



## **AmeriCorps Formula Notice of Funding Opportunity**

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**For Program Year 2026/2027**

**Application Due Date: May 18, 2026**

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICE**

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**FUNDING PROVIDED BY AMERICORPS STATE AND NATIONAL**  
*All AmeriCorps grant awards are subject to the availability and receipt of federal funding.*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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### SECTION 1: AMERICORPS GRANT OPPORTUNITY NJ COMMISSION GRANT INFORMATION AND TIMELINE

	PAGE
Description of the Grant Program	2
Changes from the prior year	4
Award Information	6
Eligibility to Apply	7
Statutory/Regulatory Source and Funding	8
Technical Assistance	8
Application Submission	8
Submission of Additional Documents	9
Selection Criteria	11
Member Living Allowance and MSY	18
Evaluation Continuation and Re-competing Applications	19
NJ Commission Training and Events	20

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### SECTION 1: AMERICORPS GRANT OPPORTUNITY NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANT INFORMATION AND TIMELINE

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#### DESCRIPTION OF THE GRANT PROGRAM

AmeriCorps is a national service network that provides full- and part-time opportunities for AmeriCorps members to serve their communities and build the capacity of organizations to meet local needs. In exchange for their service, AmeriCorps members are provided with a living allowance of approximately \$20,400 for a FT term, training, and the ability to earn a Segal Education Award (currently about \$7,395). Education awards may be used to pay future education costs at qualified institutions of higher education including in part: eligible college tuition, cost of attendance, or eligible college loans or to repay qualified student loans.

The New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service, in partnership with AmeriCorps State and National (ASN), seeks single-state applicants within New Jersey to apply for this AmeriCorps Formula Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Single-state applicants apply to their respective state commissions. National organizations operating in more than one state need to apply directly to [AmeriCorps State and National](#).

The New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service, New Jersey Department of State, seeks to fund local initiatives and utilize the AmeriCorps model to increase civic engagement and improve New Jersey's communities by deploying AmeriCorps members to provide services in the six focus areas identified i.e., Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and/or Veterans and Military Families.

## Funding Priorities

For this funding opportunity, AmeriCorps will prioritize consideration from organizations that fall within the following categories:

Faith-Based:

- **Organizations that are faith-based.**

Serve Communities:

- **Serve communities with concentrated poverty**, rural communities, and tribal communities.
- Implement programs for or **expand access to high-quality youth mental health and substance use recovery services** and prepare AmeriCorps members to enter behavioral health careers. These may include individuals who have experienced substance use and mental health challenges.
- **Focus on improving quality of life for veterans, active-duty members of the Armed Forces, and their families** through models that provide effective interventions or services or that are designed to recruit veterans, military spouses, and their older children into national service, e.g., veterans serving in mentorship roles.
- **Focus on public safety, crime prevention, and/or partnerships between law enforcement and the community.**
- **Focus on expanding outdoor recreation opportunities for future generations** by maintaining public lands; supporting wildland fire mitigation and sustainable forest management; and providing reforestation services.
- **Create workforce pathways for AmeriCorps members**, including deliberate training, such as pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities, certifications, and hiring preferences or support;
- **Focus on strengthening families**, e.g., activities that aim to support low-income parents through parenting education, responsible parenting and healthy relationship skills.

Benefit AmeriCorps Members:

- **Enhanced member experience** by providing opportunities for skill attainment, personal growth and connection to the community they are serving in support of a lifetime of civic participation.
- **Enhance and expand services to formerly incarcerated and at-risk youth** and/or engage those youth as AmeriCorps members.

Use Evidence:

- Utilize reports from the [AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange](#) on programs assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence to scale, replicate, or adapt the intervention.

To receive priority consideration, applicants must show the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes. Priority consideration does not guarantee funding.

Through this AmeriCorps Formula Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service (hereinafter, the NJ Commission) seeks submission of applications that demonstrate that they will engage AmeriCorps members in an evidence-informed and evidence-based approach to providing a service intervention that will result in intended solutions to community problems (e.g., based on proposed program's performance and evaluation data or research demonstrating the effectiveness of a similar intervention). Applicants will be awarded points for providing evidence that their proposal intervention will lead to the outcomes identified in the logic model. Applicants shall provide evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the proposed population and community challenge.

## Changes from the prior year's Formula NOFO:

- NOFO Priorities
  - Added a public safety, crime prevention, and partnerships priority
  - Added an expanding outdoor recreation for future generations priority
  - Added a strengthening family priority
- Streamlined available slot types from seven to five, removing Reduced Half Time and Abbreviated Time
- Applicants are approved for pre-award costs for one month prior to the start of their program, with approval from NJ Program Officer
- Changes to *Selection Criteria* point values for Community and Logic Model, Notice Priority, Member Supervision, Program Past Performance and Fiscal Regulatory Compliance.
- Disclosure: Any award made under this Notice may be terminated by the agency if it no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities.
- Disclosure: AmeriCorps reserves the right to award applications in an amount less than the requested level of funding.
- **The Commission will NOT accept new applications during this FY2026/2027 formula application cycle.** Organizations interested in submitting new applications are encouraged to monitor future funding announcements for when new applicant funding becomes available.
- Program Design must allow for all member slot types to complete service agreement by 8/31/27. ASN changes to No Cost Extensions will not permit use of NCE for extending service terms, effective FY26.27.

***\*\*All AmeriCorps grant awards are subject to the availability and receipt of federal funding\*\****

### A. Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations that engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions to strengthen communities. An AmeriCorps member is a person who does community service through AmeriCorps. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits. After successful completion of their service, members earn a [Segal AmeriCorps Education Award](#) they can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans. The Education Award can be used for a period of up to seven (7) years following successful completion of a term of service. Members over the age of 55 at the start of service may transfer their Education Award to a child, grandchild, stepchild, or foster child which is held in trust for up to ten years.

*This is for informational purposes only and the New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service makes no representations or guarantees as to the availability or continued existence of any such benefits.*

### **The following should be read in order to develop a complete application:**

Section I: 2026 NJ Commission Grant Information and Timeline

Section II: 2026 Mandatory Supplemental Information

Section III: 2026 National Performance Measures

Section IV: 2026 Applicant Determined Performance Measures Supplement

Section V: 2026 Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS)

**B. Timeline:**

<b>FY26.27 FORMULA Notice of Funding Opportunity GRANT APPLICATION TIMELINE</b>	
<b>DATE</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
Thursday April 2	Dissemination of <b>NOFO &amp; flyer</b> announcing the 2026/27 Formula AmeriCorps Grants competition.
Wednesday April 22	<i>General Technical Assistance Session</i> via ZOOM. Live at 2 p.m. Register <a href="#">here</a> to attend the live session. Session will be recorded and available at the NJ Department of State AmeriCorps <a href="#">website</a> within 24 hours. Mandatory for Formula applicants.
Thursday April 23	<i>Notice of Intent to Apply</i> due to Commission. Form available <a href="#">here</a> Note: Submission of form does not obligate organization. It allows Commission to plan review process.
Monday May 18	Formula applications due to Commission in OnCorps by 5:00 pm EST
Tuesday May 19	Staff and Independent Readers' review of applications and budgets are begun.
Tuesday June 2	Formula Applications Reader Arena 11 am, Arena scores and final rankings.
Wednesday June 3	NJ Commission board votes on selected applicants.
Friday June 5	Notification of Applicants selected for submission. Staff & reader revisions requested from applicants.
Friday June 12	Final revisions from applicants due back.
Tuesday June 16	Notification letters sent out to successful applicants
Wednesday June 17	NJ Commission target date for submission of Formula sub-applicants
Mid-Summer 2026	eGrants entry required by all applicants, upon NJ Commission selection

**\*\*All AmeriCorps grant awards are subject to the availability of federal funding\*\***

**NOTE: Attendance at the NOFO Technical Assistance Session is required in order to submit an application. Please [register](#) to attend the General Technical assistance session.**

**AWARD INFORMATION**

**B.1. Estimated Available Funds**

AmeriCorps expects a highly competitive AmeriCorps grant competition. AmeriCorps reserves the right to prioritize providing funding to existing awards over making new awards. The actual level of funding is subject to the availability of annual appropriations. Funding amounts for Cost Reimbursement Grants are based on a yearly formula called a Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY). The Maximum Cost Per MSY is multiplied by the number of full-time equivalent AmeriCorps members to obtain the maximum amount of funding for which an organization can apply. For example: a program that is applying for 10 MSY’s would multiply 10 x \$25,200 Maximum Cost per MSY = \$252,000. Planning Grants can apply for up to a certain level of funding.

Category	Planning Grants	Cost Reimbursement or Formula Fixed Grants
Minimum MSY's	0	8 MSY's
Maximum MSY's	0	15 MSY's (Recompeting programs with 6 years of continuous funding may propose 18 MSY's)
Maximum Funding	Up to \$75,000	\$378,000 (Recompeting programs with 6 years of continuous funding may apply for up to \$453,600)
Period of Performance	One year (9/1/26 – 8/31/27)	Three years (9/1/26 – 8/31/29)

**IMPORTANT DISCLOSURE: Funding Restrictions for FY2026/2027**

Due to limited funding availability, the New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service is implementing the following restrictions for the FY2026/2027 formula funding opportunity:

**Eligible Applicants:**

- Recompeting applicants (programs with expiring grants seeking renewal, or you are currently in Yr. 3 of 3 of Formula)
- Continuation applicants (programs in good standing seeking continuation funding, meaning you are in Yr. 1 or 2 of 3 of Formula)
- Planning Grants that were selected during FY25.26, but were deferred due to limited funding

**Ineligible Applicants:**

- New applicants (organizations that did not receive AmeriCorps funding through the NJ Commission during the last Formula cycle FY25.26)

**The Commission will NOT accept new applications during this FY2026/2027 formula application cycle.** Organizations interested in submitting new applications are encouraged to monitor future funding announcements for when new applicant funding becomes available.

**Funding Period**

For recompeting applications, this is Year 1 of 3 of a multi-year grant period covering the following funding periods:

- Year 1 September 1, 2026 to August 31, 2027
- Year 2 September 1, 2027 to August 31, 2028
- Year 3 September 1, 2028 to August 31, 2029

## ELIGIBILITY TO APPLY

Eligibility is open to public or private non-profit organizations, including but not limited to community organizations, Indian Tribes and faith-based organizations; Local Education Agencies (LEAs) including charter schools; institutions of higher education; government entities within the state (e.g., cities/municipalities, counties, state departments); labor organizations; and partnerships or consortia consisting of the aforementioned. Organizations that have been convicted of a Federal crime are disqualified from receiving the assistance described in this NOFO. Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501 ©(4), that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

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

Applicants must have a [valid SAM registration](#) and [Unique Entity Identifier](#) to receive an award.

## COST SHARING OR MATCHING

### Cost Reimbursement Grants

Applicants are required to match funds provided by AmeriCorps. The applicant’s match can be non-AmeriCorps cash and/or in-kind contributions. Applicants must show that they can meet the match requirement when they submit the application. Applicants must say in their application if they have already secured the match funding.

AmeriCorps Funding Year	Years 1,2, and 3	Years 4,5, and 6	Years 7,8, and 9	Years 10 +
Grantee Share Requirements	24%	26%	28%	30%

### Match Waiver

Please use the Match Waiver information for AmeriCorps State and National Grantees located on the AmeriCorps.gov [Manage Your Grant](#) webpage. AmeriCorps encourages Tribal Nations and any potentially qualifying entity to request match waivers to reduce barriers to participating. Every effort will be made to reduce the match requirements to improve accessibility to funding.

### Fixed Amount Grants

There is no cost share or matching requirement for Fixed Amount grants. AmeriCorps does not provide all the funds necessary to operate the program. Organizations should raise the funds needed to operate the program.

### Changes to Fixed Amount Grants since last Formula NOFO:

#### New Fixed Grant Drawdown Policy

Effective FY2026, the agency is implementing a new drawdown policy for fixed price grantees. This revised policy provides increased flexibility in accessing grant funds while ensuring accountability for program performance milestones.

## Drawdown Structure

Fixed price grantees will be authorized to draw down funds according to the following schedule:

### Initial Drawdown – 50% of Grant Funds

- Fixed price grantees may draw down up to 50% of their total grant award at the beginning of their budget period
- These funds are intended to support startup and ongoing AmeriCorps program costs

### Second Drawdown – 25% of Grant Funds

- Fixed price grantees may draw down an additional 25% of their grant award upon enrolling 50% of their committed volunteers
- Documentation of volunteer enrollment will be required prior to this drawdown

### Final Drawdown – Remaining 25% of Grant Funds

- Fixed price grantees may draw down the final 25% of their grant award upon retaining 85% of all committed volunteers through the required service period
- Documentation of volunteer retention will be required prior to this final drawdown

## STATUTORY/REGULATORY SOURCE AND FUNDING

The applicant's project must be designed and implemented in conformance with all applicable state and federal regulations. In addition to the program requirements outlined in this NOFO.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The General Technical Assistance Workshop will be held as listed in the Timeline section. A [zoom](#) technical assistance workshop will be recorded and posted on the NJ Department of State website under AmeriCorps Funding Opportunities. <https://www.nj.gov/state/volunteer-grant-opportunities.shtml>.

**Only applications submitted by agencies that participate in the virtual General Technical Assistance session will be accepted for review.**

## APPLICATION SUBMISSION

### 1. Notice of Intent to Apply (Due April 23)

Submission of a Notice of Intent to Apply is requested and is due **Thursday, April 23 by 5 p.m.** Please complete the *Notice of Intent to Apply* [form](#). The following information is required to complete the form:

- *Organization Name*
- *Address*
- *Contact Name*
- *E-mail address*
- *Phone Number*
- *Focus area your organization plans to address*
- *Applying as New, Re-competing or Continuation and Regular Cost Reimbursement or Fixed Amount.*

The New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service, Department of State operates this grant program in strict conformance with procedures designed to ensure accountability and integrity in the use of public funds and, therefore, ***will not accept late applications submitted past the below stated deadline for any reason.*** No exceptions will be made. The responsibility for a timely submission resides with the applicant.

## Formula Application Submission Process

### Important Notice Regarding Application Submission

For the FY26-27 Formula application cycle, the New Jersey Commission will **not** be utilizing eGrants for sub-applicant submissions for the May 18, 2026 deadline.

### Alternative Submission Platform

All applicants are required to complete their FY26-27 Formula application through a **custom report created specifically for this funding cycle within the OnCorps system**. This alternative process has been developed to maintain the Commission's established review timeline while awaiting guidance from AmeriCorps State and National (ASN) on the eGrants sub-application assignment process, which is expected in May 2026.

### Application Components in OnCorps

Applicants will be required to use OnCorps to enter the following application components:

- eGrants Facesheet information
- Narrative section responses
- Logic Model
- Performance Measures
- Proposed budget information

### Key Information:

- **Submission Deadline:** May 18, 2026
- **Submission Platform:** OnCorps
- **Application Access:** Instructions for accessing and completing the OnCorps custom report will be provided to all eligible applicants, with follow up information announced during the technical assistance session on April 22.
- **eGrants Entry:** Sub applicants may be required to transfer application information into eGrants, upon selection for Formula funding.
- **Page Limits:** Narratives Section: do not exceed 11 pages double spaced when printed from review tab in eGrants. Logic Model: do not exceed 8 pages as printed from review tab in eGrants. Although OnCorps will not provide accurate page counts, all applicants will need to comply with page limits, upon eGrants transfer.

### OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The applicant's authorized representative must be the person who submits the application in eGrants. The authorized representative must use their own account to sign and submit the application. Applications submitted via OnCorps do not require the authorized representative to do so.

### Submission of Additional Documents:

The NJ Commission requires that applicants submit additional documentation directly to the NJ Commission email address: [AmeriCorps.NJ@sos.nj.gov](mailto:AmeriCorps.NJ@sos.nj.gov). Please see the Section II: AmeriCorps State and National NOFO for all of the required additional documents. Please review sections related to the following elements of additional required additional documentation:

Additional documents for all applicants:

1. Evidence documents. Please refer to the [AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange](#) and [Mandatory Supplemental Information](#) for detailed instructions by evidence tier.
2. Labor union concurrence, if applicable.
3. Operational and Financial Management Survey. Submit electronically using the online form. Forms submitted as a PDF, or any other document format may not be accepted.

Applicants who have received **three or more years** of formula funding for the same project being proposed should also provide an: Evaluation plan summary using the [evaluation plan summary template](#).

**NOTE:** The required and exclusive process for submitting additional documents is that they **must** be e-mailed to [AmeriCorps.NJ@sos.nj.gov](mailto:AmeriCorps.NJ@sos.nj.gov) with the following subject line: *[Legal Applicant Name]–[Application ID number]*. Emails **MUST** include the following information:

- the legal applicant name and its point of contact information
- the application ID number
- a list of documents that should be attached to the email
- individually saved files that are clearly labeled
- Reminder to include the legal applicant name and application ID number within the body of each document.

Do not submit other items not requested in this *Notice* or Application Instructions or separately requested by the NJ Commission. The NJ Commission will not review or return them.

### **Technical Assistance**

Commission staff will provide technical assistance and training on the OnCorps platform to ensure all applicants can successfully navigate the new submission process. Additional information and detailed instructions will be disseminated with the Formula NOFO materials. OnCorps will host a Technical Assistance training session in April, around the time of the General Technical Assistance session.

### **Questions**

Please contact Commission staff if you have questions regarding the application submission process or need assistance accessing the OnCorps system. [AmeriCorps.NJ@sos.nj.gov](mailto:AmeriCorps.NJ@sos.nj.gov)

**Applications must be submitted electronically via OnCorps NO  
LATER THAN 5:00 PM Eastern Time ON  
Monday, May 18, 2026.**

Please note: At this time, application submission is being conducted outside of eGrants, which is the standard submission platform for AmeriCorps grant applications.

### **Current Process**

Applicants should follow the submission instructions provided above, regarding using OnCorps, the alternative submission method specified by the New Jersey Commission.

### **Future eGrants Entry Required**

The New Jersey Commission is awaiting guidance from the agency, which is anticipated in May 2026, regarding the eventual entry of selected applications into the eGrants system.

### **What This Means for Applicants:**

- **Sub-applicants whose applications are selected for formula funding will be required to enter their application information into eGrants during the summer months**
- **Anticipated timeline for eGrants entry: Late June through early August 2026**
- **Specific instructions, deadlines, and technical guidance for eGrants entry will be provided to selected sub-applicants once the Commission receives direction from the agency**

### **Important Reminders**

- Submit your initial application according to the current NOFO instructions

- Selected applicants should anticipate additional work during the summer to complete eGrants entry
- The Commission will provide timely communication and support throughout this process
- Questions about the submission process should be directed to [AmeriCorps.NJ@sos.nj.gov](mailto:AmeriCorps.NJ@sos.nj.gov)

## **APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION FOR OPERATING GRANTS**

### **Review Criteria**

Each applicant must describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to solve a significant community problem. AmeriCorps urges applicants to submit high quality applications that carefully follow the guidance in this Notice and in the Application Instructions. The quality of an application will be an important factor in determining whether an organization will receive funding.

### **Selection Criteria:**

#### **Program Design (40 percent)**

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

#### **Community Problem and Logic Model (18 points)**

The applicant will provide a detailed summary of the community problem, including how the applicant's intervention(s) will lead to the outcomes identified in the organization's Logic Model.

The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the organization's Logic Model. No narrative is needed other than what is contained within the logic model.

The applicant will 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, the context in which the intervention is delivered (e.g., the setting where the intervention is delivered), the number of AmeriCorps members who will deliver the intervention, and the characteristics of AmeriCorps members, including specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required to implement the intervention.

The applicant will also depict the core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including the length of the activity (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention), the dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week), and the target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level).

The Logic Model will include the measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e., number of beneficiaries served, types and number of activities conducted). If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as output indicator. The Logic Model will also depict 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.

Note: The Logic Model is a visual representation of the applicant's Theory of Change. Programs

should include short, medium, or long-term outcomes in the Logic Model. Applicants are not required to measure all components of their 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.

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

#### **Evidence Tier (4 points)**

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

In 2024, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 55 percent, Moderate 16 percent, Preliminary 19 percent, and Pre-Preliminary 11 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. Applicants that have been funded for more than six (6) consecutive years should not be applying for pre-preliminary tier. It is expected that by this time, the program can demonstrate, at a minimum, a preliminary tier of evidence.

Applicants who have outcome or impact evaluation reports of the same intervention described in the application and Logic Model (use the Mandatory Supplemental Information for a definition of "same intervention") may submit up to two of those reports, plus (if applicable) the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle, 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 by the applicant in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Community and Logic Model sections of the application: characteristics of the beneficiary 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 by the applicant in all of these areas will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points. Submission of additional documents that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements described in the Notice (e.g., advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives that are not research studies or program evaluations) will not be reviewed.

In the Evidence Tier section of the application narrative, applicants must (1) summarize the study design and key findings of any outcome or impact evaluation report(s) submitted and (2) describe any other evidence that supports their program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform their program design. Applicants who submit evaluation reports for consideration 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 Mandatory Supplemental Information.)

Applicants should provide citations for the studies they describe, if applicable; however, reviewers will not review any documents external to the application other than evaluation report(s) submitted in accordance with the Notice instructions.

Applicants must meet all requirements of an evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier. If the evaluation reports submitted by the applicant do not meet the definitions in the Mandatory Supplemental Information, the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier.

### **Evidence Quality (6 points)**

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

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; and the submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries or AmeriCorps members in at least one key outcome of interest.

Applicants that 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 their proposed program design; the described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years; and the evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries or AmeriCorps members in at least one key outcome of interest.

### **Performance Measures (6 points)**

Performance measures identify all components included in the Logic Model (refer to performance measures link and form). Performance measures provide for adequate and quality data collection including instruments (refer to performance measures link and form). Applicant describes a data collection schedule including collection of baseline data (data collection schedule is described in this narrative).

### **Member Experience (6 points)**

Describe the rationale by which you selected the number of members and slot types for your program. Describe how you plan to conduct the onboarding process and orientation on the first day of service to your cadre of members. Include training topics to be included in the orientation, including training on prohibited activities. The applicant describes how the organization will provide members an asset-based orientation to the community. The applicant details how AmeriCorps members will be provided a high quality orientation to the community they will serve.

AmeriCorps members as a result of their service will have opportunities to develop as leaders. Please describe leadership training, topics and timeline that will enable members to develop as leaders. Discuss opportunities they will have to take leadership roles through service, service events, project development. 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. Please describe your plan for career exploration for life after AmeriCorps.

The program has a well-defined plan to recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate. Please describe your recruitment plan, recruitment sources, criteria for selection and interview process for your AmeriCorps members. Describe what a typical day will look like for your members. Discuss how you plan to manage your AmeriCorps members, your site supervisors and how often you will meet with your members individually and as a group to reflect on their service.

### **Organizational Capability (15 percent)**

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

#### **Organizational Background and Staffing (7 points)**

The organization details the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing the AmeriCorps program as well as providing oversight and monitoring for the program. A full-time dedicated program manager is required in most instances. The organization has facilitated, partnered, or participated in educational or workforce development programs (i.e., pre-apprenticeship/registered apprenticeship, work experience and job training programs, etc.). The applicant describes their organization's mission and relevant experience in areas such as volunteer recruitment and management, community outreach, overcoming project implementation challenges, etc.

#### **Member Supervision (8 points)**

The applicant details how AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service (e.g., 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.). The applicant details how AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations (e.g., 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.).

### **Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (15 percent)**

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

#### **Member Recruitment (3 points)**

The applicant provides 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.

**Member Retention (3 points)**

The applicant provides 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.).

**Data Collection (4 points)**

The applicant provides a description of budget expenses to support data collection, continuous improvement activities, and evaluation of the interventions and impact on the community and the member experience.

**Budget Accuracy (5 points)**

The following criteria will be assessed based on the budget detail submitted and not in this narrative. Budget is submitted without mathematical errors. Proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award. Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated. Budget complies with the budget instructions. Member stipends comport with the amounts outlined in this NOFO. Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget. The budgeted match is equal to or more than the required match for the given program year. The budget identifies the costs for one FTE Program Director. The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum cost per MSY of \$25,200.

Proposed budgets that contain MSY costs that exceed the maximum cost per MSY and/or less than required match will be considered unresponsive to the application criteria.

Applicants must complete the budget and ensure the following information is in the budget screens: current indirect rate cost rate information if used to claim indirect/administrative costs; identify the non-AmeriCorps funding and resources necessary to support the project, including Fixed Amount applicants; and indicate the amount of non-AmeriCorps resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash), the sources of these commitments, and if the commitments are proposed or secured.

**Past Program Performance and Compliance (30 percent)****Program Performance History (15 points)**

This section evaluates the applicant's demonstrated track record in successfully implementing AmeriCorps programming and achieving program objectives. Reviewers will assess the applicant's performance across prior grant periods based on the following criteria:

**Performance Measure Achievement:** Applicant's history of meeting or exceeding approved performance measure targets, including output and outcome data quality, accuracy, and timely reporting.

**Member Recruitment and Retention:** Applicant's ability to recruit qualified members and maintain strong retention rates, including successful enrollment of planned Member Service Years (MSYs), timely member enrollment, and completion of service terms.

**Program Goal Attainment:** Applicant's success in meeting stated program goals and delivering planned community impact, including evidence of effective program implementation, sustainable community partnerships, and documented service outcomes.

**Grant Management:** Applicant's history of effectively managing grant resources, meeting program deadlines, responding to technical assistance needs, and implementing corrective actions when required.

### **Fiscal Regulatory and Grant Compliance (15 points)**

This section evaluates the applicant's history of compliance with federal regulations, AmeriCorps requirements, and sound fiscal management practices. Reviewers will assess the applicant's compliance record based on the following criteria:

**Federal and AmeriCorps Regulatory Compliance:** Applicant's demonstrated adherence to federal regulations including 2 CFR 200 (Uniform Guidance), AmeriCorps regulations (45 CFR 2510-2550), and program-specific requirements including member eligibility verification, prohibited activities, and program oversight.

**Financial Management and Audit Findings:** Applicant's history of sound financial management practices, including timely and accurate fiscal report submissions, appropriate expenditure of grant funds, compliance with match requirements, and resolution of any audit findings or questioned costs from A-133/Single Audits or AmeriCorps monitoring activities.

**Reporting Requirements:** Applicant's track record of submitting complete and timely reports, including progress reports, performance measure data, enrollment reports, exit reports, and closeout documentation as required by grant terms and conditions.

**Monitoring and Corrective Action:** Applicant's responsiveness to monitoring findings, implementation of corrective action plans within required timeframes, and demonstrated improvement in areas of concern identified during site visits, desk reviews, or compliance audits.

## Categories/Subcategories and Point Values

Categories/Subcategories	Points	Percentage
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Program Design</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40%</b>
Community Problem and Logic Model	18	
Evidence Tier	4	
Evidence Quality	6	
Performance Measures	6	
Member Experience	6	
<b>Organizational Capability</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15%</b>
Organizational Background and Staffing	7	
Member Supervision	8	
<b>Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15%</b>
Member Recruitment Costs	3	
Member Retention Costs	3	
Data Collection	4	
Budget Adequacy	5	
<b>Past Program Performance and Compliance</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30%</b>
Program Performance History	15	
Fiscal Regulatory and Grant Compliance	15	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

## ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS OR BENEFITS

The NJ Commission would like to highlight the following additional requirements and benefits of AmeriCorps.

### Terms of Service

Programs may engage members full-time or less than full-time. Full-time members must serve at least 1700 hours during a period of not less than nine months and not more than one year. Three Quarter-time members must serve at least 1200 hours. Half-time members must serve at least 900 hours. Quarter-time members must serve at least 450 hours; and 300 hours for minimum-time.

### Living Allowance

**The NJ Commission requires that all AmeriCorps members receive a living allowance regardless of the federal regulation which does not require a living allowance for less than full-time members.** All members must receive the minimum stipend amount listed in the chart for respective slot types, as demonstrated below.

**Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance for FY 2026 New and Recomplete Competitive and Formula Applicants**

<b>Slot Types</b>	<b>Minimum # of Hours</b>	<b>Minimum Living Allowance</b>	<b>Maximum Total Living Allowance</b>
Full-time	1,700	\$20,400	\$40,800
Three Quarter-time	1,200	\$14,400	\$28,560
Half-time	900	\$10,800	\$20,400
Quarter-time	450	\$8,100	\$10,608
Minimum-time	300	\$5,400	\$8,568

A living allowance is not considered a wage. **In New Jersey, AmeriCorps members are not eligible for unemployment insurance, family leave or disability insurance.**

**Maximum Cost per Member Service Year**

The AmeriCorps cost per Member Service Year (MSY) is determined by dividing the AmeriCorps share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include childcare or the value of the education award a member may earn.

AmeriCorps is keeping the maximum cost per MSY at the same amount as FY 2025 as a safeguard to ensure the number of members serving remains the same or grows.

**Table: Maximum Cost per MSY**

<b>Grant Program</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Cost Reimbursement Grant	\$25,200
Professional Corps competitive Fixed Amount Applicants/Grantees	\$1,000*
Full-cost Fixed Amount Grant	\$25,200
Education Award Program (EAP)	\$800-\$1,000

\*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.

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.

**Health Insurance**

Grantees must provide full-time members with health insurance at the time of acceptance into the program if the member is not otherwise covered by a health insurance policy. If a member who previously had coverage loses it through no deliberate act of his or her own, such as parental or spousal

job loss or other qualifying event, the grantee must provide the member with basic health insurance that meets AmeriCorps requirements. In general, AmeriCorps does not pay the costs of health benefits for half-time members unless they serve in a full-time capacity.

### **Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities**

Increasing the participation of individuals with disabilities in national and community service programs is a key interest of AmeriCorps State and National. All AmeriCorps programs are required to actively reach out to people with disabilities for inclusion in AmeriCorps service.

### **Participation in National Days of Service**

As part of the National Service Network, there are a number of opportunities for grantees to participate in national service days. AmeriCorps State and National and the NJ Commission expects all national service programs, including AmeriCorps programs, to participate in national days of service, including the 9/11 Commemorative, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday and AmeriCorps Week. In addition, AmeriCorps State and National and the NJ Commission expects programs with AmeriCorps members to participate in other national service activities such as common opening ceremonies (including the administration of an oath at Launch), orientations, and training.

## **STATE COMMISSION TRAINING AND EVENTS**

### **Program Director Trainings and Meetings**

All program directors must attend a three-day orientation known as *Starting Strong* (fiscal staff also required at Starting Strong), held annually in July/August, [America's Service Commission's](#) National Service Training held annually in Spring, and any other training (e.g., site supervisor training) developed for program directors during the contract period. Program directors are also required to participate in all monthly conference calls or meetings.

In constructing the budget, you should include the cost for transportation, meals, and possible overnight accommodations incurred as a result of all AmeriCorps State and National or NJ Commission training sessions.

### **Statewide AmeriCorps Member Trainings and Events**

All AmeriCorps members and Program Directors are required to attend the following trainings/events:

- AmeriCorps Launch – Fall 2026
- End-of-the-Year Training – Spring 2027
- Monthly Virtual Program Director Calls
- Other statewide training as determined by the New Jersey AmeriCorps Commission, such as Career Day, Disaster Preparedness or GOV Volunteerism Conference.

## **EVALUATION OF CONTINUATION AND RECOMPETING APPLICATIONS**

### **State-level Review Process**

All applications for AmeriCorps Formula grants will be reviewed accuracy and eligibility first through the NJ Commission Staff.

In year one, the application is evaluated and rated by a panel of three readers. The evaluation panel

typically consists of one reader from the originating office, one from another office within the NJ Department of State, and one reader external to the NJ Department of State who is knowledgeable in the content area. Readers of grant applications for the NJ Department of State certify that no conflict of interest exists that would create an undue advantage or disadvantage for any applicant in the application evaluation and scoring process.

Applications are evaluated on the basis of quality, comprehensiveness, completeness, accuracy and appropriateness of response to the guidelines and requirements of the governing NOFO. Applicants may request information about their evaluation scores by writing to the NJ Commission on National and Community Service. The Commission reserves the right to withdraw from consideration any application that does not include each and every component to be evaluated and scored in the evaluation process.

Applications must receive a score of at least 75 points out of 100 and include all required components to be eligible for funding. Eligible applications are ranked and funded in descending order, from highest to lowest score. In the event of a tied score at or above the NJ Department of State's cutoff score of 75, the NJ Department of State will select the applicant with the highest combined score for the Program Design section.

Selected applications which score 75 points or above will be submitted to the NJ Commission on National and Community Service Board for review. Those that are voted on by the Board, will be included in the application package submitted to AmeriCorps State and National. Applications must score above 75 points in order to proceed to the Commission Board vote, for inclusion in the Formula application package.

**PLEASE REFER TO THESE LINKS TO ACCESS THE REMAINING *REQUIRED SECTIONS* FOR THE AMERICORPS COMPETITIVE APPLICATION.**

Section I: [2026 NJ Commission Grant Information and Timeline](#)

Section II: [2026 Mandatory Supplemental Information](#)

Section III: [2026 National Performance Measures](#)

Section IV: [2026 Applicant Determined Performance Measures Supplement](#)

Section V: [2026 Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey \(OFMS\)](#)

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