

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1061
AmeriCorps Competitive

<p>New York State Commission of National and Community Resources Programmatic and Evidence Information Session: Recorded Webinar / PowerPoint Technical Requirement Information Session: Recorded Webinar / PowerPoint</p>	
<p>Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation or CNCS) Resources Technical Assistance Calls and Webinars CNCS Knowledge Network: Evaluation Resources / The Evidence Continuum</p>	
Q1	What are the Applications IDs for the Prime?
A1	Cost Reimbursement Grant: 21AC230922 Fixed Amount Grant: 20ESHNY001
Q2	Where can I locate CNCS Resources related to this grant?
A2	<p>CNCS Resources are available on the CNCS AmeriCorps State and National Grants PY2021 webpage. They provide technical assistance that covers the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Fund 101 • AmeriCorps 101 • About the Economic Mobility Corps • Best Practice in Developing Performance Measures • Best Practice in Demonstrating Evidence • Best Practice in Budget Development • Best Practice in Writing an Evaluation Plan • Best Practice in Evaluation Reporting <p>Additional Commission Resources and CNCS Evidence Resources on CNCS Knowledge Network are referenced at the beginning of this document.</p>
Q3	If we operate a program that is currently funded under AmeriCorps formula funds can we apply for funding for that program under the Competitive funds? And if so, would Competitive funds provide for a dedicated cohort of members, so that we would have one cohort funded with formula funds and one with competitive funds? Or is that not possible?
A3	This Request for Proposal (RFP) only addresses AmeriCorps competitive applications for the program year 2021-2022. If you are applying for and receive this funding, you cannot operate a formula program at the same time with the same program design. You can either 1) apply for competitive funding through this RFP, and should you receive it, surrender the funds for your formula

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	<p>program; 2) apply for an expansion of your current formula funding at the time the formula RFP is issued; or 3) apply for both competitive and formula funding but with a different program design.</p> <p>Two projects will be considered the same if they: address the same issue areas, address the same priorities, address the same objectives, serve the same target communities and population, or utilize the same sites. CNCS will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year.</p>
Q4	<p>I am requesting permission to apply for the new AmeriCorp[sic] RFP that was just released and is due Nov. 24th. I understand that we received a new grant for this year, but based on the conversation that was held yesterday with AmeriCorp[sic] programs, there is a need for more AmeriCorp[sic] members in NYC. If we are allowed to apply, I would like to add a new cohort and increase our AmeriCorp[sic] members to support our community. Please let me know if this is possible.</p>
A4	<p>Please see the response in A3. An organization may not receive funding from both competitive funding pool and formula funding pool concurrently for the same program model regardless of the grant year they applied for. An organization may apply for both funding pools if the program model in the two proposals are considered different projects which is subject to CNCS approval.</p> <p>This Request for Proposal (RFP) only addresses AmeriCorps competitive applications for the program year 2021-2022.</p>
Q5	<p>Our grant is in its 8th year. We would like to apply for a new three-year cycle, is this a new project or continuation? The logic model will remain about the same.</p>
A5	<p>A continuation is a grant that is entering its second or third year of a three-year funding cycle. For additional details, please see RFP Section 4.2.A Type of Applicants – Continuation Request.</p> <p>The Commission is unable to determine whether your project is “new.” That decision is entirely in the hands of the Corporation. If you have any doubt or uncertainty as to whether your project is “new, same or additional” you must fill out the form linked in section 4.2.A Type of Applicants – New or Additional Proposal and submit it to the appropriate email address as soon as possible. It will be reviewed, and if the Commission requires more information you will be contacted immediately. The Commission will then forward the information to the Corporation for a determination. The Commission cannot guarantee the Corporation will issue a determination prior to the Commission’s deadline for applications.</p>
Q6	<p>Where can I locate the New Project Request Form in the RFP?</p>
A6	<p>The link to the New Project request form is located on page 18, Section 4.2.A Type of Applicants – New or Additional Proposal of the RFP titled “this request form”.</p>
Q7	<p>I noticed that the links to the proposal documents do not appear to work in the FOA. If possible, may I request a copy of the Request Form for current or previous grantees that would like to request applying for a new or additional project?</p>
A7	<p>The form can be located here. All links in the proposal documents are currently operational.</p>

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Q8	On page 18, paragraph 2 of the RFP: Can first time/new applicants apply for the Fixed Amount Grant?
A8	There are four (4) possible subtypes of Fixed Amount Grant: Full-Cost, Education Award Program (EAP), Professional Corps and No Cost Slots. First time applicants are not eligible to apply for Full-Cost Fixed Amount grant, but maybe eligible to apply for other three (3) types of Fixed Amount Grant based on the program model. For additional details, please see RFP Section 4.2.A Type of Applicants – New Applicants and 4.2.B Type of Awards chart on pages 17 – 19.
Q9	<p>In section 4.1 of the RFP #1061 for NYS, the RFP states the funding priorities for this opportunity. At the bottom of the paragraph it states: “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.” If our organizations model is to recruit, train and support volunteer members AND also to place them at partnering organizations, our volunteer members will be working in different priority areas. As an example, we might send members 2 members to a HeadStart program, 5 to an afterschool–school readiness program, and an additional 3 to a workforce development program for adults.</p> <p>1. Would such a model be allowed?</p> <p>2. Following up on Question 1, if such a model is allowed, we would work with each partner organization to ensure the performance measures are met. Would we need to submit multiple logic models to demonstrate the logic, design and effectiveness of each priority area we send members to?</p>
A9	<p>1) The Commission cannot comment upon the content or program design of your individual application, nor can it offer any guidance as to what a priority area is. NYS has no funding priorities for this round of funding; priority areas for this opportunity are federal and are set by the Corporation.</p> <p>2) The Commission cannot offer any guidance as to if such logic model is considered significant program activities. Each application may contain more than one logic model, however, please be advised that the Logic Model may not exceed three pages when printed with the application from the “Review” tab in CNCS’s web-based management system. Please see section 5.1.B Program Design of the RFP, page 28 for more information on the logic model.</p>
Q10	What is the Economic Mobility Corps?
A10	Economic Mobility Corps is a joint initiative of the CDFI Fund and CNCS. The Economic Mobility Corps (EMC) places fulltime AmeriCorps members at Certified CDFIs to enhance their capacity to provide financial literacy, financial planning, budgeting, saving, and other financial counseling activities in distressed and underserved areas. Economic Mobility Corps members will be placed in Certified CDFIs and will receive training on the principles of financial counseling and financial literacy. A Certified CDFI is an entity that the CDFI Fund has officially notified that it meets all CDFI

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	certification requirements. Only Certified CDFI's are eligible to receive EMC members. For additional details, please see CNCS Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) PY2021 Page 34-36.
Q11	Should we include COVID-19 plans in the literature? Please advise.
A11	The Commission cannot comment upon the content or program design of your individual application.
Q12	On page 18, paragraph 1 of the RFP: I see that the maximum is 50 AmeriCorps member positions – is there a minimum number of AmeriCorps member positions that will be considered and awarded?
A12	<p>CNCS does not have a minimum or maximum limitation on the number of member positions in each application. The CNCS general practice is to award no more than 50 member positions (slots) to organizations receiving an AmeriCorps grant for the first time.</p> <p>The Commission has determined that it will only recommend applications for funding to CNCS that budget for a minimum number of ten MSYs (Member Service Year), which may include a larger number of member positions, depending upon the program design. For additional details, please see RFP Section 4.2.A Type of Applicants on pages 17 – 18.</p>
Q13	<p>1. As per the 2021 AmeriCorps State and National Grants NOFO it states that the maximum amount an agency can request is \$75,000 and of that \$75,000 the agency must provide a 24% match. But then the RFP on page 19 says that as per the Cost Reimbursement (for a new applicant) it is \$16,300 per MSY. This money is not the same as the Maximum cost per MSY member living allowance on page 20 and page 21. Please clarify that if we want to have 25 members enrolled in the program are we budgeting for staff and operating costs at a maximum of \$75,000 or would it be 25 members times \$16,300 or a budget request of \$407,500 in a 15-month budget period and 24% of the \$407,500 will be matched by us.</p> <p>2. And finally, are we to request the Member Living allowance separately?</p>
A13	<p>1) We are unable to locate the section in the NOFO that limits an applicant request to \$75,000. Match is calculated based on the entirety of the program cost instead of just 24% of the federal share. For example, for a budget requesting \$10,000 in federal fund, grantees are required to match at \$3,157.9 where $\\$10,000 / \\$13,157.9 = 76\%$ and $\\$3,157.9 / \\$13,157.9 = 24\%$.</p> <p>2) Member Living Allowance is part of the application budget. Please be careful not to confuse the Member Living Allowance with the maximum cost-per-MSY. For additional details, please see CNCS PY2021 Application Instruction – Detailed Budget Instructions for Cost Reimbursement Grants Details pp. 19-23.</p>
Q14	1. In section 4.2, paragraph C of the RFP, it is mentioned that the min living allowance for National Service Participants is \$15,100. If we have a workforce development program whereby employers would like to give back to the participants, are participants allowed under this contract to accept additional cash awards on top of their living allowance?

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	<p>2. Following up on question 1, would these additional funds be able to be considered as part of the cost share?</p> <p>3. In section 4.2, paragraph C, the RFP mentions that “A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. Funded organizations are responsible for withholding income tax and FICA.” Is this accurate or did you mean NOT required to withhold income tax (considering that it is not considered employment).</p> <p>4. In section 4.2, paragraph D, the RFP mentions : “The Corporation cost per MSY is determined by dividing the Corporation share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested; it does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn.” Can you please clarify if a member can achieve BOTH a living allowance as a FT or PT national service participant AND additionally receive an Education Award?</p> <p>5. In section 4.2, paragraph B, it states that the maximum Education Award per MSY is \$800 or \$1,000? Later it states, in section 4.2, paragraph E of the RFP, that: “E. Segal AmeriCorps Education Award AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will be eligible for an Education Award from the National Service Trust. The amount of the Education Award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant. A member has up to seven (7) years after his or her term of service to use the Education Award. CNCS will provide the updated education award amounts at the time of grant award”</p> <p>Can you clarify what is meant by “the amount of award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant? Does this exceed 800 or 1000 dollars?</p> <p>Are the two education awards mentioned in these sections the same award or different? Can you offer clarity on the differences if they are in fact two separate awards?</p>
A14	<p>1) Yes, participants can accept additional cash awards.</p> <p>2) Yes, the applicant may decide to include these funds in their budget.</p> <p>3) While living allowance is not considered a salary or wage; it is considered to be taxable income in the calendar year it was received. Therefore, funding organizations are responsible for withholding income tax and FICA. For additional information, please see CNCS resource on Tax Implications webpage.</p> <p>4) Yes, all members are potentially eligible for an Segal Education Award if they meet all the conditions, please see CNCS Education Award FAQ for additional details.</p> <p>Additionally, members enrolled in members slots budgeted with living allowance may earn a living allowance. Full-time (FT), Reduced Full-Time (RFT) and Part-Time (PT) members are eligible for Childcare benefits. These are three (3) different benefits and a member could potentially be eligible for all three (3).</p> <p>5) The Segal Education Award is not a budgetary expense. It is an award offered only after an AmeriCorps member has completed his or her term(s) of service and only to the member.</p>

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	<p>For the \$800 or \$1,000 figure listed in the chart within section 4.2, paragraph B is Maximum Cost per MSY for Education Award Program. It does not refer to the Segal Education Award, but to the award of grant operating funds. It means a program may request up to \$800 or \$1,000 per MSY requested in the proposal for program operation cost. This type of Fixed Amount program is call Education Award Program (EAP).</p> <p>An AmeriCorps member can earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award by successfully completing his or her term. The value is based on the term type the member completed. The value Segal AmeriCorps Education Award can be found here: https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/segal-ameri-corps-education-award/amount-eligibility-and</p>
Q15	Are there grant types that do not require match?
A15	Yes, there is no match requirement for Fixed Amount Grants, however, new applicants are not eligible to apply for Full-Cost Fixed Amount Grant. For additional details, please see RFP Section 4.2.B Type of Awards.
Q16	On page 22, paragraph 4 of the RFP: Is Cost Sharing mandatory for first time applicants?
A16	Match or cost-sharing is required for Cost Reimbursement grants at a minimum of 24% for the first three (3) years of the grant. Match or Cost Sharing is not required for Fixed Amount Grants. First time applicants are eligible to apply for both Cost Reimbursement and Fixed Amount Grants except for Full-Cost Fixed Amount Grant.
Q17	How does in-kind match works?
A17	<p>In-kind match donation is defined in 2 CFR § 200.96 - Third-party in-kind contributions: Third-party in-kind contributions means the value of non-cash contributions (i.e., property or services) that -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Benefit a federally assisted project or program; and b. Are contributed by non-Federal third parties, without charge, to a non-Federal entity under a Federal award. <p>In addition, CNCS regulation also allows other federal funds to be used as match, however, the other federal agency must provide written permission to use its funds as program operating cost match on the AmeriCorps Grants. All applications recommended by the Commission to the Corporation for funding, must provide proof of this in writing upon the Commission’s request. For additional details, please see section 4.2.F. Cost Sharing or “Match” Requirement – Cost Reimbursement Grants of the RFP.</p>
Q18	On page 22, paragraph 3 of the RFP: During the Informational Interview, it was stated that “all costs will not be covered” for the Fixed Amount Grant – what will not be covered? Does this include indirect costs?
A18	Fixed Amount Grants: provide a fixed amount of funding per Member Service Year (MSY) and are eligible for payment based on member enrollment which may be lower than the amount required to operate the program. Organizations use their own or other resources to cover the remaining costs. CNCS does not provide all the funds necessary to operate a fixed amount grant program;

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	<p>therefore, organizations should raise the additional revenue required to operate the program. Any direct OR indirect program costs that are not covered by the fixed amount must be covered by other organizational funds.</p> <p>Please see CNCS Application Instruction page 28 ATTACHMENT D: Detailed Budget Instructions for Fixed Amount Grants (eGrants Budget Section)</p>
Q19	<p>The Calendar of Events on Section 1.2 of the RFP states that the "Deadline for Submission of Proof of SAM registration and additional documents required by CNCS" must be submitted by 1/5/2021. Just to make sure, is it only the SAM registration documents that should be emailed by this date, and all other supporting documents should be submitted by November 24, 2020?</p>
A19	<p>Yes, the SAM registration documents are due on 1/5/2021 by 4:59 p.m. Eastern Time. All other New York State supporting documents are due on 11/24/2020 by 4:59 p.m. Eastern Time.</p>
Q20	<p>Are public entities exempt from prequalification and/or vendor responsibility questionnaire?</p>
A20	<p>Please see Section 3.0 Minimum Qualifications to Propose and Prequalification Process of the RFP. Note: If you are unsure if you must prequalify, it is recommended that you do.</p>
Q21	<p>There are some optional forms like labor union concurrence. They were previously submitted for previous applications. Do they need to be resubmitted?</p>
A21	<p>For documents that are not required for submission, Commission staff will reach out to applicants during the post-review clarification period with additional instructions.</p>
Q22	<p>What evaluation documents need to be submitted?</p>
A22	<p>Evaluation requirements vary for each applicant based on the year of their re-competing grant cycle. For additional details, please see CNCS PY2021 Mandatory Supplemental Instruction: Evidence Tiers on page 3-4.</p>
Q23	<p>Is there any size limit on the files submitted through email? Our evidence report is over 8MB and that can be an issue sometimes.</p>
A23	<p>The size limit on files received through email is 25mb. However, an email may go through multiple networks in order to reach the destination and could result in an unsuccessful transmission. We suggest you use delivery and read receipts to ensure there are no delivery errors or IT issues.</p>
Q24	<p>What file formats are acceptable for additional documents submitted via email?</p>
A24	<p>While PDF and word documents are acceptable, additional documents should be submitted in the original format acquired. Scanned materials must be submitted in PDF format.</p>