate an identical or similar evidence-based intervention, as well as applicants classifying their evidence as either moderate or strong evidence should reference the information about the evidence tiers provided below. Submission of additional documents (e.g., advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives not research studies or program evaluations) that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements described in the Notice will not be reviewed.

All applicants must include as much detailed information as possible in the Evidence section of the application. Applicants that have collected relevant performance measurement data must describe this data. Applicants that have conducted evaluations of their own program or that are replicating other evidence-based programs must describe these evaluations as outlined in the evidence tier descriptions. Applicants are advised to focus on presenting high-quality evidence from up to two of the strongest and most relevant studies while also summarizing the remaining body of evidence that exists for the program. Studies must be evaluations of specific programs or

interventions. Research that does not focus on a specific program or intervention, but rather focuses on a broader issue area or population, will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points.

When describing research studies or evaluations in the application narrative, applicants must include the following information in order to earn points:

- 1) The date the research or evaluation was completed, and the time period for which the intervention was examined
- 2) A description that shows the study's relevance to the proposed intervention
- 3) A description of the target population studied (e.g. the demographics)
- 4) The methodology used in the study (e.g.; outcome study, random assignment, regression discontinuity design, propensity score matching, etc.)
- 5) A description of the data, data source, and data collection methods
- 6) The outcomes or impacts examined and the study findings
- 7) The strength of the findings (e.g. effect size, confidence level, statistical power of the study design and statistical significance of findings).

**Applicants must provide this information in the narrative even if they submit the study or evaluation.** Applicants should provide citations for the studies they describe, if applicable; however, reviewers will not review any links or cited documents referenced in the application and will not review any additional documents that is not a study submitted in accordance with the Notice instructions.

Reviewers will examine the descriptions (and attached studies if relevant) using the following criteria:

- a) How closely the intervention evaluated in the studies matches the one proposed by the applicant;
- b) The methodological quality and rigor of the studies presented (e.g., sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, use of control or equivalent comparison groups, baseline equivalence and study attrition, etc.);
- c) Strength and consistency of the findings, with preference given to findings that show a meaningful and persistent positive effect on participants demonstrated with confidence levels; and
- d) The date of the study, with a preference towards studies that have been conducted within the last six years.

If the evidence submitted as part of an application does not describe a well-designed and well-implemented evaluation, the applicant may be considered for a lower tier of evidence and related point values. Applicants must meet all requirements of the evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier. Applicants that do not meet all requirements will be considered for a lower tier.

Requirements associated with the five evidence tiers are described next.

**No evidence** (0 points) means that the applicant has not provided evidence that they have systematically collected any qualitative or quantitative data to date.

Applicants in this tier must describe how their program design is evidence-informed. An evidence-informed program uses the best available knowledge, research and evaluation to guide program design and implementation, but does not have scientific research or rigorous evaluation of the program itself. Applicants may describe up to two research or evaluation studies that inform their program design but may not submit these studies.

**Pre-preliminary evidence (1-2 points)** means the applicant has demonstrated data collection experience testing or tracking at least one aspect of its logic model. For example, the applicant has collected systemic and accurate data on one or more of the following: the community need the proposed intervention will address, the program intervention's activities and services delivered, participation in the intervention by the target population, and/or participant outcomes (for example, performance measurement data or a process evaluation assessing implementation of the intervention.)

In order to qualify for this tier, the applicant must have collected data about their own program. The data collection process and results must be described fully and the applicant should explain the link between data collection and the relevant component(s) of its logic model. Applicants should describe evidence for the pre-preliminary tier in the Evidence section of the application but should not submit additional documents unless required to meet CNCS evaluation requirements.

**Preliminary evidence (3-6 points)** means the applicant has provided data from at least one outcome study of their own intervention that yielded promising results for the proposed intervention or that the applicant proposes to replicate a similar intervention with fidelity to the evaluated program model. The ways to demonstrate preliminary level of evidence are as follows:

**Preliminary with Outcome Study** The applicant must describe at least one outcome study that was conducted of their own intervention. This must include a detailed description of the outcome study data from pre and post-tests without a comparison group or post-test comparison between intervention and comparison groups. In some cases a retrospective pre-post test may be considered, but its use must be justified. This description should explain whether the outcome study was conducted internally by the applicant organization or by an entity external to the applicant. Applicants must describe the studies fully but should not submit them unless required to meet CNCS evaluation requirements. Outcome evaluations that are submitted to fulfill the CNCS evaluation requirements will be reviewed only for compliance with evaluation requirements. Outcome evaluations submitted by applicants who were not required to meet CNCS evaluation requirements will not be considered when assessing evidence tier.

An outcome study includes data beyond that which is collected as part of routine performance measurement. In addition to describing up to two outcome studies of their own program or intervention, applicants must describe the performance measurement data they have collected and how the outcome study data goes beyond performance measurement.

**Preliminary with Replication**

- The applicant must describe and submit at least one randomized controlled trial study or quasi-experimental evaluation (e.g. propensity score matching) that found positive results for the same intervention that the applicant plans to replicate. The applicant must describe how the intervention studied and the applicant's proposed approach are the same and how the applicant will replicate

the intervention with fidelity to the program model. The study must have been conducted by an entity external to the organization whose program was studied. An applicant may be eligible for more points if they also submit evidence from a process evaluation demonstrating that they have implemented the replication with fidelity. The process evaluation should be described but not submitted.

- Applicants who do not submit the required study or who do not describe fully how they are replicating the evidence-based program with fidelity will be considered for a lower tier.

For the purposes of this Notice, “replicate” means that the key elements of the applicant’s intervention are implemented as the evidence-based program model describes (e.g., in terms of content or curriculum, delivery process, and target population), and the applicant’s adaptations are relatively minor. For example, an applicant implementing an intervention using certified teachers to administer the curriculum would not be considered replicating that program with fidelity if it replaces teachers with AmeriCorps members who are not certified teachers, because the documented success of the intervention relied on the specialization of certified teachers.

Applicants proposing to replicate an evidence-based program with fidelity must describe how their program is the same as, or very similar to, the program they will replicate in the following areas:

- Characteristics of the beneficiary population
- Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention
- Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention
- Training for the AmeriCorps members and/or other individuals, such as volunteers, delivering the intervention
- The context in which the intervention is delivered
- Outcomes of the intervention

Applicants must also describe how they will assess whether they are implementing the intervention with fidelity to the intervention they are replicating.

In cases where the applicant is part of a multi-site program (for example, a national program operating in multiple states) that has conducted an evaluation that qualifies them for the moderate or strong evidence tier, but the evaluation did not include the applicant’s proposed sites, the applicant must describe how they are replicating the evidence-based program with fidelity at all of the sites included in the application. In this case, an application for sites included in the evaluation would receive moderate or strong evidence, and an application for the sites not included in the evaluation would receive preliminary evidence.

**Moderate evidence (7-9 points)** means the applicant has submitted up to two well-designed and well-implemented studies of their own program that evaluated the same intervention described in this application and identified evidence of effectiveness on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant’s logic model. Evidence of effectiveness (or positive findings) is determined using experimental design evaluations (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT)) or quasi-experimental design evaluations (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. The ability to generalize the findings from the RCT or QED beyond

the study context may be limited (e.g., single-site). The studies were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

Applicants classifying their evidence as Moderate must submit up to two evaluation reports from external entities or evaluations published in peer-reviewed articles as separate attachments.

CNCS grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two studies required for the Moderate evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three studies will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program, then more than two studies will not be considered.

**Strong evidence (10-12 points)** means the applicant has demonstrated that the intervention described in the application has been tested nationally, regionally, or at the state-level (e.g., multi-site) using a well-designed and well-implemented QED or RCT of their own program. Alternatively, the proposed intervention's evidence may be based on multiple (up to two) well-designed and well-implemented QEDs or RCTs of their own program indifferent locations or with different populations within a local geographic area. The overall pattern of study findings is consistently positive on the key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant's logic model. Findings from the RCT or QED studies may be generalized beyond the study context. The studies were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

Applicants classifying their evidence as **Strong** must submit up to two evaluation reports from external entities or evaluations published in peer-reviewed articles as separate attachments.

Corporation grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their Corporation funded program. The Corporation-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two studies required for the Strong evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three studies will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their Corporation funded program, then more than two studies will not be considered.

#### **5. Notice Priority (3 points)**

- The applicant proposed program fits within one or more of the 2017-18 AmeriCorps funding priorities as outlined in the Funding Priorities section and more fully described in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.
- The proposed program meets all of the requirements detailed in the Funding Priorities section and in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.

#### **6. Member Training (4 points)**

- AmeriCorps members will receive high quality training to provide effective service.

- AmeriCorps members and volunteers will be aware of, and will adhere to AmeriCorps requirements including the rules regarding prohibited activities (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance).

**7. Member Supervision (2 points)**

- AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service.
- AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations.

**8. Member Experience (3 points)**

- AmeriCorps members will gain skills and experience as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.
- AmeriCorps members will have access to meaningful service experiences.
- AmeriCorps members will have access to opportunities for reflection and connection to the broader National Service network.
- The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate.

**9. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification (2 points)**

- Members will know they are AmeriCorps members.
- Staff and community members where the members are serving will know they are AmeriCorps members.

**C. 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 (10 points)**

- The organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program.

As documentation of community support and commitment to the program please procure, keep on file, but do not submit, letter(s) from the applicant’s most significant community partner(s). The letter(s) should include what the partner(s) see as the benefit to the community provided by the applicant’s AmeriCorps members and what activities would not happen without the AmeriCorps members.

**2. Compliance and Accountability (15 points)**

- The organization will comply with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities at the grantee, subgrantee (if applicable), and service site locations.
- The applicant’s organization, in implementation and management of its AmeriCorps program, will prevent and detect compliance issues.
- The applicant will hold subgrantees (if applicable) and service site locations accountable if instances of risk or noncompliance are identified.

**D. 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 applicant has raised or describes an adequate plan to raise non-grant resources to fully support the program.
- The applicant, if re-competing, has a lower cost per Member Service Year (MSY – see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) 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 grantee share.

\*Program costs not included in the formal budget, including for Fixed Price grantees, must be described in this section in sufficient detail to allow reviewers to assess their sufficiency and alignment. Failure to provide adequate information in this section may result in a lower score.

Having a low cost per Member Service Year (MSY) is a competitive advantage. New applicants that submit with a low cost per MSY and re-competing 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 funded in previous years must justify their requests. If an applicant requests above the maximum cost per MSY (see Maximum Cost per MSY Section), it must justify its request. Please note that such requests are rarely approved.

**2. Budget Adequacy (7 points)**

- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.

Applicants must complete the budget and ensure the following information is in the budget narrative (requested information in the budget screens):

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

**E. Evaluation Plan (Required for re-competing grantees - 0 percent)**

If the applicant is competing for the first time, please enter N/A in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" field since it pertains only to re-competing grantees. If the applicant is re-competing for AmeriCorps funds for the first time (see definition of "re-competing" below) the program must submit its evaluation plan in the "Evaluation Summary or Plan" section of the Narratives field in eGrants. If the applicant is re-competing for a subsequent time, the program must submit its evaluation report (see the Submission of

Additional Documents section for more information), as well as an evaluation plan for the next three-year period in the “Evaluation Plan” field in eGrants. Evaluations plans submitted outside of eGrants will not be reviewed.

Evaluation plans must include as much information as possible for each of the following (see Frequently Asked Questions: Evaluation, available at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/cncs-evaluation-policies>):

- A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results
- Outcome of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation
- Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes
- Study components – a) a proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the designs elected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components; b) description of the sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures, and c) an analysis plan
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator
- The estimated budget.

For more information about evaluation plans visit the CNCS Knowledge Network’s Evaluation Resources:

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation>.

The evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of the grant, as described in 45 C.F.R. §2522.710:

- If the applicant is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee (other than an Education Award Program grantee), and its average annual Corporation program grant is \$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 the Commission and the Corporation for competitive funds as required in 45 C.F.R. §2522.730.
- If the applicant is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee whose average annual Corporation program grant is less than \$500,000, or an Education Award Program Grantee, it must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to the Commission and the Corporation for competitive funds as required in 45 C.F.R. §2522.730.

A program will be considered a recompeting application if it satisfies the definition of “same project” (see Mandatory Supplemental Guidance) 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 competitively funded 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 competitively funded three-year cycles, the applicant will be required to submit an evaluation report as well as an evaluation plan for the upcoming 3 year grant. If the project does not satisfy the definition of recompeting, it will not be required to submit an evaluation plan, or completed evaluation report.

The “Evaluation Summary or Plan” field of the Narrative does not count towards the page limit of the application; however, it does have a set character limit of 10,000

characters. Applicants should print out the plan to ensure the narrative does not exceed the character limits when entered in eGrants.

New York State subgrantees with an average annual Corporation program grant of \$500,000 or more that are recompeting for funds are eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. Grantees 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 grantee 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.nationalservicerresources.gov/files/guidance\\_for\\_grantees\\_approval\\_of\\_alternative\\_evaluation\\_approach.pdf](https://www.nationalservicerresources.gov/files/guidance_for_grantees_approval_of_alternative_evaluation_approach.pdf).

If the request for the alternative evaluation approach and the evaluation plan itself will exceed the character limit of the evaluation summary or plan field in eGrants, the applicant should do the following:

- Enter the evaluation plan in the evaluation summary or plan field in eGrants.
- Include a note in the evaluation summary or plan field stating that the applicant is requesting an alternative evaluation approach.
- Include the alternative evaluation approach at the END of the application narrative with the heading “REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPROACH.” This section of the application narrative will not count against the page limit.

#### **F. Amendment Justification (0 percent)**

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

#### **G. Clarification Information (0 percent)**

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

#### **H. Continuation Changes (0 percent)**

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

### **Criteria for Evidence Based Intervention Planning Grants**

#### **A. Executive Summary (fill in the blanks) (0 percent):**

The [Name of the organization] proposes to develop an AmeriCorps program serving in [the location(s) the AmeriCorps program will serve] that 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, tribal, and federal funds] in public funding and \$[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding. No AmeriCorps members will be needed to execute this plan.

## **B. Program Design (50 percent)**

### **1. Need (10 points):**

- The community need is prevalent and severe in communities where the program plans to serve and the need has been documented with relevant data.

### **2. Evidence-Based Intervention (30 points)**

- The evidence-based intervention has successfully addressed the need in other communities. The applicant must describe the evidence for the intervention in the application narrative and must submit at least one, and no more than two, randomized controlled trials (RCT) or quasi-experimental design (QED) evaluations of the intervention. If applicable, cite the clearinghouse and rating where the intervention is rated. The studies must be well-designed and well-implemented, must have been conducted by an independent, external evaluator, and must demonstrate, at minimum, evidence of effectiveness (positive findings) on one or more key outcomes that address the community problem/need.
- The key elements of the intervention will be implemented with fidelity to the evidence based model (e.g., context, target population, content or curriculum, delivery process, training for members).
- AmeriCorps members are well-suited to deliver the evidence-based intervention.

### **3. Planning Process/Timeline (10 points):**

- The applicant describes a clear and logical planning process, including:
  - A detailed description of the planning process and who is leading it.
  - A well-developed timeline for planning activities.
  - A clear description of how the planning period will be used to develop the necessary components to effectively manage an AmeriCorps program in the future.
- The applicant includes development of the following program elements in the planning process/timeline:
  - Theory of Change/Logic Model that describes implementation of the evidence-based intervention with fidelity and why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed outcomes
  - Member selection and training plan
  - Member supervision plan
  - Commitment to AmeriCorps Identity
  - Compliance and Accountability
  - Securing Match Support for the Program
- The applicant includes development of the following evaluation elements in the planning process/timeline:
  - Assessing fidelity to the evidence-based intervention being replicated, including a detailed accounting of which core components were modified as a result of integrating AmeriCorps members, how they were modified, and which core components were implemented with fidelity without adaptation
  - Assessing outcomes achieved in previous evaluations of the evidence-based intervention
  - Assessing any new outcomes anticipated as a result of integrating AmeriCorps members into the evidence based intervention

## **C. Organizational Capability (25 percent)**

### **1. Organizational Background and Staffing (25 points)**

- The applicant has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan the proposed program.
- The applicant has prior experience in the proposed area of programming.
- The applicant has conducted high-quality process and outcome evaluations and has used evaluation results for organizational learning and continuous improvement

## **D. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)**

(Same as other AmeriCorps Applications)

## **E. Evaluation Plan (0 percent)**

Evaluating the implementation and outcomes of proposed models will be critical to determining whether or not it is feasible to integrate national service into evidence-based interventions and achieve the same kinds of programmatic outcomes and impacts. As such, applicants should understand that they will be required to submit an evaluation plan with their subsequent application for a three-year AmeriCorps grant.

- A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results
- Outcome of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation
- Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes
- Study components – a) a proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the design selected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components; b) description of the sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures, and c) an analysis plan
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator
- The estimated budget.

## **5.2 Key Concepts**

### **2017 AmeriCorps State and National Notice of Funding Opportunity**

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/main-menu/2016/2017-notice-funding-opportunity>

### **2017 AmeriCorps State and National Application Instructions (Includes Budget Instructions)**

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2017%20ASN%20Application%20Instructions.pdf>

### **2017 Performance Measure Instructions**

### **Evaluation Resources for AmeriCorps State and National**

[http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2017%20Performance%20Measures%20Instructions\\_edited8-29-16.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2017%20Performance%20Measures%20Instructions_edited8-29-16.pdf)

## 2017 Mandatory Supplemental Guidance

[http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2017%20Mandatory%20Supplemental%20Guidance\\_0.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2017%20Mandatory%20Supplemental%20Guidance_0.pdf)

### **5.3 Proposal Content**

This section is intentionally left blank.

### **5.4 Proposal Submittal Process**

#### **How to Submit a Proposal**

#### **Prior to submitting a proposal, Not-for-profit organizations must prequalify in the Grants Gateway.**

If you are not already registered:

REGISTER WITH THE GRANTS GATEWAY – Registration forms are available at the GGS Website: <http://grantsreform.ny.gov>

Proposals must be submitted online via eGrants by the date and time posted on the cover of this RFP, <http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/egrants>. Late proposals will not be accepted. Proposals will not be accepted via fax, email, hard copy or hand delivery except under the circumstances noted below for submission outside of eGrants.

Submission Outside of eGrants: The Commission will only accept submissions outside of eGrants for two reasons:

- a. Lack of Access to Necessary Technology to Submit in eGrants: If an applicant does not possess access to web-based technology, that applicant must notify the Commission that it will be submitting its application outside of eGrants. Such notification must be by first class mail postmarked no later than Monday, November 21, 2016 to the address below, and must identify the reason(s) why the applicant cannot submit electronically.
- B. eGrants Technical Issues: All other applicants are required to submit their proposal electronically utilizing eGrants; however, the Commission recognizes that technical issues with electronic may arise. In order to submit an application under these circumstances by the published due date, applicants must make at least one attempt to submit via eGrants no later than Tuesday, November 29, 2016. If a technical issue with the eGrants system is discovered on or before November 29, 2016, the applicant must immediately contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask> to secure a Ticket Number (National Service Hotline hours are Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET.). Be prepared to provide the Application ID, organization's name, and the NOFA (Part I: Section 2) to which your organization is applying.

If the issue cannot be resolved after contacting the National Service Hotline, the following materials must be sent by overnight carrier and arrive (not be post-marked) at the Commission Office no later than noon EST on **Wednesday November 30, 2016**. The following must be included with your submission: (1) the National Service Hotline

Ticket Number and a brief paragraph explaining the technical issues that prevented submission of your application in eGrants by the due date; (2) a complete paper copy of the applicant's 2017-18 State AmeriCorps Application including all eGrants Application Components and Required Application Forms; and (3) an electronic version of the application on flash drive or CD-ROM. The electronic version must be an exact duplicate of the paper original. If there are differences between the paper and electronic versions, the Commission will review the electronic version as final.

An application submitted outside of eGrants must arrive at the Commission office no later than noon EST on November 30, 2016.

You must retain proof of submission, whether through electronic tracking or otherwise.

All hard copy applications must arrive no later than noon EST on November 30, 2016 at the following address:

**Linda J. Cohen, Executive Director  
New York State Commission on National & Community Service  
52 Washington Street  
North Building – Suite #338  
Rensselaer, New York 12144-2796**

## **6.0 OCFS Procedure for Handling Debriefing Requests, Formal Protests and Appeals**

### **6.1 Applicability**

The intent and purpose of these procedures is to define the debriefing process, as well as the protest and appeal procedures. This includes the steps that must be taken when an interested party challenges a contract award from OCFS. These procedures shall apply to all contract awards made by OCFS.

### **6.2 Definitions**

1. "Interested party" shall mean a participant in the procurement process and those whose participation in the procurement process has been foreclosed by OCFS.
2. "Contract award" shall mean a written determination from OCFS to an offerer, indicating that OCFS has accepted the offerer's bid or offer.
3. "Debriefing" is the practice whereby, upon request of a bidder, OCFS reviews with such bidder the reasons its bid was not selected for an award. It is viewed as a learning process so that the bidder will be better prepared to participate in future procurements.
4. "Formal Protest" shall mean a written challenge to an OCFS contract award.
5. "Procurement" shall mean any method used to solicit or establish a contract (e.g., invitation for bid, request for proposal, single/sole source, etc.)
6. "Protesting party" is the party who is filing a protest to the bid, contract award or other aspect of procurement.
7. "Formal protest determination" shall mean the determination of a formal protest by the associate commissioner for financial management of OCFS or his or her designee.
8. "Decision after appeal" shall mean the decision on the appeal of a formal protest by the executive deputy commissioner of OCFS or his or her designee.

### **6.3 Debriefing Request**

In accordance with section 163 of the NY State Finance Law, OCFS must, upon request, provide a debriefing to any unsuccessful offerer that responded to the RFP, regarding the reasons that the proposal or bid submitted by the unsuccessful offerer was not selected for an award.

1. OCFS will provide notice in writing or electronically to all unsuccessful offerers that the offerer will not receive a funded award under the RFP. An unsuccessful offerer wanting a debriefing must request a debriefing in writing, within fifteen calendar days of receipt of the notice from OCFS that the offerer's proposal did not result in an award.
2. OCFS, upon receipt of a timely written request from the unsuccessful offerer, will schedule the debriefing to occur within a reasonable period of time following the receipt of such request. Debriefings will be conducted in-person, unless OCFS and the offerer mutually agree to utilize other means, including, but not limited to, telephone, video-conferencing or other types of electronic communications.
3. Such debriefing will include: (a) the reasons that the proposal, bid or offer submitted by the unsuccessful offerer was not selected for an award; (b) the qualitative and quantitative analysis employed by OCFS in assessing the relative merits of the proposals, bids or offers; (c) the application of the selection criteria to the unsuccessful offerer's proposal; and (d) when the debriefing is held after the final award, the reasons for the selection of the winning proposal, bid or offer. The debriefing will also provide, to the extent practicable, general advice and guidance to the unsuccessful offerer concerning potential ways that their future proposals, bids or offers could be more responsive.

### **6.4 Formal Protest and Appeal Procedure**

Any interested party who believes that there are errors or omissions in the procurement process, who believes they have been aggrieved in the drafting or issuance of a bid solicitation or who believes they have been treated unfairly in the application, evaluation, bid award, or contract award phases of the procurement, may present a formal protest to OCFS and request administrative relief concerning such action.

#### **A. Submission of Bid or Award Protests**

##### **1. Deadline for Submission**

- a. Concerning "Alleged Errors," "Omissions" or "Prejudice" in the bid specifications or documents: Formal protests that concern alleged errors in the drafting of bid specifications must be received by OCFS at least ten (10) calendar days before the date set in the solicitation for receipt of bids.
- b. Concerning "Proposed Contract Award:" Formal protests concerning a pending contract award must be received within five (5) business days after the protesting party knows or should have known of the facts that constitute the basis of the formal protest. Formal protests will not be accepted by OCFS concerning a contract award after the contract between OCFS and the offerer who received the contract award has been approved by the NYS Office of the State Comptroller (OSC).

## B. Review and Formal Protest Determination

1. Formal protests must be filed with the OCFS associate commissioner for financial management. Any protests filed with the OCFS program division responsible for the procurement will be forwarded to the associate commissioner for financial management. Copies of all formal protests will be provided by the associate commissioner for financial management to the OCFS Division of Legal Affairs and other necessary parties within OCFS, as determined by the associate commissioner for financial management.
2. Formal protests shall be resolved through written correspondence; however, either the protesting party or OCFS may request a meeting to discuss a formal protest. Where further formal resolution is required, the program division responsible for the procurement may designate a state employee not involved in the procurement ("designee") to determine and undertake the initial attempted resolution or settlement of any formal protest.
3. The OCFS program division responsible for the procurement will conduct a review of the records involved in the formal protest, and provide a memorandum to the associate commissioner for financial management or the associate commissioner's designee summarizing the facts, an analysis of the substance of the protest, and a preliminary recommendation including: (a) an evaluation of the findings and recommendations, (b) the materials presented by the protesting party and/or any materials required of or submitted by other bidders, (c) the results of any consultation with the OCFS Division of Legal Affairs, and (d) a draft response to the formal protest.
4. The OCFS associate commissioner for financial management or his or her designee shall hear and make a formal protest determination on all formal protests. A copy of the formal protest determination, stating the reason(s) upon which it is based and informing the protesting party of the right to appeal an unfavorable decision to the OCFS executive deputy commissioner, shall be sent to the protesting party or its agent within thirty (30) business days of receipt of the formal protest, except that upon notice to the protesting party such period may be extended by OCFS. The formal protest determination will be recorded and included in the procurement record, or otherwise forwarded to the OSC.

## C. Appeal of Formal Protest Determination

1. If the protesting party is not satisfied with the formal protest determination, the protesting party **must** submit a written notice of appeal to the executive deputy commissioner of OCFS no more than fifteen (15) business days after the date the formal protest determination is sent to the protesting party.
2. The executive deputy commissioner or his or her designee shall hear and make a decision after appeal on all appeals.
3. An appeal may not introduce new facts unless responding to facts or issues unknown to the protesting party prior to the formal protest determination.

## D. Reservation of Rights and Responsibilities of OCFS

- OCFS reserves the right to waive or extend the time requirements for protest submissions, decisions and appeals herein prescribed when, in its sole judgment, circumstances so warrant to serve the best interests of the state.
- If OCFS determines that there are compelling circumstances, including the need to proceed immediately with contract award and development of final contracts in the best interests of the state, then these protest procedures may be suspended and such determination shall be documented in the procurement record.
- OCFS will consider all information relevant to the protest, and may, at its discretion, suspend, modify, or cancel the protested procurement action, including solicitation of bids, or withdraw the recommendation of contract award prior to issuance of a formal protest decision.
- OCFS will continue procurement and contract award activity prior to the formal protest determination. The receipt of a formal protest will not stop action on the procurement and award of the contract(s) or on development of final contracts.
  - a. The procurement record and awarded contract(s) will be forwarded to OSC, and a notice of the receipt of a formal protest and any appeal will be included in the procurement record. If a formal protest determination, or a decision after appeal, has been reached prior to transmittal of the procurement record and the contract(s) to OSC, a copy of the formal protest determination or decision after appeal will be included in the procurement record and with the contract(s).
  - b. If a formal protest determination or decision after appeal is made after the transmittal of the procurement record and contract(s) to OSC, but prior to OSC approval, a copy of the formal protest determination or decision after appeal will be forwarded to OSC when issued, along with a letter either: a) confirming the original OCFS recommendation for award(s); b) modifying the proposed award recommendation; or c) withdrawing the original award recommendation.
- All records related to formal protests and appeals shall be retained for at least one (1) year following resolution of the formal protest. All other records concerning the procurement shall be retained according to the applicable requirements for records retention.

### **6.5 Appeal to the NYS Office of the State Comptroller**

If the protesting party is still not satisfied with the result of its protest after conclusion of the formal protest and appeal procedure described above, the protesting party *must* file a written appeal with the OSC within ten business days of the date the protesting party received OCFS's protest determination. An appeal to the OSC's Bureau of Contracts must be in writing and must contain the specific factual and/or legal allegations setting forth the basis upon which the protesting party challenges the contract award by OCFS. Such appeal must be filed with the director of the Bureau of Contracts at the NYS Office of the State Comptroller, 110 State Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Albany, NY 12236.

### **6.6 OCFS Reserved Rights**

OCFS reserves the right to:

1. Place a monetary cap on the funding amount made in each contract award.
2. Change any of the schedule dates stated in this RFP prior to the due date for the submission of proposals.
3. Reject any or all proposals received in response to the RFP.
4. Withdraw the RFP at any time at the agency's sole discretion.
5. Make an award under the RFP in whole or in part.
6. Disqualify any bidder whose conduct and/or proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFP.
7. Reject any proposal if, in the sole discretion of OCFS, it determines the bidder is not a responsible vendor.
8. Seek clarification and revisions of proposals. Request bidders to present supplemental information clarifying their proposals either in writing or by formal presentation. New information is not permitted.
9. Require that bidders demonstrate, to the satisfaction of OCFS, any feature(s) present as a part of their proposal that may include an oral presentation of their proposal and may be considered in the evaluation of the proposal.
10. Amend any part of this RFP prior to opening of bids, with notification to all bidders, and direct all bidders to prepare modifications addressing RFP amendments, if necessary. Expenses incurred in the preparation of any proposals or modifications submitted in response to this RFP are the sole responsibility of the bidder or other party and will not be incurred by OCFS.
11. Make funding decisions that maximize compliance with and address the outcomes identified in this RFP.
12. Fund only one portion, or selected activities, of the selected bidder's proposal and/or adopt all or part of the selected bidder's proposal based on federal and state requirements.
13. Eliminate any RFP requirements that cannot be met by all prospective bidders upon notice to all parties that submitted proposals.
14. Waive procedural technicalities or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after notification to the bidder involved.
15. Correct any arithmetic errors in any proposal or make typographical corrections to proposals with the concurrence of the bidder.
16. Negotiate with the selected bidder(s) prior to contract award.
17. Conduct contract negotiations or award a contract to the next highest bidder if contract negotiations with the selected bidder(s) cannot be accomplished within an

acceptable time frame. No bidder will have any rights against OCFS arising from such actions.

18. Award contracts to more than one bidder or to other than the lowest bidder.

19. Require that all proposals be held valid for a minimum of 180 days from the closing date for receipt of proposals, unless otherwise expressly provided for in writing.

20. Fund any or all of the proposals received in response to this RFP. However, issuance of this RFP does not commit OCFS to fund any proposals. OCFS can reject any proposals submitted and reserves the right to withdraw or postpone this RFP without notice and without liability to any bidder or other party for expenses incurred in the preparation of any proposals submitted in response to this RFP and may exercise these rights at any time.

21. Use the proposal submitted in response to this RFP as part of an approved contract. At the time of contract development, awardees may be requested to provide additional budget and program information for the final contract.

22. Utilize any and all ideas submitted in the proposals received where an award is ultimately made.

23. Require clarification at any time during the procurement process and/or require correction of arithmetic or other apparent errors for the purpose of assuring a full and complete understanding of an offerer's proposal and/or to determine an offerer's compliance with the requirements of the solicitation.

24. Make additional awards based on the remaining proposals submitted in response to this RFP and/or provide additional funding to awardees if such funds become available.

25. Make inquiries of third parties, including but not limited to, bidders references, with regard to the applicants' experience or other matters deemed relevant to the proposal by OCFS. By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the applicant gives its consent to any inquiry made by OCFS.

26. Require contractors to participate in a formal evaluation of the program to be developed by OCFS. Contractors may be required to collect data for these purposes. The evaluation design will maintain confidentiality of participants and recognize practical constraints of collecting this kind of information.

27. Consider statewide distribution and regional distribution within New York City, including borough distribution methodology, in evaluating proposals.

28. Rescind awards for failure of awardees to meet timeframes that OCFS is required by statute to meet for contract approval.

29. Prior to the deadline for submission of proposals, any such clarifications or modifications as deemed necessary by OCFS will be posted in Grants Gateway and potential offerer will receive an email from Grants Gateway and the Online Bidders List (OBL) that have received access to this RFP. OCFS also reserves the right to cancel this RFP, in whole or in part, and to reject any and all proposals.

## 7.0 MANDATORY CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS

### 7.1 Contract Readiness

New York State's Prompt Contracting laws require all state agencies to complete contract development and the signatory process within statutorily-prescribed timeframes. Awardees must be available and prepared to respond within the required timeframes. If selected, awardees may be required to travel to Rensselaer, New York for contract development and will be expected to cover the costs of that travel. OCFS may rescind the awards of awardees who cannot satisfactorily complete the contracting process in order to commence services by the anticipated contract start date.

### 7.2 Standard Contract Language

The terms and conditions for all funded projects are specified in a detailed contract that must be signed by OCFS and approved by the New York State Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and the OSC before work begins or payments are made. This RFP includes all relevant contract terms and conditions, which can be found in Section 8: CONTRACT DOCUMENTS. Upon contract award and completion of negotiations, OCFS will send successful awardees the complete contract for development and signature prior to submitting it to the OAG and to OSC for approval.

### 7.3 Workers Compensation Insurance and Disability Benefits Coverage

Sections 57 and 220 of the Workers' Compensation Law (WCL) and section 142 of the State Finance Law require that businesses contracting with New York State have and maintain and provide evidence of appropriate workers' compensation and disability benefits insurance coverage. In the event that an award is made from this RFP, updated proof of coverage must be provided during contract development. Failure to submit the proof will delay the contract development process, and may result in the award being rescinded. Municipalities are not required to show proof of coverage.

**Please note: The ACCORD form is not acceptable proof of Workers' Compensation or Disability Insurance coverage.**

#### **A. Proof of Workers' Compensation Coverage**

To comply with coverage provisions of the WCL, the Workers' Compensation Board requires that a business seeking to enter into a state contract, or contract renewal, submit appropriate proof of coverage to the state contracting entity issuing the contract. To prove the awardee has appropriate workers' compensation insurance coverage, submit ONE of the following four forms: <http://www.wcb.ny.gov/content/main/forms/AllForms.jsp>

- **Form C-105.2** - *Certificate of Workers' Compensation Insurance* issued by private insurance carriers, or **Form U-26.3** issued by the State Insurance Fund ; or
- **Form SI-12** - *Certificate of Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance*; or **Form GSI-105.2** *Certificate of Participation in Workers' Compensation Group Self-Insurance*; or

- **CE-200** - *Certificate of Attestation of Exemption from NYS Workers' Compensation and/or Disability Benefits Coverage.*

## **B. Proof of Disability Benefits Coverage**

To comply with coverage provisions of the WCL regarding disability benefits, the Workers' Compensation Board requires that a business seeking to enter into a state contract, or contract renewal, submit appropriate proof of coverage to the state contracting entity issuing the contract. To prove the awardee has appropriate disability benefits insurance coverage, submit ONE of these three forms: <http://www.wcb.ny.gov/content/main/forms/AllForms.jsp>

- **Form DB-120.1** - *Certificate of Disability Benefits Insurance; or*
- **Form DB-155** - *Certificate of Disability Benefits Self-Insurance; or*
- **CE-200** - *Certificate of Attestation of Exemption from New York State Workers' Compensation and/or Disability Benefits Coverage.*

### **7.4 Contractor Employee and Volunteer Background/Confidentiality Non-Disclosure Agreement Forms (if applicable)**

OCFS is responsible for maintaining the safety of the youth in its care. New York State law requires that any client identifiable information be kept confidential. Any contractor who will provide goods and/or services to a residential facility or programs operated by OCFS must require all of its employees and volunteers who will have the potential for regular and substantial contact with youth in the care or custody of the commissioner of OCFS to complete and sign the [Confidentiality Non-Disclosure Agreement \(OCFS-4715\)](#) and [Contractor Employee and Volunteer Background Certification \(OCFS-4716\)](#) forms. These forms must be completed before any such employees and/or volunteers are permitted access to youth in the care or custody of OCFS, and/or any financial and/or client identifiable information concerning such youth. **The forms should be completed after the bidder has been awarded funding, during the contract development, and only if applicable.** For additional information see Attachment A-1, Section 3b. "[Confidentiality and Protection of Human Subjects](#)", located in Section 8.0: Contract Documents – Attachment A-1, Agency Specific Terms and Conditions.

### **7.5 Charities Registration (Not-for-Profit Corporations Only)**

Not-for-profit vendors must be registered with the New York State Office of the Attorney General as a charitable organization, and the registration must be up to date at the time of contracting. Vendors must be sure all their documents are up-to-date and comply with the vendor responsibility requirements as outlined below. To determine the status of your charities registration information, contact: [https://www.charitiesnys.com/RegistrySearch/search\\_charities.jsp](https://www.charitiesnys.com/RegistrySearch/search_charities.jsp)

### **7.6 Federal Requirements (If Federally Funded)**

See Attachment A-2, *Federally Funded Grants*, located in **Section 8 Contract Documents** for federally funded opportunities.

### **7.7 Required Electronic Payments and Substitute Form W-9**

The Governor's Office of Taxpayer Accountability has issued a directive that all state agency and state authority contracts, grants and purchase orders executed after February 28, 2010 shall require vendors, contractors and grantees to accept electronic payment (e-pay).

As New York State proceeds with implementing the new Statewide Financial System (SFS), the OSC is preparing a centralized vendor file. To assist OSC in this project, vendors are directed to provide a *Substitute Form W-9* which includes the taxpayer identification number, business name, and business contact person. This data is critical to ensure that the vendor file contains the information state agencies need in order to contract with and pay vendors.

Please note that the contractor payee name and address provided to OSC for the epay program must match exactly the contractor name and address contained in the contractor's contract with OCFS. If these do not match, then a check is printed and mailed to the payee. Note that limited exemptions may be granted for extenuating circumstances.

Vendors should file a *Substitute Form W-9* with their Electronic Payment Authorization form.

Further information concerning these requirements, including forms and contacts for questions, can be found at the following links:

<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/epay/how.htm>

<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/agencies/guide/MyWebHelp/>

(Guide to Financial

Operations)

## **7.8 Iran Divestment Act**

By submitting a bid in response to this solicitation or by assuming the responsibility of a contract awarded hereunder, bidder/contractor (or any assignee) certifies that it is not on the Prohibited Entities List, as defined by the *Entities Determined To Be Non-Responsive Bidders/Offerers Pursuant to The New York State Iran Divestment Act of 2012* (the Act), which is posted on the OGS website at <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/about/regs/docs/ListofEntities.pdf> and further certifies that it will not utilize on such contract any subcontractor that is identified on the "Prohibited Entities List." Bidder/contractor is advised that should it seek to renew or extend a contract awarded in response to the solicitation, it must provide the same certification at the time the contract is renewed or extended.

During the term of the contract, should OCFS receive information that a person (as defined in State Finance Law §165-a) is in violation of the above-referenced certifications, OCFS will review such information and offer the person an opportunity to respond. If the person fails to demonstrate that it has ceased engagement in the investment activity that is in violation of the Act within 90 days after the determination of such violation, then OCFS shall take such action as may be appropriate and provided for by law, rule, or contract, including, but not limited to, seeking compliance, recovering damages, terminating the contract or declaring the contractor in default.

OCFS reserves the right to reject any bid, request for assignment, renewal or extension for an entity that appears on the Prohibited Entities List prior to the award, assignment, renewal or extension of a contract and to pursue a responsibility review

with respect to any entity that is awarded a contract and appears on the Prohibited Entities List after contract award.

## **7.9 Statewide Financial System**

Recipients of grant awards must also be registered in the New York Statewide Financial System (SFS) Central Vendor Registry File and provide their identification number at the time of contracting. To register and for additional information on the vendor file, visit: [http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor\\_management/index.htm](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendor_management/index.htm)

## **7.10 Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) – Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) - Requirements and Procedures**

This section outlines contractor requirements and procedures for business participation opportunities for New York State certified Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) and Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) for minority group members and women.

### **7.10.1 New York State Executive Law (Article 15-A)**

Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) recognizes its obligation to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of certified Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of OCFS contracts.

In 2006, the State of New York commissioned a disparity study to evaluate whether MWBEs had a full and fair opportunity to participate in state contracting. The findings of the study were published on April 29, 2010, under the title *The State of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises: Evidence from New York* ("Disparity Study"). The report found evidence of statistically significant disparities between the level of participation of MWBEs in state procurement contracting versus the number of MWBEs that were ready, willing and able to participate in state procurements. As a result of these findings, the Disparity Study made recommendations concerning the implementation and operation of the statewide certified MWBE Program. The recommendations in the Disparity Study culminated in the enactment and implementation of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, which requires that OCFS establish goals for maximum feasible participation of New York State certified MWBEs and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of New York State contracts. In order to be recognized as a certified MWBE, a vendor must be for-profit and certified by New York's Empire State Development agency (ESD).

### **7.10.2 MWBE Business Participation Opportunities – OCFS Established Goals**

For purposes of this solicitation, OCFS hereby establishes an overall goal of 30 percent for MWBE participation. OCFS recommends that whenever practical, contractors attempt to equally utilize Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (MBE) (15 percent) and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (WBE) (15 percent) participation in the performance of the contract. It is expected that all contractors make a good faith effort to utilize MWBEs when there is an opportunity to subcontract or purchase supplies, goods and services in the performance of a

contract with OCFS, however, strict adherence to the suggested MBE and WBE utilization goal is not required as long as the overall goal of 30 percent is met.

A contractor must document good faith efforts to provide meaningful participation by MWBEs as subcontractors or suppliers in the performance of the contract and agrees that OCFS may withhold payment pending receipt of the required MWBE documentation. The directory of New York State Certified MWBEs can be viewed at: <https://ny.newnycontracts.com>. This website (New York State Contract System, or NYSCS) was developed to facilitate New York State's MWBE initiatives as set forth in Article 15-A of Executive Law. NYSCS offers tools that can be used by businesses, as well as New York State Agencies, to expand the role of minority- and women-owned businesses in the economic activities of New York State.

This website contains:

- A directory of all certified Minority- and Women-Owned Enterprises. This database is designed to allow end-users the capability to search for MWBE vendors in a variety of ways, for example, by region, product type, product category or name.
- A portal to be used by agencies and businesses at the prime and sub-prime level to record, monitor and report MWBE goal attainment in state-funded contracting. (The NYSCS allows only the reporting of money spent with certified MWBEs.)
- Links to the latest bid and grant opportunities from state agencies, authorities and state universities.
- Information on ESD and the governor's MWBE program.

Vendors interested in doing business with New York State agencies are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this resource before the contracting process begins since it contains the information needed to identify certified MWBEs, which is required for compliance.

For guidance on how OCFS will determine a contractor's "good faith efforts," refer to 5 NYCRR §142.8 at the following website:

[http://www.esd.ny.gov/MWBE/Data/122210\\_MWBE15-ARegs.pdf](http://www.esd.ny.gov/MWBE/Data/122210_MWBE15-ARegs.pdf)

In accordance with 5 NYCRR §142.13 (Provisions in Contracts; Violations), the contractor acknowledges that if it is found to have willfully and intentionally failed to comply with the MWBE participation goals set forth in the contract, such finding constitutes a breach of contract and OCFS may withhold or recover payment from the contractor as liquidated or other damages, as well as impose other such remedies as determined necessary. Such liquidated damages shall be calculated up to an amount equaling the difference between: (1) all sums identified for payment to MWBEs had the contractor achieved the contractual MWBE goals; and (2) all sums actually paid to MWBEs for work performed or materials supplied under the contract.

### **7.10.3 Notice of Deficiency (Issued to Contractor if Warranted by OCFS)**

OCFS expects its contractors to demonstrate good faith efforts to provide meaningful participation by MWBEs as subcontractors or suppliers in the establishment of MWBE goals in accordance with agency standards and in the performance of the contract. This includes the contractor's requirements to properly document said

efforts. OCFS will work collaboratively with contractors, whenever possible, to lend technical assistance to accomplish successful compliance with the requirements set forth in Article 15-A of the NYS Executive Law to minimize the need for punitive or other corrective actions.

However, when it is determined that no other recourse is possible, a **Notice of Deficiency** may be issued to the contractor. The issuance of a Notice of Deficiency may occur during contract development, prior to full execution of the contract, or at any point during the term of the contract. The determination of deficiency will be made by OCFS, following the review of information provided by the contractor.

If OCFS issues a Notice of Deficiency, the contractor must respond to the notice within seven (7) business days of receipt by submitting a written remedy to the attention of the Contract Compliance Officer at this address:

NYS Office of Children and Family Services  
Equal Opportunities and Diversity Development Unit  
Room 205 South Building  
52 Washington Street, Rensselaer, NY 12144  
ATTN: Contract Compliance Officer

If the written remedy submitted is not timely or is found by OCFS to be inadequate, OCFS may notify the contractor of any inadequacies in the response. As a result, the contractor may be directed by OCFS to submit [OCFS-4442, M/WBE Request for Waiver Form](#), within seven (7) business days, requesting either a partial or total waiver of MWBE participation goals. Failure to file the *M/WBE Request for Waiver Form* in a timely manner may be grounds for disqualification of the proposal or contract. The completed form, along with required documentation, must be **signed and emailed to: [MWBEinfo@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:MWBEinfo@ocfs.ny.gov)**.

Please be advised *there are no automatic waivers*. All requests for waivers will require both the approval of OCFS and the governor's office.

#### **7.10.4 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Requirements**

By submission of this proposal, the bidder/contractor agrees with all of the terms and conditions of the State of New York Master Contracts for Grants, including Section IV. Additional Contractor Obligations, Representations and Warranties, J. Equal Opportunities for Minorities and Women; Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises and Appendix MWBE. The contractor is required to ensure that any subcontractors awarded a subcontract over \$100,000 for the construction, demolition, replacement, major repair, renovation, planning or design of real property and improvements thereon (the "work") except where the work is for the beneficial use of the contractor, shall undertake or continue programs to ensure that minority group members and women are afforded employment opportunities without discrimination because of race, creed (religion), color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, age, disability, predisposing genetic characteristic, marital status or domestic violence victim status, and shall also follow the requirements of the Human Rights Law with regard to non-discrimination on the basis of prior criminal conviction and prior arrest. For these purposes, EEO shall apply in the areas of recruitment, employment, job assignment, promotion, upgrading, demotion, transfer, layoff, or termination and rates of pay or other forms of compensation.

Further, pursuant to Article 15 of the Executive Law (the “Human Rights Law”) and all other state and federal statutory and constitutional non-discrimination provisions, the contractor and sub-contractors will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed (religion), color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, age, disability, predisposing genetic characteristic, marital status or domestic violence victim status, and shall also follow the requirements of the Human Rights Law with regard to non-discrimination on the basis of prior criminal conviction and prior arrest; will undertake or continue existing EEO programs to ensure that minority group members and women are afforded equal employment opportunities without discrimination, and shall make and document its conscientious and active efforts to employ and utilize minority group members and women in its work force.

#### **7.10.5 Required Documentation**

By submitting this proposal, bidder/contractor agrees to complete and submit the following forms, documents and/or requested information, as required or applicable, as evidence of compliance with the foregoing. Once a contract is awarded, OCFS may disqualify a contractor as being non-responsive if the contractor fails to submit any of the forms/documents which are required during contract development, or if OCFS determines that the contractor has failed to document good faith efforts to comply with Article 15-A.

It is expected that all contractors make a good-faith effort to utilize Minority- and Women- Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) when there is an opportunity to subcontract or purchase supplies, goods and services in the performance of a contract with OCFS.

##### **a. Project Staffing Plan**

[OCFS-4629 - Project Staffing Plan Form](#)

(\*Applies to contract awardees ONLY)

This form is required for contracts with a total value in excess of \$250,000. To ensure compliance with the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Section above, the contractor shall submit a *Project Staffing Plan* to document the composition of the proposed workforce to be utilized in the performance of the contract by the specified categories listed, including ethnic background, gender, and federal occupational categories. It must be completed by the awardee and submitted prior to the state date of the contract. **The completed form should be signed and emailed to: [MWBEINFO@OCFS.NY.GOV](mailto:MWBEINFO@OCFS.NY.GOV).**

##### **b. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement**

[OCFS-3460 – MWBE – Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement](#)

(\*Applies to contract awardees ONLY)

This document is to be completed by the contractor and submitted to OCFS, pursuant to Article 15-A of the NYS Executive Law. *OCFS-3460 is provided to contractors/ subcontractors as a model Policy Statement and may be used if the contractor/ subcontractor lacks an MWBE-EEO Policy Statement that is acceptable pursuant to Article 15-A.* The contractor/subcontractor has the option to use this model statement or create an appropriate MWBE–EEO Policy Statement to be submitted to OCFS for approval. More information on the MWBE-EEO Policy

Statement can be found in the [MWBE Appendix](#). **The completed form should be signed and emailed to: [MWBEINFO@OCFS.NY.GOV](mailto:MWBEINFO@OCFS.NY.GOV).**

**c. MWBE Utilization Plan**

[OCFS-4631 – MWBE Utilization Plan Form](#)  
(\*Applies to contract awardees ONLY)

During the contract development stage, the awardee must provide an MWBE Utilization Plan for the purpose of identifying anticipated MWBE utilization and during the term of a contract to report actual MWBE participation goals achieved. Contractors should attempt to utilize, in good faith, any MBE or WBE identified on the *MWBE Utilization Plan Form* during the performance of the contract. OCFS requires that all entities awarded state-funded contracts submit MWBE utilization plans via the website (known as New York State Contract System – NYSCS) located at <https://ny.newnycontracts.com>. **The completed form should be signed and emailed to: [MWBEINFO@OCFS.NY.GOV](mailto:MWBEINFO@OCFS.NY.GOV).**

**d. MWBE Compliance Reporting**

[OCFS-4441 - MWBE Quarterly Report Form](#)  
(\*Applies to contract awardees ONLY)

Information relating to the MWBE utilization in the performance of the contract must be reported periodically throughout the term of the contract. This form is to be completed and submitted by the contractor within 30 days following the end of each applicable reporting quarter over the term of the contract, documenting the progress made toward achievement of the MWBE goals of the contract. Contracts containing state funds must report this information through the New York State Contract System (NYSCS) at <https://ny.newnycontracts.com>. **The completed form should be signed and emailed to: [MWBEINFO@OCFS.NY.GOV](mailto:MWBEINFO@OCFS.NY.GOV).**

It is the policy of New York State to maximize opportunities for the participation of New York State business enterprises, including Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises as bidders, subcontractors and suppliers on its procurement contracts.

Information on the availability of New York State subcontractors and suppliers is available on the internet at [www.esd.ny.gov](http://www.esd.ny.gov). For additional information and assistance, contact:

NYS Department of Economic Development  
Division for Small Business  
Albany, New York 12245  
Telephone: 518-292-5100  
Fax: 518-292-5884  
Email: [opa@esd.ny.gov](mailto:opa@esd.ny.gov)

A directory of certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises is available from:

NYS Department of Economic Development  
Division of Minority and Women's Business Development

633 Third Avenue  
New York, New York 10017  
Telephone: 212-803-2414  
Email: [MWBEcertification@esd.ny.gov](mailto:MWBEcertification@esd.ny.gov)  
<https://ny.newnycontracts.com>

Note: Companies requesting lists of potential subcontractors and suppliers are encouraged to identify the SIC code, size and location of vendors.

#### **7.11 Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (SDVOB)**

[The Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act](#), signed into law by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo on May 12, 2014, allows eligible veteran business owners to become certified as a New York State Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (SDVOB) in order to increase the participation of such businesses in New York State's contracting opportunities. The SDVOB Act, which is codified under Article 17-B of the Executive Law, acknowledges that SDVOBs strongly contribute to the economies of the state and the nation. Therefore, and consistent with its Master Goal Plan, OCFS strongly encourages vendors who contract with OCFS to consider the utilization of certified SDVOBs that are responsible and responsive for at least six (6) percent of discretionary non-personnel service spending in the fulfillment of the requirements of their contracts with OCFS. Such partnering may include utilizing certified SDVOBs as subcontractors, suppliers, protégés, or in other supporting roles to the maximum extent practical, and consistent with the legal requirements of the State Finance Law and the Executive Law. Certified SDVOBs may be readily identified through the directory of certified businesses at: [http://ogs.ny.gov/Core/docs/CertifiedNYS\\_SDVOB.pdf](http://ogs.ny.gov/Core/docs/CertifiedNYS_SDVOB.pdf).

For additional information relating to the use of certified SDVOBs in contract performance, and participation by SDVOBs with respect to State contracts through Set Asides, please refer to the following:

- [Use of Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises in Contract Performance](#)
- [Participation by Service-Disabled Veterans with Respect to State Contracts Through Set Asides](#)
- <http://ogs.ny.gov/Core/SDVOBA.asp>

#### **7.12 Omnibus Procurement Act**

The *Omnibus Procurement Act of 1992* requires that by signing a bid proposal, contractors certify that whenever the total bid amount is greater than \$1 million:

1. The contractor has made reasonable efforts to encourage the participation of New York State Business Enterprises as suppliers and subcontractors on this project and has retained the documentation of these efforts to be provided upon request to the State of New York; and has
2. Documented their efforts to encourage the participation of New York state business enterprises as suppliers and subcontractors by showing that they have:
  - Solicited bids, in a timely and adequate manner, from ESD business enterprises, including certified minority/women-owned businesses; or

- Contacted ESD to obtain listings of New York State business enterprises and MWBEs; or
  - Placed notices for subcontractors and suppliers in newspapers, journals or other trade publications distributed in New York State, or
  - Participated in bidder outreach conferences; and
  - Provided a statement indicating the method by which they determined that New York State business enterprises are not available to participate on the contract as subcontractors or suppliers, *if the contractor has determined such*; and
  - Provided a statement verifying no intention of using subcontractors, *if the contractor has no such intention*.
3. The contractor has complied with the *Federal Equal Opportunity Act of 1972* (P.L. 92-961), as amended.
  4. The contractor will be required to notify New York State residents of employment opportunities by listing any such positions with the Community Services Division of the New York State Department of Labor, providing for such notification in such manner as is consistent with existing collective bargaining contracts or agreements. The agency agrees to document these efforts and to provide said documentation to OCFS upon request.
  5. Bidders located in a foreign country are notified that the state may assign or otherwise transfer offset credits to third parties located in New York State, and the bidders shall be obligated to cooperate with the state in any and all respects in making such assignment or transfer, including, but not limited to, executing any and all documents deemed by the state to be necessary or desirable to effectuate such assignment or transfer and using their best efforts to obtain the recognition and accession to such assignment or transfer by any applicable foreign government.
  6. Bidders are hereby notified that state agencies and authorities are prohibited from entering into contracts with businesses whose principle place of business is located in a “discriminatory jurisdiction.” Discriminatory jurisdiction is defined as a state or political subdivision which employs a preference or price distorting mechanism to the detriment of or otherwise discriminates against a New York State business enterprise in the procurement of commodities and services by the same or a nongovernmental entity influenced by the same. A list of discriminatory jurisdiction is maintained by the ESD commissioner.

**7.13 Other Requirements (Optional)**

*Include in this section any special requirements that will become part of contract, for example, special licenses or certifications, insurance policies, or particulars cited for the enabling legislation.*

**8.0 CONTRACT DOCUMENTS**

The contract documents consist of the documents listed below.

1. Face Page
2. Signatory Page
3. NYS Standard Terms and Conditions (State of New York Master Contract for Grants)
4. Attachment A-1 (Agency-Specific Terms and Conditions)
5. Attachment A-2 (Federally Funded Grants)

6. Attachment B: Budget and Instructions
7. Attachment C: Work Plan
8. Attachment D: Payment and Reporting Schedule

NYS Standard Terms and Conditions (State of New York Master Contract for Grants) is located in the **NYS Grants Gateway System (GGS)** at the following link:

[http://www.grantsreform.ny.gov/sites/default/files/docs/nys\\_master\\_contract\\_for\\_grants\\_8\\_14.pdf](http://www.grantsreform.ny.gov/sites/default/files/docs/nys_master_contract_for_grants_8_14.pdf)

## 9.0 OCFS GLOSSARY OF OUTCOME-BASED CONTRACTING TERMS

**Fiscal Documentation:** Documentation necessary for payment.

**Grants Gateway:** The New York State Grants Gateway went live on May 15, 2013, and serves as the primary outlet for state agencies to post upcoming and available funding opportunities.

**Guide To Financial Operations (GFO):** This website was created as the central storehouse of OSC policies and is intended to replace individual OSC Bulletins. The GFO can be found at

<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/agencies/guide/MyWebHelp>.

**Legal Documents:** Legally required application/contract components.

**Organizational Qualifications:** The organizational characteristics and capacity (i.e. agency mission, past accomplishments/experience in serving the target population or in providing similar services to a different population, experience in collaborating with community agencies needed for program success, key people, and fiscal capability) that are likely to result in successful performance target attainment.

**Baseline Estimate:** The projected status of the target population without the proposed intervention. A baseline is the best estimate, using prior program experience, collected data, or research results, of what would happen to the target population without the program's intervention and its benefits. Projection should be numerical (a number or a percentage). A baseline estimate is required for each performance target.

**Outcomes:** The desired benefits or changes for the target population following their interaction with a program. These are the expected results of program intervention. Outcomes may relate to knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors or condition. Either the investor or provider may set them. (They are broader, more general than performance targets. They do not require numerical projection). In some instances the outcome may be a system change rather than an individual behavior change.

**Performance Targets:** Performance targets are the *measurable* verifiable improvements in the condition or behavior of program recipients that the provider expects to achieve *by the end of the contract period*. Targets are quantifiable and verifiable indicators of program performance. They contribute to the attainment of the desired outcomes for the target population. Attainment of several performance targets may be needed to indicate the achievement of a single outcome. Performance targets must include a description of the methods that will be used to verify target achievement.

**Milestones:** *Measurable interim* changes in the condition or behavior of the target population used to track whether the program is on course to achieve its performance

targets. These are critical points of change or target population achievement that must occur to progress towards the performance targets. You must include a description of the methods that will be used to verify milestone achievement.

**Program Budget:** Definition of program expenditures and funding sources.

**Program Description:** Detailed explanation of the means (service model, plan or approach) the provider will use to achieve its performance targets and outcomes. This should include a description of the program's core features (i.e., the kinds of services provided, their intensity and duration, the essential elements, theoretical approach, delivery strategies, involvement of target population in planning, etc.).

**Project Work Plan:** Steps necessary to implement a program. This is most relevant to new applicants and start-ups.

**Staffing Pattern:** Please identify the staff assigned to a program, regardless of whether it is paid through OCFS funds.

**Target Population:** Please describe the specific group of people (individuals, families, community members or certain instances, specified personnel or entity) that are the focus of change, and who will directly interact with the program. In certain instances where the desired outcome is systemic change, the agency as a whole may be considered the target population.

**Verification:** Statement of methods used to verify performance target and milestone attainment and/or submission of actual documentation.

**Vendor Responsibility:** Compliance with New York State Finance Law and guideline provisions related to vendor integrity providing reasonable assurance that the potential contractor has the capacity to perform the requirement of the contract. This includes authority to do business in the state, capacity and performance in addition to aforementioned integrity.

**Vision:** OCFS Program Area Statement of ideal end-state sought for a population (e.g., prevention of child abuse and neglect).

## **10.0 PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS AND FORMS**

This section is intentionally left blank.