



Request for Proposals and Application Instructions
2024-2025 AmeriCorps State Formula Program Grant Funds

RFP #2425WNCSB-ACF

Issued by:

State of Wisconsin

Serve Wisconsin – Wisconsin National and Community Service Board

A Notification of Intent to Apply is required for all applicants.

Access the Notification of Intent to Apply at

<https://forms.gle/SDrk5RXwFPvYbF1a9>

Notifications of Intent to Apply must be submitted by
Thursday, February 22, 2024 by 12:00pm midnight (Central Time)

All Proposals and Required Additional Documents must be received by
Tuesday, March 12, 2024 by 4:30pm (Central Time)

For further information regarding this Request for Proposals, send an email to
ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov

All questions must be submitted via email.

Questions about this Request for Proposals will be accepted until
Friday, March 8, 2024 at 12:00pm midnight

Note From the Executive Director

Thank you for your interest in starting a new AmeriCorps program by applying for an AmeriCorps Formula Program Grant for the coming year. With the challenges we face across the state, we need to harness the power of service more than ever. Whether you are addressing the education gap, climate change, helping people access health care, improving public health, assisting the unhoused, or advancing racial equity, we look forward to the positive impact you will have across the state.

This Request for Proposal & Instructions (RFP) document will walk you through the proposal process and requirements. You can find additional resources, videos, and contact information on the [Serve Wisconsin](#) website.

Last year we hosted 625 AmeriCorps members across 24 programs, and we look forward to growing and strengthening our programs across the state. We are committed to supporting greater diversity, equity, and inclusion within Serve Wisconsin, our programs, and our AmeriCorps members.

At Serve Wisconsin, we view all funded organizations as our partners in achieving our mission to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. We are here to support you through the application process and beyond; the coming year promises to help us achieve even more together.

We can't wait to learn more about your program!

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2024 Serve Wisconsin AmeriCorps Formula Program RFP

Application Dates and Deadlines

Date	Description
Monday, February 5	Request for Proposals released
Thursday, February 22	Notification of Intent to Apply due by midnight
Friday, March 8	Last day to email questions about the Request for Proposals
Monday, March 11	Final Questions & Answers from applicants posted online
Tuesday, March 12	Applications and Additional Documents due
Tuesday, March 12	Alternative Match Requests Due (if applicable)
Tuesday, April 2	Applications will be returned to applicants for revisions
Mid-April	Expected AmeriCorps Notification Date of Competitive awards
Thursday, April 18	Revisions due to Serve Wisconsin <i>There may be further revisions after this date</i>
Tuesday, April 30	Program Evaluation & Development Committee meeting, @ 101 E. Wilson, Madison, WI. <i>All recommended applicants are required to present to committee</i>
Thursday, May 9	Wisconsin National and Community Service Board (WNCSB) Meeting 101 E. Wilson, Madison or Zoom
Friday, May 17	Board-approved applications due to AmeriCorps

Meeting dates will be posted on the [Serve Wisconsin](#) website, and all meetings are publicized as open meetings. Please check the website for up-to-date schedules. Email ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov with questions.

Application Resources

Please use this document to apply for AmeriCorps Wisconsin State Formula Program (Operational) Grant funding for program year 2024-25.

AmeriCorps State Formula Program grants are awarded to organizations that propose to place AmeriCorps members in service solely within Wisconsin. Selected organizations will receive grants to support AmeriCorps member members that engage in service to meet critical needs in Wisconsin.

Use this document in conjunction with the [AmeriCorps Regulations](#) and the [AmeriCorps Mandatory Supplemental Information](#) to complete an AmeriCorps Wisconsin Formula Program Grant proposal for program year 2024-25.

This AmeriCorps Wisconsin State Formula Program Request for Proposals document, and other resources to help complete this application, can be found on the [Serve Wisconsin](#) webpage. Serve Wisconsin strongly recommends completing online training courses provided by [On3Learn](#) as applicants write their proposal, which are provided at no cost. For details on how to access On3Learn courses for free, please email ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov.

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Table 1. Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Topic	AmeriCorps Regulations
What service activities may I support with my grant?	45 CFR §2520.20 - §2520.55
What activities are prohibited in AmeriCorps subtitle C programs?	45 CFR §2520.65
What basic qualifications must an AmeriCorps member have to serve as a tutor?	45 CFR §2522.900-2522.950
Who must comply with matching requirements?	45 CFR §2521.35-2521.90
What financial benefits do AmeriCorps participants serving in approved AmeriCorps positions receive?	45 CFR §2522.240-2522.250
How do I calculate my program's budgeted Corporation cost per member service year (MSY)?	45 CFR §2522.485
May I use the Corporation's program grant funds for performance measurement and evaluation?	45 CFR §2522.500-2522.650
Evaluation Requirements: What are performance measures and performance measurement?	45 CFR §2522.500-2522.650
What are my Evaluation Requirements?	§2522.700-2522.740
What process does AmeriCorps use to select new grantees?	45 CFR §2522.400-2522.475

If there is any inconsistency between the [AmeriCorps federal regulations](#) and this Request for Proposals, the regulations take precedence.

I. Program Description

The mission of AmeriCorps is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps has helped engage millions of people to meet community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

AmeriCorps Wisconsin Formula Program Grants are awarded to eligible organizations (see [Eligible Applicants](#) section) proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions/practices to strengthen communities.

An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. AmeriCorps 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 they can use to pay for higher education expenses or to pay qualified student loans.

The purpose of this Request for Proposal & Instructions (RFP) document is to provide interested parties with information to enable them to prepare and submit a proposal for AmeriCorps Wisconsin Formula Program (Operational) funding for the creation, expansion, or enhancement of programs that meet the requirements of the AmeriCorps national service program.

A. About Serve Wisconsin

Serve Wisconsin is Wisconsin's National and Community Service Board. Serve Wisconsin's mission is to promote service, provide training, and allocate resources to programs that enrich lives and communities through service and volunteerism. Serve Wisconsin achieves this mission primarily through our work with AmeriCorps programs and AmeriCorps members throughout the State of Wisconsin. Serve Wisconsin is governed by a 21-member citizen board that is appointed by the Governor.

AmeriCorps is a federal agency that funds organizations to make positive impacts in communities. To support the placement of AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in communities, AmeriCorps provides more than \$800 million in grants every year.

B. Focus Areas and Funding Priorities

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 maximize the impact of investment in national service, AmeriCorps has the following focus areas:

- **Environmental Stewardship:** Supporting communities to become more resilient through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve land and water, increase renewable energy use and improve at-risk ecosystems, especially in underserved households and communities.
- **Disaster Services:** Helping individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of disasters and increase community resiliency.
- **Economic Opportunity:** Improving the economic well-being and security of underserved individuals.
- **Education:** Improving educational outcomes for underserved people, especially children. AmeriCorps is particularly interested in program designs that support youth engagement and service learning as strategies to achieve high educational outcomes.
- **Healthy Futures:** Supporting health needs within communities, including mitigating the impacts of public health crises, access to care, aging in place, public health and addressing childhood obesity, especially in underserved communities.
- **Veterans and Military Families:** Improving the quality of life for veterans, military families, caregivers, and survivors.

Funding Priorities

To receive priority consideration, applicants must show that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes. AmeriCorps' funding priorities for this grant competition are:

- Organizations leading service in communities with concentrated poverty, rural communities, tribal communities, and those organizations serving historically underrepresented and underserved individuals, including but not limited to communities of color, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, people who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community, people with arrest and/or conviction records, and religious minorities;
- Evidence-based interventions on the [AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange](#) that are assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence. Please note that many of these interventions have demonstrated effectiveness in improving outcomes for individuals living in underserved communities and that the agency has committed resources to supporting grantees seeking to replicate and evaluate these interventions in similar communities;
- Veterans and Military Families, Caregivers, and Survivors – a program model that improves the quality of life of veterans and improves the well-being of military and veteran families, caregivers, and survivors;
- Faith-based organizations;

- Programs that provide additional benefits to AmeriCorps members aimed at enhancing member experience and bolstering member recruitment and retention such as paying more than the minimum living allowance, transportation, housing, food, etc.;
- Programs that create workforce pathways for AmeriCorps members, including deliberate training, certifications, and hiring preferences or support;
- Environmental Stewardship, including supporting communities to become more resilient through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve land and water, increase renewable energy use and improve at-risk ecosystems, especially in underserved households and communities;
- Community-based programs that enhance and expand services to second chance youth and/or engage those youth as AmeriCorps members;
- Programs that support civic bridgebuilding programs and projects to reduce polarization and community divisions; and providing training in civic bridgebuilding skills and techniques to AmeriCorps members;
- Programs focused on implementing or expanding access to high-quality early learning and those that prepare AmeriCorps members to enter early learning careers.

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

C. Federal Grant Award Information

1. Estimated Available Funds

Serve Wisconsin expects a highly competitive grant competition. AmeriCorps and Serve Wisconsin reserve the right to prioritize providing funding to existing awards over making new awards. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

2. Estimated Award Amount

Award amounts will vary, as determined by the scope of the projects and available funding.

3. Period of Performance

The project period is generally one year with a start date of either August 15 or September 1, 2024, and end date of either August 14 or August 31, 2025, respectively. Continuation awards for subsequent years are not guaranteed; they depend on availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance.

4. Types of Funding Awards Available

There are three types of Serve Wisconsin AmeriCorps program funding awards available for the 2024-25 program year.

This Request for Proposal & Instructions (RFP) document provides information to prepare and submit a proposal for AmeriCorps Wisconsin Formula Program (Operational) funding for the creation, expansion, or enhancement of programs that meet AmeriCorps requirements.

- **AmeriCorps State Formula Program (Operational) Grants**
Formula Program Grants are awarded to fund a portion of program costs and AmeriCorps members' living allowance. Serve Wisconsin determines which applications receive AmeriCorps State Formula Program Grants in the State of Wisconsin.
- **AmeriCorps State Formula Planning Grants**
AmeriCorps State Formula Planning grants of up to \$75,000 are awarded on a competitive basis to allow organizations to begin developing their plans to manage an AmeriCorps program. Planning grant activities may involve work to establish a new program in Wisconsin or to replicate a successful existing program model in unserved or underserved areas of the state. Organizations use planning grants to become better prepared to compete for an AmeriCorps program grant in the subsequent grant cycle. Planning grants may not be used to support AmeriCorps members and costs associated with writing an AmeriCorps application may not be charged as direct costs to the grant. To apply for an AmeriCorps State Formula Planning Grant, please [click here](#) to see the Request for Proposals for Planning Grants.
- **AmeriCorps State Competitive Program (Operational) Grants**
These grants are awarded to fund a portion of program costs and AmeriCorps members' living allowance. *AmeriCorps State Competitive applications are submitted to Serve Wisconsin through a separate RFP process.* Eligible applications are reviewed at the state level and then sent to AmeriCorps (federal agency) where they are selected for funding or returned to the state for further consideration under the Formula grant process. Serve Wisconsin is not currently accepting applications for Competitive Program Grants.

This Request for Proposals & Instructions (RFP) document is only for AmeriCorps Wisconsin Formula Program (Operational) grants.

5. Types of Grant Awards Available

There are two types of grants: Cost Reimbursement and Fixed Amount.

Fixed Amount grants are limited to applicants who have received at least three years of funding from Serve Wisconsin and/or Professional Corps (as they are not eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement grants). See [Table 2](#) below for more information. AmeriCorps will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year.

Table 2. Serve Wisconsin AmeriCorps Formula Program Grant Types

<i>Grant Types</i>	<i>Cost Reimbursement</i>	<i>Fixed Amount</i>			
		<i>Full-Cost</i>	<i>Education Award Program (EAP)</i>	<i>Professional Corps</i> <i>See MSI for further requirements</i>	<i>No Cost Slots</i>
<i>Available Subtypes</i>	<i>Traditional Formula</i>				
<i>Maximum Cost per MSY*</i>	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$800 or \$1,000**	\$1,000	\$0
<i>Type of Slots in the National Service Trust</i>	FT, TQT, HT, RHT, QT, MT, AT	FT, TQT, HT, RHT, QT, MT, AT	FT, TQT, HT, RHT, QT, MT, AT	FT only	FT, TQT, HT, RHT, QT, MT, AT
<i>Budget Submission Required</i>	Yes	No		No	No
<i>Availability of funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSYs</i>	No	Yes			No
<i>Special Requirements</i>	N/A	N/A		Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries and benefits must be paid	N/A

			entirely by organization where member serves and not included in budget.	
<i>Financial Reporting Requirements</i>	Yes	No		
<i>Available to New Applicants</i>	Yes	No	Yes	

FT = Full Time, TQT = Three Quarter Time, HT = Half Time, RHT = Reduced Half Time, QT = Quarter Time, MT = Minimum Time, AT = Abbreviated Time

6. Funding Requirements

a) AmeriCorps member Living Allowance

A living allowance is not considered a salary or wage.

Programs are required to provide a living allowance for AmeriCorps members serving in Full-Time terms of service.

Programs are not required to provide a living allowance for AmeriCorps 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 AmeriCorps (*CNCS Share* column) or grantee share. Exceptions are noted below.

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

Table 3. Member Service Year (MSY) + Living Allowance Amounts

Service Term Type	Min # of Hours	Member Service Year (MSY) Calculation	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Living Allowance
Full-Time	1,700	1.00000000	\$18,700	\$37,400
Three-Quarter Time	1,200	0.70000000	n/a	\$26,180
Half-Time	900	0.50000000	n/a	\$18,700
Reduced Half-Time	675	0.38095240	n/a	\$14,212
Quarter-Time	450	0.26455027	n/a	\$9,724
Minimum-Time	300	0.21164022	n/a	\$7,854
Abbreviated-Time	100	0.05627705	n/a	\$2,244

Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements

Programs existing prior to September 21, 1993 are not required to offer a living allowance. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement, but not the maximum requirement.

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

Professional Corps Grantees must provide AmeriCorps 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 AmeriCorps members serve and are not included in the budget.

b) Maximum Cost Per Member Service Year (MSY)

The AmeriCorps cost per MSY is determined by dividing the AmeriCorps share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include child care or the value of the education award an AmeriCorps member may earn. The maximum amount an applicant may request from AmeriCorps per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

Table 4. Maximum Cost Per MSY

Grant Program	Maximum
Professional Corps Fixed Amount Applicants/Grantees	\$1,000*
Education Award Program (EAP) Fixed Amount Grant	\$800 or \$1,000**

All non EAP formula grants***	\$27,000****
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*AmeriCorps requires Professional Corps programs to cover the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non-AmeriCorps resources. AmeriCorps will only consider operating funds of up to \$1,000 per MSY if an applicant is able to demonstrate significant organizational financial need.

** Per 42 U.S.C. 12581a, the Corporation may provide the operational support under this section for a program in an amount that is not more than \$800 per individual enrolled in an approved national service position, or not more than \$1,000 per such individual if at least 50 percent of the persons enrolled in the program are disadvantaged youth.

*** Except planning grants

****\$18,000 adjusted for inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers.

AmeriCorps reserves the right to:

- 1) treat an applicant that meets the statutory requirements of a Professional Corps as such, whether or not they submitted their application as a professional corps program; and
- 2) determine whether an applicant has demonstrated inability to effectively operate in the absence of AmeriCorps operating funds.

c) Cost Sharing or Matching

(1) Fixed Amount Grants

There is no specific match requirement for Fixed Amount grants. AmeriCorps does not provide all the funds necessary to operate the program; therefore, organizations must raise the additional revenue required to operate the program. New applicants are not eligible to apply for Fixed Amount Grants.

(2) Cost Reimbursement Grants

A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in [45 CFR § 2521.60](#) and below.

Table 5. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements

AmeriCorps Funding Year	1, 2, 3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Grantee Share Requirements	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

Section [121\(e\)\(5\) of NCSA \(42 USC 12571\(e\)\)](#) requires that, if grantees use other federal funds as matching funds for an AmeriCorps grant, they must report the amounts and sources of these funds to AmeriCorps on a Federal Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout. Match can be non-AmeriCorps cash and/or in-kind contributions. Applicants must indicate if the match is proposed or already secured.

The living allowance or salary provided to AmeriCorps members in Professional Corps programs does not count toward the matching requirement.

d) Match Waiver

AmeriCorps recognizes that some grantees experience hardship securing matching resources. Match waivers follow the federal regulations in [45 CFR § 2521.70](#). If the proposed program may qualify for a match waiver, please email ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov.

e) Alternative Match

Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at [45 CFR § 2521.60\(b\)](#). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined in the Application Instructions. Applicants that plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request to ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov at the time the application is submitted.

f) Funding Restrictions

- **Religious use**

AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to provide religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in any form of proselytization.

- **Political activity**
AmeriCorps assistance may not be used by program participants or staff to assist, promote, or deter union organizing; or finance, directly or indirectly, any activity designed to influence the outcome of a federal, state or local election to public office.
- **Contracts or collective bargaining agreements**
AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
- **Supplantation**
AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to replace state and local public funds that had been used to support programs of the type eligible to receive AmeriCorps support.
- **Nonduplication**
AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And AmeriCorps assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities currently provided.
- **Nondisplacement**
An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps assistance.
 - An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps assistance.
 - A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
 - A participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
 - A participant in any program receiving AmeriCorps assistance may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that—
 - Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
 - Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
- A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any—
 - Presently employed worker;
 - Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
 - Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;

- Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
- Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.
- **Prohibited Activities**
See [Appendix 8: Glossary](#) for full list of Prohibited Activities.

II. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicant Organizations

Eligible applicants are organizations that propose to place AmeriCorps members in service within Wisconsin to meet critical needs in Wisconsin.

In order to be eligible for Formula Program grant funding through the Serve Wisconsin/Wisconsin National and Community Service Board, an applicant organization shall be one of the following at the time of application for a Formula Program grant:

1. one of the following if its governing body operates within the state of Wisconsin:
 - a. a federally recognized Indian Tribe
 - b. public or private nonprofit organization (organized as a tax-exempt entity under the [Internal Revenue Code section 501\(c\)\(3\)](#), including religious organizations) or
 - c. an institution of higher education as defined in [Wisconsin Statute 118.55\(1\)](#)

or

2. Wisconsin state or local government entity

The only exception to this policy would be for an annual Formula Program grant process in which all other possible Formula Program grant funding options have been considered and Formula Program grant funding remains unallocated. In cases where Formula Program grant funds would otherwise remain unallocated, those funds could be provided to an entity that does not meet the requirements of this Eligibility Policy.

Organizations must have a valid SAM registration and Unique Entity Identifier to receive an award. See the [SAM Quick Guide for Grantees](#) webpage for more information.

B. New Applicants

Serve Wisconsin encourages organizations that have not received prior funding to apply for a Serve Wisconsin Formula Planning grant.

New applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants but are not eligible to apply for non-EAP Fixed Amount grants. See [Table 2](#) for chart.

Due to staff time and other capacity commitments for oversight and management of an AmeriCorps program, Serve Wisconsin encourages applicants to apply for no fewer than 10 AmeriCorps members under this RFP.

C. Continuation Applicants

Continuation applicants are currently in the first or second year of operation within a grant cycle.

The following applicants are eligible to submit a Continuation Application for Formula Program funding: City of Green Bay, Milwaukee Bar Association Foundation, North Central Community Action Program, Wisconsin 4-H and Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Serve Wisconsin reserves the right to update this list.

Continuation applicants are required to submit an application in [eGrants](#) in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. The submission deadline for continuation applications is Tuesday, March 12, 2024 by 4:30pm.

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

D. Threshold Issues

Applications should reflect that meet the following threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying:

- Professional Corps applicants and/or applicants determined to be a Professional Corps by AmeriCorps must demonstrate that the community in which it will place AmeriCorps members serving as professionals has an inadequate number of said professionals.
- If the proposed service activities require specialized AmeriCorps member qualifications and/or training (e.g., tutoring programs: [45 CFR § 2522.910-940j](#)), the applicant must describe how the program will meet these requirements.
- All applicants must propose program designs that are either evidence-based or evidence-informed. Applicants assessed as lower than the Preliminary evidence tier (i.e., Pre-Preliminary) must provide adequate responses to the Evidence Quality review criteria in order to be considered for funding.
-

E. Other Eligibility Requirements

1. Convicted of a Federal Crime

Under Section [132A\(b\) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended](#), organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this RFP.

2. Prohibited Activities

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

3. Unpaid Federal Tax Liability

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

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

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

4. Lobbying Organization

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in the [Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501\(c\)\(4\)](#) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply for AmeriCorps funding.

F. Other Considerations

AmeriCorps has refocused many national service efforts to assist with the response to natural disasters. Applicants are encouraged to include AmeriCorps member service activities that involve members in disaster preparedness or response.

Serve Wisconsin supports programs that actively engage qualified people living with disabilities as AmeriCorps members and volunteers. These efforts are part of a larger initiative from AmeriCorps which supports efforts to increase participation in national service by people living with disabilities. Serve Wisconsin stands behind the principle that everyone can serve their community and encourages applicants to engage people with disabilities in their local service efforts.

III. For All Applicants: Application and Submission Information

This document should be used together with the [AmeriCorps Regulations](#) and [Mandatory Supplemental Information](#), Budget Instructions (Appendix 3: Cost Reimbursement Budget Instructions or Appendix 5: Fixed Amount Budget Instructions, both available at the [Serve Wisconsin Formula Program Request for Proposals](#) webpage) and [Appendix 1: AmeriCorps Performance Measure Instructions](#), which are incorporated by reference.

A. How to Apply

- Submit a mandatory [Notification of Intent to Apply](#) form by Thursday, February 22, 2024 by 12:00pm midnight
- Register (or renew) applicant organization with the [System for Award Management](#) to obtain a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number
- Establish an [eGrants](#) account
- Write a high-quality proposal that is responsive to this Request for Proposals
- Submit the application in eGrants by Tuesday, March 12, 2024 by 4:30pm
- Submit required Additional Documents to ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov by Tuesday, March 12, 2024 by 4:30pm
-

B. Notification of Intent to Apply

All applicants, including Continuation Applicants, must submit an online [Notification of Intent to Apply](#) form.

Organizations that submit a Notification of Intent to Apply form will receive a confirmation email from Serve Wisconsin within one business day. If experiencing technical difficulties that prevent submission a Notification of Intent to Apply form, take screenshots and email them to ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov.

Applications submitted by applicants who have not submitted a Notification of Intent to Apply by the deadline will not be considered for funding.

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

All applicants must register with the [System for Award Management \(SAM.gov\)](#) and maintain an active SAM.gov registration until the application process is complete. During an organization's registration on SAM.gov, a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) will be generated. If an applicant is awarded a grant, it must maintain an active SAM registration

throughout the life of the award. See the [SAM.gov Quick Guide for Grantees](#) webpage for more information.

SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually. Serve Wisconsin is responsible for ensuring our state applicants have compliant registrations. We suggest applicants finalize a new registration or renew an existing one at least three weeks before the application deadline to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise.

Applicants must use their organization name and address exactly as it appears in its SAM.gov registration in all grant applications to AmeriCorps.

AmeriCorps will not make awards to entities that do not have a valid SAM registration and Unique Entity Identifier. If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the time AmeriCorps is ready to make a federal award, AmeriCorps may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

Applications must include an Employer Identification Number and a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

D. Content and Application Form

1. Application Fields

Applicants must submit applications online via the AmeriCorps web-based system, [eGrants](#). Because it is a unique system, we recommend that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application creation process as soon as possible.

In eGrants, applicants will enter the following components of a complete application:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet (automatically generated by eGrants when applicants complete the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget Sections)
- Applicant Info
- Application Info
- Narratives: Executive Summary, Program Design, Organizational Capability, Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
- Logic Model
- Performance Measures
- Program Information
- Documents
- Budget Sections 1-3 (for Cost Reimbursement applications) or Budget Section 2 (for Fixed Amount applications)
- Funding/Demographics

- Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications

2. Page Limits

There are two application sections with page limits that must be adhered to: the Narrative and Logic Model.

Please note that number of pages of a document in a word processing document may be different than number of pages that will print out from the “Review” section in eGrants. Serve Wisconsin will consider the number of pages only as they print out from eGrants (from the “Review” section, click on “View/Print your application”) when determining compliance for page limits.

Narrative

The narrative may not exceed ten pages, or twelve pages for those proposing a Rural Intermediary model. The application sections that count towards the page limit are:

- SF-424 Face Sheet (automatically generated)
- Executive Summary
- Program Design, Organizational Capability, and Cost Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy narrative sections

Logic Model

The Logic Model may not exceed eight pages as it prints from the “Review” page in eGrants.

We strongly encourage applicants to print out the application from the “Review” section in eGrants (click on “View/Print your application”) prior to submission to ensure that the application Narratives and Logic Model do not exceed the page limits.

3. Late Applications

Submitting an application after the deadline may result in disqualification of the application.

E. Submitting a Grant Application in eGrants

Important Details About eGrants

- must submit applications electronically via the AmeriCorps web-based system, [eGrants](#). Because it is a unique system, it is recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application creation process as soon as possible.
- New applicants need to establish an eGrants account by accessing the [eGrants login page](#) and selecting “**Don’t have an eGrants account? Create an account**”

- The applicant’s authorized representative must be the person who submits the application. The authorized representative must use their own eGrants account to sign and submit the application. A copy of the governing body’s authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant’s office.

Technical Support for eGrants

Contact the AmeriCorps Hotline at (800) 942-2677 or via the [web form](#) if a problem arises when creating an account or preparing or submitting the application in eGrants. The hours for the AmeriCorps Hotline are posted on the [AmeriCorps Hotline webpage](#).

When contacting the AmeriCorps hotline, be prepared to provide the following information:

- eGrants application ID
- organization’s name, and
- the competition to which the organization is applying.

If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, applicants must continue working with the AmeriCorps Hotline to submit their application via eGrants. The applicant must then submit a brief paragraph including the support ticket number issued by the AmeriCorps Hotline with an explanation of the technical issues that prevented submission in eGrants by the deadline via email to ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov before the application submission deadline.

If applying for a Continuation grant
please skip to the section [For Continuation Applicants](#)

IV. For New and Recompete Applicants: Application Instructions and Selection Criteria

eGrants Instructions for New and Recompete Applications

In eGrants, find the **Creating an Application** section (near the bottom left) and choose one of the following:

- If the applicant organization has received an AmeriCorps grant in the past five years, select **Continuation/Renewal**
- If the applicant organization is applying for the first time or is a former grantee whose last AmeriCorps grant was received more than five years ago, select **New**
- If the applicant organization is a current planning grantee applying for a Program/Operational Grant, select **New**

Select a NOFA page:

- In the dropdown, select **AmeriCorps**, then click go
- Select the radio button next to one of the following:
 - For a Cost Reimbursement application, select the option called: **FY 2024 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission (New and Cont)**
 - For a Fixed Amount application, select the option called: **FY 2024 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission Fixed and EAP (New and Cont)**

The due date that appears for those NOFA is 1/4/24, so when click the circle next to the option, a pop-up warning box will say “You have selected an expired NOFA...” just click **OK**

- Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click **next**

NOFA information page:

- In the dropdown, select **Wisconsin**
- In the second dropdown, select one of the following:
 - For a Cost Reimbursement application, select the prime application ID **#24AC263583**
 - For a Fixed Amount application, Serve Wisconsin will contact Fixed Amount applicants after submission of the Notice of Intent to Apply with the prime application ID number to use.

A. Applicant Info

Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF 424 Facesheet.

Enter or update the requested information in the fields that appear. The Program Director must be the person who can answer questions about the application.

B. Application Info

- Areas affected by the program: enter the city and/or county name for each proposed host site location, separated with a comma. Include the two-letter capitalized state abbreviation (WI) at the end. There is a maximum of 1,000 characters for this field. If there is not enough space to list all cities/counties, note the number of cities/counties, the two-letter capitalized state abbreviation (WI), and list all of the locations in the grant narrative.
- Program Start and End Dates. Serve Wisconsin AmeriCorps applicants select one of the following two options:
 - Proposed Start Date 8/15/2024 and Proposed End Date 8/14/2025 or
 - Proposed Start Date 9/1/2024 and Proposed End Date 8/31/2025
- The Application is Subject to Review by State Executive Order 12372 Process: This is pre-filled as “No, this is not applicable.”
- Indicate Yes if the applicant organization is delinquent on any federal debt. If yes, provide an explanation.
- State Application Identifier: Enter N/A.

C. Narratives

The narrative section of the application is the opportunity to convince reviewers that the proposed project meets the selection criteria outlined in the RFP. It is strongly recommended to create the narrative in a word processing document prior to entering into eGrants.

Below are some general recommendations to help guide description of the proposed project in a way the reviewers will find compelling and persuasive.

- Lead from the program strengths and be explicit. Do not make the mistake of trying to stretch or change the proposed program description to fit Funding Priorities and Focus Areas articulated in the regulations or RFP.
- Be clear and succinct. Do not use jargon, boilerplate, rhetoric, or exaggeration. Describe clearly what the proposed project will do and how the proposed project responds to the selection criteria.
- Avoid circular reasoning. The problem should not be defined as the lack of the proposed project.
- Explain how. Avoid simply stating that the criteria will be met. Explicitly describe how the proposed project will meet the criteria.
- Don't make assumptions. Even if the applicant has received funding from AmeriCorps in the past, do not assume the reviewers know anything about the proposed program, partners, or beneficiaries. Avoid overuse of acronyms.

- Use an impartial proofreader. Before submitting an application, let someone who is completely unfamiliar with the proposed project read and critique the project narrative.
- Follow the instructions and discuss each criterion in the order they are presented in the instructions. Include the section headings in all capital letters to differentiate by criterion.

Table 6. Application Section Point Value Distribution

% of Total Points	Categories/Subcategories	Points per Subcategory
0%	Executive Summary	0
50%	Program Design	
	Community Problem and Logic Model	24
	Evidence Base: Evidence Tier	12
	Evidence Base: Evidence Quality	8
	Funding Priority	0
	Member Experience	6
25%	Organizational Capability	
	Organizational Background and Staffing	15
	Member Supervision	6
	Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility	4
25%	Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	
	Member Recruitment	7
	Member Retention	8
	Data Collection	7
	Budget Alignment to Program Design	3
Total Points:		100

Review the instructions for entering Narratives very carefully. and include all bulleted Selection Criteria.

1. Executive Summary

Please copy the two paragraphs below and paste into the “Executive Summary” narrative box. Then fill in the blanks with information about the applicant organization, AmeriCorps program proposed and details about the application.

Do not deviate from the template below.

The [Name of applicant 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 **[number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable]** who will be engaged in **[what the leveraged volunteers will be doing]**.

The AmeriCorps investment 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.

*** Fixed Amount grant applicants (EAP, Full-Cost Fixed Amount, No Cost Slots, and Professional Corps Fixed) should list their [Other Revenue](#) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still raise significant additional resources to operate the program.*

2. Program Design

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application’s response to the criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value. For scoring criteria, see the [Proposal Selection and Award Process](#) section.

a) Community Problem and Logic Model (24 points)

Please ensure the Community Problem narrative and Logic Model chart incorporate the funding priorities listed above—for example supporting communities historically excluded and/or underserved from government services, addressing structural and institutional inequities, or increasing opportunity in order to achieve sustainable change in communities.

In the Narratives box in eGrants called “Rationale and Approach/Program Design,” type the heading in all capital letters: **COMMUNITY PROBLEM**. Then provide a detailed summary of the community problem that the proposed AmeriCorps program will address, including:

- The role that current or historical inequities faced by underserved communities may play in contributing to the problem
- The community need as it relates to the CDC’s Social Vulnerability Index, in order to communicate the severity and prevalence of the community problem

New in 2024! Do not describe the AmeriCorps program in the “Narratives” section. Instead, all of the description and detail about the AmeriCorps program will be represented in the Logic Model chart, as well as demonstration that the intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the Logic Model (see [Logic Model](#) section for instructions).

b) Evidence Base

The assessment of the evidence base for the program is divided into has two parts:

1. Evidence Tier. The program will be assigned to an evidence tier is appropriate for the proposed program. Definitions and requirements for each tier are below. The four evidence tiers are:
 - a. Pre-preliminary
 - b. Preliminary
 - c. Moderate
 - d. Strong
2. Evidence Quality. The quality of the evidence provided and the degree to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored, including program alignment with the [Funding Priorities](#).
- 3.

(1) Evidence Tier (12 Points)

An evidence tier will be assessed for the purpose of understanding the relative strength of the evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the Logic Model.

Definitions and Requirements of Evidence Tiers

- **Pre-preliminary evidence** means that the applicant has not submitted an outcome or impact evaluation of the same intervention described in the application, although the organization may have collected some performance data on the intervention (e.g., data on intervention outputs and/or outcomes).

In this tier, describe in the Evidence Base section of the application how the program design is evidence-informed (see definition above). Applicants may also cite prior performance measure data, if applicable.

- **Preliminary evidence** means the applicant has submitted up to two outcome evaluation reports (non-experimental) that evaluated the same intervention described in the application and yielded positive results on one or more key desired outcomes of interest in the Logic Model. The outcome evaluations may either have been conducted internally by the organization or by an external entity.

The study design must include pre- and post-assessments without a statistically matched comparison group or a post-assessment comparison between intervention and comparison groups. In some cases, a retrospective pre-post assessment may be considered, but its use must be justified in the text of the evaluation report. More than two reports will not be considered.

- **Moderate evidence** means that the applicant has submitted up to two well-designed and well-implemented evaluation reports that evaluated the same intervention described in the application and identified evidence of effectiveness on one or more key desired outcomes in the 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 evaluations were conducted by an independent entity that is external to the organization implementing the intervention. More than two reports will not be considered.

- **Strong evidence** means an applicant has submitted up to two evaluation reports demonstrating that the same 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 experimental design evaluation (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)) or a Quasi-Experimental Design evaluation (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. Alternatively, the proposed intervention’s evidence may be based on multiple (up to two) well-designed and well-implemented QEDs or RCTs of the same intervention described in the application in different locations or with different populations within a local geographic area.

The overall pattern of evaluation findings must be consistently positive on one or more key desired outcomes of interest in the Logic Model. Findings from the RCT or QED evaluations may be generalized beyond the study context. The evaluations were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention. More than two reports will not be considered.

In 2023, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 25 percent, Moderate 12 percent, Preliminary 20 percent, and Pre-Preliminary 43 percent. As these figures indicate, AmeriCorps values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. Thus, do not be deterred from applying for funding due to the program’s current evidence level.

If there are outcome or impact evaluation reports of the same intervention described in the application and Logic Model (use [Appendix 8: Glossary](#) for a definition of “same intervention”), up to two of those reports can be submitted to qualify for the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tier.

In order to qualify for consideration, the intervention evaluated in the submitted report(s) must match the intervention proposed in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Community Problem and Logic Model sections of the application:

- Characteristics of the beneficiary population, including evidence of current or historic inequities facing the population
- Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention
- Dosage (frequency and duration) and design of the intervention, including all key components and activities
- The context in which the intervention is delivered, and
- Outcome of the intervention

Submitted reports that do not sufficiently match the intervention proposed in all of these areas will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points. If applicants submit Additional Documents that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements described in this RFP (such as advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives that are not research studies or program evaluations), they will not be reviewed.

Continuing in the Narratives box in eGrants called “Rationale and Approach/Program Design” after the COMMUNITY PROBLEM section, start a new line and type the heading in all capital letters: **EVIDENCE BASE**. Then:

- summarize the study design and key findings of any outcome or impact evaluation report(s) submitted, and
- describe any other evidence that supports the program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform the program design.

If an applicant submits evaluation reports for consideration, the applicant must also describe in the Evidence Base section of the application narrative how the intervention described in the submitted reports is the same as the intervention described in the application (use the Glossary’s definition of “same intervention”).

The applicant must provide citations for the studies described in the Evidence Tier section of the “Rationale and Approach/Program Design” narrative box, if applicable; however, reviewers will not review any links or cited documents referenced in the application and will not review any additional document that is not a study submitted in accordance with the instructions in this Request for Proposals.

The proposed program must meet all requirements of an evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier. If the evaluation reports submitted do not meet the definitions, the application may be considered for a lower evidence tier.

(2) Evidence Quality (8 points)

After the application's evidence tier has been assessed, the quality of the evidence and the extent to which it supports the proposed program will be assessed and scored.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tiers, reviewers will score the submitted evaluation reports using the following standards:

- The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.)
- The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years
- The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries and/or AmeriCorps members in at least one key outcome of interest.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier, reviewers will score the narrative provided in the Evidence Base section of the application using the following standards:

- The applicant uses relevant evidence, including past performance measure data and/or cited research studies, to inform the proposed program design
- The described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years
- The evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries and/or AmeriCorps members in at least one key outcome of interest.

Applicants assessed in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier who do not provide adequate responses to the Evidence Quality standards will not meet the threshold requirements for this RFP and will not be considered for funding.

c) Funding Priority (0 points)

Continuing in the Narratives box in eGrants called "Rationale and Approach/Program Design" after the EVIDENCE BASE section, start a new line and type the heading in all capital letters: **FUNDING PRIORITY**. Please identify if the proposed program fits within one or more of the AmeriCorps funding priorities and meets all of the funding requirements.

The application does not need to fit a Funding Priority. If the application does not fit a priority, please state so.

d) Member Experience (6 points)

Continuing in the Narratives box in eGrants called “Rationale and Approach/Program Design” after the FUNDING PRIORITY section, start a new line and type the heading in all capital letters: **MEMBER EXPERIENCE**. Then address how:

- AmeriCorps members’ service will provide them opportunities to develop as leaders.
- AmeriCorps members will gain skills 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 receive additional benefits.
- AmeriCorps members will be provided a high quality orientation to the community they will serve in that is from an asset based frame and guided and informed by the community.

The following language is required for all New applicants for flexibility of service:

- [Incidental Service: AmeriCorps members may be provided the opportunity for occasional service outside the focus of this program in order to better understand and benefit their community and to participate in National Days of Service. These hours may be counted towards the member’s term of service if they do not interfere with their normal service hours or conflict with prohibited activities, the service is approved by the member’s supervisor [and/or] program director, and the supervisor of the service activity signs an agreement certifying the service and hours performed.]

The following language is not required, but Serve Wisconsin does recommend it for flexibility of service:

- [Disaster Response: AmeriCorps programs and members may participate in disaster relief. There is no cap on the amount of time programs and members may spend on disaster relief efforts during the program year; however, programs will not engage in disaster relief on such a long-term basis that the program focus significantly changes. Hours served by members responding to disaster will count toward their AmeriCorps term of service, as long as they are pre-approved by the Program Director. Disaster response on-site supervisors will track and verify AmeriCorps members’ activities and hours.]

3. Organizational Capability

This section should explain how the applicant organization is qualified to operate the proposed programs. Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the following criteria. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

a) Organizational Background and Staffing (15 points)

In the Narratives box in eGrants called "Organizational Capability," type the heading in all capital letters: **ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING**.

- Explain the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing, providing oversight, and monitoring the program.
- Explain if the organization facilitated, partnered, or participated in educational or workforce development programs (i.e., pre-apprenticeship/registered apprenticeship, work experience and job training programs, etc.)
- Describe the organization's mission and relevant experience in areas such as:
 - volunteer recruitment and management,
 - community outreach,
 - overcoming project implementation challenges, etc.

b) Member Supervision (6 points)

Continuing in the Narratives box in eGrants called "Organizational Capability," after the ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING section, start a new line and type the heading in all capital letters: **MEMBER SUPERVISION**.

- Demonstrate how AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service, such as:
 - a structure for member supervision,
 - cadence and format of supervisor/AmeriCorps member check-ins,
 - member and supervisor opportunities to assess strengths and opportunities for growth, member training plan, etc.).
- Explain how AmeriCorps members' supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations, such as:
 - a structure for support of supervisors,
 - training plan for supervisors related to supervision and AmeriCorps rules and regulations,
 - cadence and format of AmeriCorps supervisors/their supervisors check ins,

- opportunities to assess strengths and opportunities for growth of supervisors, etc.

c) Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (4 points)

Continuing in the Narratives box in eGrants called “Organizational Capability,” after the MEMBER SUPERVISION section, start a new line and type the heading in all capital letters: **COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY**.

Demonstrate if the leadership and staff at the applicant organization have the same lived experience as the beneficiary population and/or community being served.

Explain if the organization has definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility that demonstrate the organization is engaged in relation to diversity, equity, and inclusion (i.e., inclusion of diversity on the Board of Directors, agency staff and leadership, and/or volunteers).

4. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

This section includes two parts:

- responding to the four scoring criteria in the narrative and
- completing the budget with zero errors.

Please follow the information in the Budget Instructions (Appendix 3: Cost Reimbursement Budget Instructions or Appendix 5: Fixed Amount Budget Instructions) available at the [Serve Wisconsin Formula Program Request for Proposals](#) webpage.

a) Member Recruitment (7 points)

In the Narratives box in eGrants called “Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy,” type the heading in all capital letters: **MEMBER RECRUITMENT**.

- Provide a description of budget expenses to support successful recruitment of AmeriCorps members best suited to serve the community, for example from geographic or demographic communities in which the program operates.

b) Member Retention (8 points)

Continuing in the Narratives box in eGrants called “Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy” after the MEMBER RECRUITMENT section, start a new line and type the heading in all capital letters: **MEMBER RETENTION**.

- Provide a description of budget expenses to support retention of AmeriCorps members (e.g., additional member benefits such as increasing above the minimum living allowance, supporting workforce pathways, certifications, coaching for members, resume building, individual benefit as well as community building, network building, member recognition, alumni programming, etc.).

c) Data Collection (7 points)

Continuing in the Narratives box in eGrants called “Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy” after the MEMBER RETENTION section, start a new line and type the heading in all capital letters: **DATA COLLECTION**.

- Provide a description of budget expenses to support data collection, continuous improvement activities, and evaluation in service to evaluating the interventions and impact on the community and the member experience).

d) Budget Alignment to Program Design (3 points)

Continuing in the Narratives box in eGrants called “Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy” after the MEMBER RETENTION section, start a new line and type the heading in all capital letters: **BUDGET ALIGNMENT TO PROGRAM DESIGN**.

- Explain how the budget is aligned to the program design outlined in the narrative, meaning activities discussed in the narrative are incorporated in the budget in the “CNCS Share” or “Grantee Share” columns.

5. Evaluation Summary or Plan

In the Narratives box in eGrants called “Evaluation Summary or Plan,” enter **N/A**.

6. Amendment Justification

In the Narratives box in eGrants called “Amendment Justification,” enter **N/A**. This field will be used if the applicant is awarded a grant and needs to amend it.

7. Clarification Information

In the Narratives box in eGrants called “Clarification Information,” enter **N/A**.

8. Continuation Changes

In the Narratives box in eGrants called “Continuation Changes,” enter **N/A**.

D. Logic Model

(24 points in combination with [Community Problem](#) section)

The Logic Model is a visual representation of the applicant’s Theory of Change and Program Design.

Depict in the Logic Model:

- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including but not limited to:
 - Locations or sites in which members will provide services
 - Context in which the intervention is delivered (e.g., the setting where the intervention is delivered)
 - Number of AmeriCorps members who will deliver the intervention
 - Characteristics of AmeriCorps members, including specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required to implement the intervention
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
 - Duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention)
 - Dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)
 - 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, types and number of activities conducted, equity gaps closed). If applicable, identify which [National Performance Measures](#) will be used as output indicators.
- Outcomes that demonstrate meaningful 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.

Include short, medium, and long-term outcomes in the Logic Model.

Applicants are not required to measure all components of the Logic Model. The applicant's performance measures should be consistent with the program's Logic Model and should represent significant program activities.

Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization's performance data (e.g., program data observed over time that suggests targets are reasonable), relevant research (e.g. targets documented by organizations running similar programs with similar populations), or prior program evaluation findings.

If the program has multiple interventions, complete one Logic Model chart where each intervention is entered in its own row. Logic Model content that exceeds eight pages as it prints from the "Review" page in eGrants will not be reviewed.

Instructions for entering the Logic Model in eGrants

To begin entering the Logic Model, from the eGrants application page select "Logic Model" in the left side navigation menu.

In the first blank row of the Logic Model, click "edit." Clicking this link will open a pop-up screen with fields for each column of the Logic Model. Complete any fields that are applicable; there are no required fields in this screen. When finished, click "save and close."

Applicants may add an unlimited number of rows to the Logic Model by clicking "add a new row;" however, the Logic Model may not exceed eight pages as it prints from the "Review" page in eGrants. Reviewers will not consider any information that is over the page limit, even if eGrants allows it.

Applicants may edit or delete an existing row by clicking "edit" or "delete" in the last column of the Logic Model. Each field is limited to around 4,000 characters, so to make use of the full eight pages, applicants will need to add more than one row.

E. Performance Measures

All applicants must submit performance measures with their application. See [Appendix 2: Step-by-Step Guide to Entering a Performance Measure in eGrants](#) for assistance entering performance measures in eGrants and see the [AmeriCorps Performance Measures Instructions](#) for details about the number and type of performance measures required.

F. Program Information

Applicants must check the relevant boxes in order to be considered for AmeriCorps' assessment of the strategic considerations and Special Initiatives. Applicants should

only check the boxes for those characteristics that represent a significant part of the program.

- **AmeriCorps Funding Priorities.** Check any priority area(s) that apply to the proposed program. Only select priorities that represent a significant part of the program focus, high quality program design, and outcomes. If the program design does not propose to meet any of these funding priorities, do not check them. It is not a requirement to fit into them.
- **Grant Characteristics.** Check any grant characteristics that are a significant part of the proposed program.

-

G. Additional Documents

In addition to the application submitted in eGrants, applicants must also submit the required Additional Documents. After emailing Additional Documents, change the status in eGrants to the applicable status: “Sent,” “Not Applicable” or “Already on File at AmeriCorps.”

Additional Documents must be emailed to ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov with the following subject line:

2024-25 AmeriCorps Proposal – [Organization Name] [AmeriCorps Program Name]

- Please do not send multiple documents in one combined file, and do not send a single document in multiple files.
- If the size of an applicant’s email attachments requires multiple emails, please also include an ordering system in the subject line, such as “(1 of 3)”

The email should include:

- Legal applicant organization name
- Legal applicant organization’s point of contact information
- eGrants application ID number
- List of documents that are attached to the email by filename, labeling each document based on the title for that type of document in [Table 7](#)

Each individually attached file must be clearly labeled.

- The file name must include the legal applicant name and application ID number. For example: *ABC Organization – 24AC012345 – Audit and Management Letter*
- For each document submitted, include a header or title *within the document itself* that includes the legal applicant organization’s name and eGrants application ID on each document.

If an alternate submission method is required, please email ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov by Tuesday, February 27, 2024.

All Additional Documents must be received by Serve Wisconsin by the deadline of Tuesday, March 12, 2024 by 4:30pm. Timely submission of emailed document packets will be determined by the date and time the email was received by Serve Wisconsin.

Occasionally, emails with many attachments can take significant time to send and receive. Please take this into consideration when sending and submit in enough time for Serve Wisconsin to receive by the Tuesday, March 12, 2024 by 4:30pm deadline.

If additional information and/or clarifications are needed, it is the applicant's responsibility to reply to emails from Serve Wisconsin in a timely manner.

Table 7. Required Additional Documents

Document	Description	Required for New	Required for Continuation
Audit	Most recent audit for the applicant organization, or other financial statements if the organization has not had an audit. If a management letter was provided as part of the audit, it must be submitted along with the audit. Wisconsin state agencies and universities do not need to provide the State audit.	Yes	Yes
Evaluation briefs, reports, or studies	If the applicant has evaluation reports of the same intervention described in the application, up to 2 of those reports may be submitted to qualify for the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tier. See the Evidence Tier section for more information.	If applicable	No
Labor Union Concurrence	<p>1) If the program proposes to serve as the placement site for AmeriCorps members; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has employees engaged in the same or substantially similar work as that proposed to be carried out by AmeriCorps members; and • Those employees are represented by a local labor organization, <p>- then the application must include the written concurrence of the local labor organization representing those employees.</p> <p>2) If the program proposes to place AmeriCorps members at sites where they will be engaged in the same or substantially similar work as employees represented by a local labor organization, then the applicant must submit a written description of how the applicant will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AmeriCorps members won't be placed in positions that were recently occupied by paid staff. 	If applicable	If applicable

Document	Description	Required for New	Required for Continuation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No AmeriCorps member will be placed into a position for which a recently resigned or discharged employee has recall rights as a result of a collective bargaining agreement, from which a recently resigned or discharged employee was removed as a result of a reduction in force, or from which a recently resigned/discharged employee is on leave or strike. 		
Federally approved Indirect Cost Agreement	<p>If the applicant organization uses a federally approved indirect cost rate amount in the budget, the applicant must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> enter the current approved indirect cost rate agreement in eGrants before they submit their application. See Appendix 6: eGrants Indirect Cost Rate User Instructions; and submit a copy of the federally approved indirect cost rate agreement with the rest of the Additional Documents. 	If applicable	If applicable
Delinquent Federal Debt	<p>If the applicant checks Yes to the question on federal debt delinquency, the applicant must submit a complete explanation in Word or PDF format.</p>	If applicable	If applicable
Organizational Chart	<p>Ensure both AmeriCorps program staff and AmeriCorps members are represented in the organizational chart. Submit this with the rest of the Additional Documents.</p>	Yes	Yes
IRS Determination Letter	<p>Letter reflecting approval or denial of tax-exempt status; Include any amendments. Submit this with the rest of the Additional Documents.</p>	If applicable	No
Cost Allocation Plan	<p>Submit this with the rest of the Additional Documents.</p>	If applicable	If applicable
Permission to Use Federal Funds as Match	<p>If using other federal funds for match, submit written/mailed documentation from the other federal entity showing that those federal funds are permitted to be used as match on an AmeriCorps grant, along with the rest of the Additional Documents.</p>	If applicable	If applicable

Document	Description	Required for New	Required for Continuation
Alignment with Wisconsin State Service Plan	This is Attachment E. Complete the narratives and submit this with the rest of the Additional Documents.	Yes	Yes
Priority Specific Documents	Rural Intermediaries must provide letters of support from the consortium members.	If applicable	If applicable
Additional Documents Checklist	This is Attachment A. Complete the checklist and submit with the rest of the Additional Documents; however, failure to include the checklist will not disqualify the application.	Yes	Yes
Cost Reimbursement Budget Checklist	This is Attachment B. If the application is for a Cost Reimbursement grant, complete and submit this with the rest of the Additional Documents.	If Cost Reimbursement	If Cost Reimbursement
AmeriCorps Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS)	This is Attachment C. Complete this survey and submit with the rest of the Additional Documents.	Yes	Yes
Serve Wisconsin Financial Management Survey (FMS)	This is Attachment D. Complete this survey and all associated documents with the rest of the Additional Documents.	Yes	No
Alignment with Wisconsin State Service Plan	This is Attachment E. Complete the narratives and submit this with the rest of the Additional Documents.	Yes	Yes
Training Plan	This is Attachment F. Provide information about training that will be provided for AmeriCorps, then submit this with the rest of the Additional Documents	Yes	No

H. Budget

Please follow the information in the Budget Instructions (Appendix 3: Cost Reimbursement Budget Instructions or Appendix 5: Fixed Amount Budget Instructions) available at the [Serve Wisconsin Formula Program Request for Proposals](#) webpage.

I. Funding/Demographics

1. Other Revenue Funds

Enter the amount of funds that the proposed program will use to run the program beyond amounts that are identified on the application budget as AmeriCorps share or grantee share (match).

Note: Programs should not enter the total operating budget for the applicant organization unless the entire operating budget supports the AmeriCorps program.

Programs that have additional revenue sources beyond amounts that are included in the grantee share column of the budget should provide the amount of this additional revenue that supports the program. This amount should not include the AmeriCorps (CNCS) or Grantee Share amounts in the budget.

Fixed Amount grantees should enter all non-AmeriCorps funds that support the program in this field. All Fixed Amount grants will have Other Revenue.

2. Number of Volunteers Generated by AmeriCorps Members

Please enter the number of volunteers participating in one day service projects or ongoing volunteer commitments that the proposed AmeriCorps members will generate, if relevant to the program design.

J. Review, Authorize, and Submit

Applicants must submit common federal government-wide Representations and Certifications through SAM.gov.

eGrants also requires that applicants review and verify the entire application before submitting, by completing the following sections in eGrants:

- Review
- Authorize

- Assurances
- Certifications
- Verify, and
- Submit

Read the Authorization, [Assurances](#), and [Certifications](#) carefully.

The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant's Authorized Representative or their designee and must have an active eGrants account to sign these documents electronically. An Authorized Representative is the person in the applicant organization authorized to accept and commit funds on behalf of the organization. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Be sure to check the entire application prior to submission to ensure that there are no errors. When verifying the application, eGrants will also generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected prior to submission.

If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant organization's Authorized Representative, that person must log into their eGrants account and proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, their name will override any previous signatory that may appear and show on the application as the Authorized Representative.

Note: Anyone who will be entering information in the application at any point during application preparation and submission in the eGrants system must have their own eGrants account. Individuals may establish an eGrants account by clicking here and selecting "Don't have an eGrants account? Create an account."

Please direct all questions about these application instructions and attachments in writing to the RFP Manager at ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov.

V. For Continuation Applicants: Application Instructions and Selection Criteria

The following instructions for submitting a continuation request apply only to programs that are currently operating their first or second year within a grant cycle.

Organizations that have current AmeriCorps State and National awards that will be in program Year 2 or Year 3 in FY 2024 are considered continuation applicants. Continuation applicants must submit an application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the 2024 program year.

In addition, if the applicant is in year two or three of a Cost Reimbursement grant cycle, and wants to participate as a Fixed Amount grant, the applicant must submit a “new” application; the applicant cannot continue the existing project and switch from Cost Reimbursement to Fixed Amount. AmeriCorps reserves the right to consider a continuation request if the Fixed Amount application is not funded

Requests by continuation applicants for increases in the level of funding or number of positions will be assessed using the selection criteria.

Continuation application selection will also be based on progress reports, financial reports and Serve Wisconsin staff’s knowledge of the grant program. To be approved for continuation funding, recipients must demonstrate satisfactory performance with respect to key program goals and requirements, as well as compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the grant.

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

eGrants Instructions for Continuation Applications

In eGrants, find the **Creating an Application** section and click **Continuation/Renewal**.

After selecting Continuation/Renewal, the applicant will be shown a list of grants that are eligible to be continued. Select the current grant.

- Be sure to select the correct one.
- Do not start a new application.

Select a NOFA

- Select the radio button next to one of the following:
 - For a Cost Reimbursement application, select the option called: **FY 2024 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission (New and Cont)**
 - For a Fixed Amount application, select the option called: **FY 2024 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission Fixed and EAP (New and Cont)**

The due date that appears for those NOFA is 1/4/24, so when clicking the circle next to the option, a pop-up warning box will say “You have selected an expired NOFA...” just click **OK**

- Serve Wisconsin’s Cost Reimbursement Prime Grant application ID is: 24AC263583
- Serve Wisconsin’s Fixed Amount Prime Grant number will be provided to organizations that submit a Notice of Intent to Apply survey for a Fixed Amount grant
- The system will copy the most recently awarded application

Do not edit the continuation application. Follow the instructions below.

Be sure to review the entire RFP when preparing the continuation application.

If there are questions about the application instructions and selection criteria below, please contact the RFP Manager at ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov.

A. Applicant Information and Application Information

Update the Applicant Info and Application Info Sections in eGrants, if necessary.

If the applicant makes any changes in these sections, add a short description of those changes in the “Continuation Changes” narrative field.

B. Narratives

Do not modify the original narrative in the following fields that were copied from the previous application, including:

- Executive Summary
- Rationale and Approach/Program Design
- Organizational Capability
- Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
- Evaluation Summary or Plan
- Amendment Justification and
- Clarification Information.

Serve Wisconsin and AmeriCorps expect that programs will maintain a consistent program design for the duration of the three-year project period; however, Serve Wisconsin and AmeriCorps recognize that, on occasion, some programmatic changes are necessary. As a result, continuation applicants may request the following changes during the continuation process:

- Changes in Operating Sites
- Significant Changes in Program Scope or Design

- Changes to Performance Measures
- Significant Changes to Monitoring Structures or Staffing
- Budget Revisions

Describe the above changes in the Continuation Changes narrative field, if any.

The page limit for the Continuation Changes field is six pages, as the pages print out from eGrants. The six-page limit for the Continuation Changes narrative field is an aggregate for the full grant cycle (typically two continuation application cycles). If the applicant is applying for a continuation for the third year of funding, add any new continuation changes for the third year above any changes that were described for the previous continuation year.

If the applicant is not requesting changes, enter “N/A” in Continuation Changes. AmeriCorps expects that most continuation applications will not be requesting changes.

C. Logic Model

As a continuation applicant, do not enter content into these fields.

D. Performance Measures

The performance measures are copied from the previous year’s application into the continuation request. If the applicant makes changes to the program, such as adding or changing grant-funded activities, or requesting additional slots or MSYs, the applicant may need to revise the performance measures.

If the original performance measures do not align with [Appendix 1: AmeriCorps Performance Measures Instructions](#), the performance measures must be changed to conform with the 2024 instructions.

To revise performance measures, “View/Edit” the performance measures that copy over from the original application or add new performance measures (Appendices 1 and 2 for instructions).

After making adjustments in the Performance Measures module in eGrants, describe the performance measures changes in the Continuation Changes narrative field, if any. If the applicant is proposing to significantly increase or decrease output or outcome targets for existing performance measures, provide a justification for this change.

E. Program Information

In the Program Information Section, review and make selections as appropriate. Applicants should only select priorities and characteristics that represent a significant part of the program.

- AmeriCorps Funding Priorities. Check any priority area(s) that apply to the proposed program. Only select Priorities that represent a significant part of the program focus, high quality program design, and outcomes. The program does not have to fit any of the priorities.
- Grant Characteristics. Check any grant characteristics that are a significant part of the proposed program.

F. Additional Documents

In addition to the application submitted in eGrants, the applicant is required to submit all required Additional Documents as part of the application. After submitting the documents, change the status in eGrants from the default “Not Sent” to the applicable status “Sent,” “Not Applicable,” or “Already on File at AmeriCorps”. Please see [Table 7](#) for a complete list of Additional Documents.

G. Budget

The budget from the previous year’s application is prepopulated in the continuation application in eGrants so the applicant can make the necessary adjustments. Revise the detailed budget for the upcoming year, if necessary.

Incorporate any required AmeriCorps increases (such as an increase to the minimum AmeriCorps member living allowance) into the budget.

As a continuation applicant, the applicant may apply for increases in dollars, MSY, and/or members, but it is not guaranteed. Expansion requests may not exceed the cost/MSY threshold in this Request for Proposals.

Serve Wisconsin retains a 2% share of the 5% federal funds available to programs for administrative costs and this needs to be identified within the budget. See Budget Instructions (Appendix 3: Cost Reimbursement Budget Instructions or Appendix 5: Fixed Amount Budget Instructions) available at the [Serve Wisconsin Formula Program Request for Proposals](#) webpage for more details.

In the Continuation Changes narrative field, provide a description of each budget change.

AmeriCorps requires grantees to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. Applicants have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three

budget sections, as long as the applicant maintains the minimum match of 24% for the first three years and the increasing minimums in years thereafter. See [45 CFR §2521.35-2521.90](#) for the specific regulations. See Appendix 3: Cost Reimbursement Budget Instructions for instructions for applying for the Alternative Match Schedule and/or an individual match waiver.

H. Funding/Demographics

- Other Revenue funds. Enter the amount of funds that the program uses to run the program that are not CNCS share or match.
- Number of Volunteers Generated by AmeriCorps members. Please enter the number of volunteers participating in one-day service projects or ongoing volunteer commitments that the proposed AmeriCorps members will generate.

I. Review, Authorize, and Submit

Applicants must submit common federal government-wide Representations and Certifications through [SAM.gov](#). Applicants will be required to review financial assistance representations and certifications before the annual registration renewal in SAM.gov can be activated. As applicants renew their registration, the data collected make SAM.gov the federal repository for the government-wide information.

eGrants requires that applicants review and verify the entire application before submitting by completing the following sections in eGrants: Review; Authorize; Assurances; Certifications; Verify; and Submit.

Read the Authorization, [Assurances](#), and [Certifications](#) carefully.

The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant's Authorized Representative or their designee and must have an active eGrants account to sign these documents electronically. An Authorized Representative is the person in the applicant organization authorized to accept and commit funds on behalf of the organization. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Be sure to check the entire application prior to submission to ensure that there are no errors. When verifying the application, eGrants will also generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected prior to submission.

If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant's Authorized Representative, that person must log into their eGrants account and proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, their name will override

any previous signatory that may appear and show on the application as the Authorized Representative.

Note: Anyone within the applicant organization who will be entering information in the application at any point during application preparation and submission in the eGrants system must have their own eGrants account. Individuals may establish an eGrants account at the [eGrants](#) login page by selecting “**Don’t have an eGrants account?** Create an account.”

Please direct all questions about these application instructions and attachments in writing to the RFP Manager at ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov.

VI. Proposal Selection and Award Process

A. Procuring and Contracting Agency

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued by the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board/Serve Wisconsin, which is the sole point of contact for the State of Wisconsin during the selection process. All contracts resulting from this RFP will be administered by Serve Wisconsin.

The Serve Wisconsin application review and selection process is intended to produce a diversified set of high-quality programs that represent the priorities and strategic considerations described in this Notice. This process includes the Board, staff, and peer review of application materials and evaluation of prior performance, where applicable.

In accordance with [State Statute 16.22\(2\)\(h\)](#), Serve Wisconsin must give priority to the greatest extent practicable to applications proposing youth corps programs when awarding grants. Youth Corps programs are given priority with two additional points when they are otherwise comparable.

B. Initial Application Compliance and Eligibility Review

Serve Wisconsin will conduct an initial Eligibility Review to determine if an application meets the eligibility requirements as detailed in this Request for Proposals and advances to the next stage of the review process.

An application is compliant if the applicant:

- Is an eligible organization
- Is eligible to submit to Serve Wisconsin
- Submitted an application by the submission deadline

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

C. Serve Wisconsin Application Review Process

1. External/Peer Review

External Peer Reviewers will review portions of new and recompetete applications and assess based on criteria in the RFP using [Appendix 10: Peer Reviewer Form](#). Serve Wisconsin will recruit and select reviewers on the basis of demonstrated expertise.

It is recommended that the applicant use this document to assist in drafting the application.

Proposals will be scheduled for review by at least 3 peer reviewers, and the reviewers' scores are then averaged for each application. An application must receive an average peer score of 80 or above to be considered by the Board for submission as a New or Recompetete Competitive Application. The Board will consider all applications receiving an average score of 80 or above if they also pass the Performance Scoring Evaluation and may recommend any or all for submission as a New or Recompetete Competitive Application. An application that receives an average peer review score of fewer than 80 points may be ineligible for further consideration. Reaching the 80 point threshold is inclusive of rounding to two places after the decimal point.

All External Peer Reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

Post-Review Quality Control. After the peer review process is complete, Serve Wisconsin staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a post-review quality control assessment. This additional level of review may be used to ensure fairness and provide assurances that an application was not disadvantaged in the original peer review.

2. Internal Review

Serve Wisconsin staff will evaluate all applications using the application review criteria and assess the priorities and strategic considerations detailed in this RFP. Past performance will be considered as well. Staff will be screened for conflicts of interest.

3. Pre-Award Financial Risk Assessment

Serve Wisconsin staff will evaluate the risks to the applicant's ability to manage federal funds, including grantees' past performance, if any. This evaluation is in addition to the assessment of the applicant's eligibility and the quality of its application on the basis of the selection criteria in the Proposal Selection and Award Process section. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If Serve Wisconsin determines that an award will be made to an applicant with assessed risks, additional monitoring activities and training that correspond to the degree of assessed risk may be applied to the award. If Serve Wisconsin concludes that the reasons for an applicant organization having poor risk assessment are not likely to be mitigated, the application may not be selected for funding.

4. Applicant Clarification

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

5. Feedback to Applicants

Following the application reviews, applicants will receive feedback from the External Review (if applicable) and Internal Review of the compliant application. This feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect any information provided during clarification.

6. Program Evaluation & Development Committee Meeting

If the application passes external and internal reviews, the application will be considered at the meeting of the Program Evaluation & Development (PE&D) Committee of the Wisconsin National Community Service Board. At least one representative from the applicant organization must be present at this meeting to give a brief presentation to Committee members. For existing programs, past performance will be considered as well. More details about this meeting will be available to qualified applicants.

7. Wisconsin National Community Service Board (Board) Meeting

The applications that the PE&D Committee recommends for funding then make their way to the full Board for consideration. Attendance at this meeting is not required for

applicants. More details about this meeting will be available on the [Serve Wisconsin website](#).

Serve Wisconsin and AmeriCorps reserve the right to prioritize funding existing awards over making new awards. Serve Wisconsin and AmeriCorps reserve the right to award applications in an amount other than at the requested level of funding and will document the rationale for doing so.

D. Application Resolution

AmeriCorps may ask an applicant for information after notification of competition results to resolve any issues prior to award. AmeriCorps will ask all grantees for a written compliance implementation plan that includes notification of waste, fraud, and abuse to the [AmeriCorps Office of the Inspector General](#) (OIG). Failure to respond adequately and in a timely manner may result in the removal of the application from the award process.

E. Transparency in Grantmaking

AmeriCorps is committed to transparency in grant-making. A list of all approved applications for new and recompeting applications will be published on the [AmeriCorps Funded Grants](#) website within 90 business days after all grants are awarded.

Submitted program narratives, executive summaries, a blank template of the external review worksheet, a list of all external reviewers who completed the review process, and a summary of external reviewer comments for successful applications will be available upon request via email to AmeriCorpsOGA@cns.gov.

Information about funded grants and subgrants is also available at [USASpending.gov](#).

F. Appeal of Grant Decision

An applicant can only protest or appeal violation of procedures to the Board that are outlined in this RFP or fall within the grant selection process. Ranking and scoring by the peer reviewers is not subject to protest or appeal.

Notice of intent to protest and any protests must be made in writing. Individuals should make their protests as specific as possible and should fully identify the procedural issue being contested. Any written notice of intent to protest must be filed with the Board and received in no later than five (5) working days after the notices of intent to award are issued. Any written protest must be received within ten (10) working days after the notice of intent to award is issued.

Notice of intent to protest and any protests must be made in writing via email to: The Board Chair, Wisconsin National & Community Service Board at ServeWisconsin@wisconsin.gov. The appeal will be reviewed by the Program Evaluation & Development Committee of the Board and a recommendation will be forwarded to the Board for consideration. The decision of the Board may be appealed to the Secretary of the Department of Administration within five (5) working days of issuance. A copy of the appeal must also be filed with Board. The appeal must allege a violation of a Wisconsin statute or a section of the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

VII. Award Administration Information

A. Federal Award Notices

AmeriCorps will make awards following the grant selection announcement. All applicants, successful or not, will be notified of funding via email.

Notification of an award is not an authorization to begin grant activities. The Notice of Grant Award is the authorizing document for grant activities. An awardee may not expend federal funds until the start of the Project Period identified on the Notice of Grant Award unless it has received a written pre-award cost approval from Serve Wisconsin.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Uniform Guidance

All awards under the criteria in this RFP are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) in [2 CFR §200](#) and [§2205](#).

2. Monitoring Payment Integrity Information

AmeriCorps may request documentation from recipients in order to monitor the award or to comply with other legal requirements, such as the [Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019](#). Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on manual hold, reimbursement only status, or other remedies may be applied as appropriate.

3. AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions

All awards made under the criteria in this RFP will be subject to the *FY2024 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions* and the *FY2024 AmeriCorps State & National Program Specific Terms and Conditions*.

These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the AmeriCorps General and Program Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available on the AmeriCorps [Manage Your Grant](#) webpage.

4. National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a specific screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. Serve Wisconsin encourages applicants to minimize barriers to service without putting their program beneficiaries at genuine risk.

The law requires grant recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on persons (including award-funded staff, national service participants, or volunteers) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend or education award through a program receiving AmeriCorps funds (limited exceptions are described in [45 CFR §2540.201](#)). This includes staff who receive part of their salary through a subgrant.

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the regulations and additional guidance to fully understand how to comply with the requirements, which can be found on the [AmeriCorps NSCHC](#) webpage.
- The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award. The grant recipient must utilize the two preferred vendors AmeriCorps has engaged to conduct the required NSCHCs.
- Failure to conduct a NSCHC may result in significant disallowed costs, including repaying grant funds back to AmeriCorps.

A NSCHC consists of a check of the:

- National Sex Offender Public website (through Truescreen);
- State criminal history record repository or agency-designated alternative for the individual's State of residence AND State of service (both through Truescreen); and
- Fingerprint-based check of the FBI criminal history record database (through Fieldprint)

All checks must be conducted, reviewed, and an eligibility determination made one day or more before the individual begins work or service.

An individual is not eligible to serve or work in a position subject to the NSCHC requirements if the individual:

- Refuses to consent to a criminal history check;
- Makes a false statement in connection with a criminal history check;
- Is registered, or is required to be registered, on a state sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry; or
- Has been convicted of murder.

See [45 CFR §2540.200 through §2540.207](#) and the [AmeriCorps National Service Criminal History Check](#) webpage for complete information and FAQs.

5. Official Guidance

All AmeriCorps active Guidance is available on the [AmeriCorps Guidance](#) webpage. The contents of these documents do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way unless incorporated into a contract or grant agreement. These documents are intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

6. Use of Material

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

7. Re-Focusing of Funding

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

C. Technical Assistance

Serve Wisconsin intends to provide technical assistance to ensure that strong proposals are developed. The following policies will be followed as a fair process for the provision of technical assistance:

- Technical Assistance will be equally available to all prospective applicants.
- Staff will only respond to applicants who have reviewed the Request for Proposals and available written materials and have a specific question to be answered. For

fairness and transparency, questions may only be submitted via email to ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov.

- Staff will only provide answers to specific questions and make general comments regarding the Regulations and RFP, as opposed to providing specific suggestions for a particular applicant.
- Staff will not review proposal drafts.

Serve Wisconsin strongly recommends completing online training courses provided by [On3Learn](#) as applicants write proposals. For details on how to access On3Learn courses for free, please email ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov.

In compliance with federal regulations regarding conflict of interest, WNCS Board members will not provide any form of technical assistance to a potential grant applicant. Instead, they will refer an applicant to the RFP Manager.

Serve Wisconsin will provide applicants with technical assistance on entering and submitting proposals in AmeriCorps' web-based grants management system and will provide guidance on how to access assistance from the [AmeriCorps Hotline](#).

D. Reporting

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

Cost Reimbursement grant recipients are required to provide quarterly progress reports and quarterly financial reports through OnCorps, Serve Wisconsin's web-based grants management system.

Fixed Amount grant recipients are required to provide quarterly progress reports through OnCorps, Serve Wisconsin's web-based grants management system.

Recipients will submit regular progress reports and financial reports. At the end of the award period, recipients must submit final financial and progress reports that are cumulative over the entire award period, and consistent with the closeout requirements. Fixed Amount grantees are exempt from the final financial report requirement.

Once the grant is awarded, recipients will be expected to have in place data collection and data management policies, processes, and practices that provide assurance that they are reporting high quality performance measure data. At a minimum, recipients should have policies, processes, and practices that address the following five aspects of data quality for themselves and for subrecipients (if applicable):

- Data measures what it intends to measure
- Data reported is complete

- Grantee collects data in a consistent manner
- Grantee takes steps to correct data errors
- Grantee actively reviews data for accuracy prior to submission.

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

VIII. Notices

These application instructions conform to the Corporation for National and Community Service's online grant application system, [eGrants](#). All funding announcements by the Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps) are posted on [AmeriCorps.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#).

A. Public Burden Statement

Public reporting burden for collection of information under this Notice of Funding is estimated to average 80 hours per submission, including reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing the application and reporting forms. Comments on the burden or content of this instrument may be sent to AmeriCorps, Attn: Arminda Pappas, 250 E Street, SW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20525. AmeriCorps informs people who may respond to this collection of information that they are not required to respond unless the OMB control number and expiration date are current and valid. (See 5 CFR §1320.5(b)(2)(i).)

B. Privacy Act Notice

The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC §552a) requires that we notify applicants that the information requested on the AmeriCorps Application is collected pursuant to 42 USC §12581-12585 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended, and 42 USC §4953 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 as amended.

Purposes and Uses - The information requested is collected for the purposes of reviewing grant applications and granting funding requests. Routine uses may include disclosure of the information to federal, state, or local agencies pursuant to lawfully authorized requests. In some programs, the information may also be provided to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to determine the existence of any prior criminal convictions. The information may also be provided to appropriate federal agencies and contractors that have a need to know the information for the purpose of assisting the government to respond to a suspected or confirmed breach of the security or confidentiality or

information maintained in this system of records, and the information disclosed is relevant and unnecessary for the assistance. Please see the Notice of Funding Opportunity for AmeriCorps' transparency in grantmaking information. The information will not otherwise be disclosed to entities outside of AmeriCorps without prior written permission.

Effects of Nondisclosure - The information requested is mandatory in order to receive benefits.

C. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act

Grant recipients will be required to report at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards that equal or exceed \$30,000 and may be required to report on executive compensation for recipients and subrecipients. Recipients must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 CFR Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

D. Indirect Cost Rates

AmeriCorps allows applicants to include indirect costs in application budgets. Based on qualifying factors, applicants have the option of using a federally approved indirect cost rate, a 10% *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs (MTDC) or may claim certain costs directly as outlined in [2 CFR §200.413](#). Applicants who hold a federal negotiated indirect cost rate must use that rate in lieu of the AmeriCorps 5/10% allocation of administrative costs or the 10% *de minimis* rate. All methods must be applied consistently across all federal awards.

Applicants who hold a state or federal negotiated indirect cost rate or will be using the 10% *de minimis* rate must enter that information in the Organization section in eGrants (see [Appendix 6: eGrants Indirect Cost Rate \(IDCR\) User Instructions](#)). However, under section 121(d) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended and AmeriCorps' regulations at [45 CFR §2521.95](#) and [45 CFR §2540.110](#), no more than 5% of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps State grants.

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

E. Universal Entity Identifier

Applicants must include a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) in eGrants at the time of submission. Applicants must obtain a UEI and register the applicant organization/entity through the System for Award Management. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid registration, which must be renewed annually.

The Grantee Administrator role in eGrants is the only user that can add the UEI to eGrants. The UEI is added to the organizational attributes page, and then will automatically populate onto all of the applications that are tied to the organization.

IX. Appendices and Attachments

The Appendices and Attachments listed below are available on the [Serve Wisconsin Formula Program Request for Proposals](#) webpage.

- The Appendices listed below are for reference
- The Attachments listed below are to be sent as Additional Documents via email by Tuesday, March 12, 2024 by 4:30pm. Please review specific submission instructions in the [Additional Documents](#) section.

A. Appendices are for reference

- Appendix 1: AmeriCorps National Performance Measures 2024-25
- Appendix 2: Step-by-Step Guide to Entering a Performance Measure in eGrants
- Appendix 3: Cost Reimbursement Budget Instructions
- Appendix 4: Cost Reimbursement Budget Worksheet
- Appendix 5: Fixed Amount Budget Instructions
- Appendix 6: eGrants Indirect Cost Rate User Instructions
- Appendix 7: AmeriCorps Mandatory Supplemental Information
- Appendix 8: Glossary
- Appendix 9: Serve Wisconsin Formula Funding Process
- Appendix 10: Peer Reviewer Form

B. Attachments must be submitted (if applicable)

Submit as Additional Documents via email to ServeWisconsin@Wisconsin.gov by Tuesday, March 12, 2024 by 4:30pm.

- Attachment A: Additional Documents Checklist
- Attachment B: Cost Reimbursement Budget Checklist (if applicable)
- Attachment C: AmeriCorps Operational and Financial Management Survey

- Attachment D: Serve Wisconsin Financial Management Survey
- Attachment E: Alignment with Wisconsin State Service Plan
- Attachment F: Training Plan

X. Right to Reopen RFP

The Board reserves the right to reopen the RFP if additional funding becomes available, a sufficient number of applications were not received, or it is in the best interest of the Board.