



Delaware State AmeriCorps

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Program Year 2014-2015

**Serve Delaware
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ABOUT SERVE DELAWARE

Serve Delaware is the Delaware State Commission for National and Community Service and is responsible for administering the federally funded AmeriCorps State grants program. The AmeriCorps State funds are made available through the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

Serve Delaware was established in 1994. Serve Delaware administers national service, volunteerism and civic engagement through its AmeriCorps State programs, statewide volunteer initiatives and many days of service (i.e., 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, Delaware Week of Service, National AmeriCorps Week and Martin Luther King Day of Service).

National Service in Delaware

Serve Delaware funds, monitors and supports 4 AmeriCorps State programs through formula and national competitive grants. On average, there are roughly 80-100 AmeriCorps members in service annually through Serve Delaware funded programs. In collaboration with AmeriCorps*VISTA, AmeriCorps National Direct and Senior Corps programs there are approximately 3,500 individuals who commit a year of service to our state's local communities ([AmeriCorps in Your State](#)).

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Serve Delaware announces the availability of AmeriCorps State funds to be awarded to **new or re-competing** AmeriCorps applicants through a state competition for the 2014-2015 grant cycle. Serve Delaware employs an annual Request for Proposals (RFP) process beginning with this announcement, in conjunction with the release of the Corporation for National and Community Service's 2014 AmeriCorps State and National Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and Application Instructions. Serve Delaware solicits grant proposals through the state's annual RFP process and makes determinations on which proposals will be considered to compete in the national competition and which proposals will be considered for state formula funding. Any eligible applicant seeking to apply for AmeriCorps State funds must respond to this RFP and all related deadlines.

Serve Delaware's Request for Proposals should be read together with the AmeriCorps State and National FY 2014 NOFO and Application Instructions which can be found at the CNCS website on its [Funding Opportunities page, http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities/2014/ameri-corps-state-and-national-grants-fy-2014](http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities/2014/ameri-corps-state-and-national-grants-fy-2014)

NOTE: Serve Delaware's RFP is based on draft versions of CNCS materials. Applicants should be advised that there may be additional changes and Serve Delaware will inform applicants of any changes once materials are in final form.

AmeriCorps State grants support a broad range of local service programs that engage thousands of Americans in intensive service to meet critical community needs. Applicants should respond to at least one of the Focus Areas as outlined in the CNCS Notice of Funding

Opportunity, which are:

- Disaster Services
- Economic Opportunity
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Healthy Futures
- Veterans and Military Families
- Governor and Mayor Initiative

AMERICORPS REGULATIONS & GRANTS PROVISIONS

Applicants need to familiarize themselves with AmeriCorps programming by visiting:

1. The CNCS website at: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/>
2. AmeriCorps Grant Provisions: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/managing-ameri-corps-grants>
3. AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520-2550 at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr>.

2014-2015 GRANTS PROCESS

Serve Delaware solicits proposals annually to make determinations on which proposals will be considered to compete in the national competition and which proposals will be considered for formula funding. Serve Delaware utilizes a multi-step process that includes the submission of Intent to Apply and other relevant forms and those applicants that are successful will then be invited to submit a full proposal that responds to the CNCS Application. Those applicants considered for “competitive funds” will compete with other applicants nationally and are decided upon by the Corporation for National and Community Service with notifications anticipated in mid April 2014. Applicants that are not awarded “competitive funds” are automatically considered for “formula funds” with decisions made by Serve Delaware in late May. Please refer to the full Timeline on the following page for all deadlines.

The Intent to Apply requirement is to allow applicants the opportunity to present their proposed program, its potential community impact and their organizational capacity to manage an AmeriCorps Program. A peer review committee and Serve Delaware staff will review all applications and Serve Delaware Commission will make final decisions on which applications will be submitted to CNCS for funding consideration. Full proposals will be submitted into the eGrants system and Serve Delaware staff will be available to provide technical assistance.

Once CNCS makes its competitive decisions in mid to late April, Serve Delaware will then make its formula decisions in late May by reviewing any applicant that was either not funded at the competitive level and/or any applicant that was not submitted to the national competition.

Special Considerations:

1. Concept Paper submission does not automatically result in an invitation to submit a full AmeriCorps application.
2. Invitations to submit a full proposal do not guarantee AmeriCorps funding.
3. Final funding for this grant is contingent upon appropriations from CNCS.

TIMELINE

November 25	Initial Application Submissions (via eGrants)
December 2	Peer Review Sessions
December 6	Commission POC Approval of Proposals
December 8-10	Technical Assistance Sessions (times TBD)
December 11	Feedback calls to applicants
December 12	Final application submission to Serve Delaware via eGrants
December 16	Final Serve Delaware Commission Approval
December 20	Submission to CNCS by Serve Delaware
April 18	CNCS Decisions for Competitive grants
Late May	Expected Commission decision for Formula grants

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; Tribes; and intermediaries planning to subgrant awarded funds are encouraged to apply.

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

INTENT TO APPLY

Applicants are **required** to submit Intent to Apply and completed accompanying forms to: **Delaware Health and Social Services, Herman M. Holloway Sr. Campus, Procurement Branch Main Administration Bldg., Sullivan Street, 2nd Floor, Room #257, 1901 North DuPont , Highway, New Castle, Delaware 19720 by November 7, 2013, by 11:00 a.m.**

The Intent to Apply must include the following information:

1. Legal Name of Applicant
2. AmeriCorps Program Name, if different from Legal Name of Applicant
3. Potential number of AmeriCorps members
4. Intended Serve America Act Focus Area
5. Contact Person
6. Contact Information, including address, phone, fax and email

GRANT INFORMATION SESSIONS

Serve Delaware will host two public grant information sessions at the Serve Delaware Office, located at Charles Debnam Building., 1901 N. DuPont Highway, New Castle, DE 19720. These sessions are not mandatory for applicants; however, registration is required. First time applicants are strongly encouraged to attend. Please register by phone or email at least 3 business days prior to scheduled training date

- Thursday, October 24, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
- Friday, October 25, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

To register contact Kim Massey, (302) 255-9883, kimberly.massey@state.de.us. Please specify which session you will attend and include your name, organization, contact phone number and email, and number of people attending. Please call the Serve Delaware office if you require a reasonable accommodation. *NOTE: if you are unable to attend, presentation materials will be posted to the Serve Delaware website*

SERVE DELAWARE FOCUS AREA

Serve Delaware is interested in AmeriCorps applications that provide effective solutions that address local community needs, offer meaningful AmeriCorps member experiences, demonstrate the ability to document and evaluate significant community impact and provide the opportunity for strategic partnership. Specifically, Serve Delaware will give consideration from applications on these three priority areas: veterans and military families, education, economic opportunity, and those showing how to include people with disabilities into their programs.

SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The selection process includes the following steps:

1. Determining whether your proposal complies with the application requirements, such as deadlines and eligibility requirements;
2. Scoring your proposal against the basic selection criteria articulated in AmeriCorps NOFO; and
3. Ensuring innovation and geographic, demographic, and programmatic diversity across the AmeriCorps State portfolio.

In evaluating applications for funding, peer reviewers and Serve Delaware Staff and Commission members assess overall program design, organizational capability, and budget adequacy. Applicants should not assume that reviewers are familiar with proposed grant program, even if applicants are re-competing. The weights assigned by Serve Delaware, for its applications, are below.

In order to maximize the impact of the public investment in national service, CNCS will fund programs that can demonstrate community impact and solve community problems using an **evidence-based** or **evidence-informed approach** (e.g. performance measure data, quality of research, theory of change).

The proposals should provide reviewers a clear and compelling need in the community that is backed up using relevant national, state and local data while describing the AmeriCorps intervention and roles of AmeriCorps members. Reviewers should be able to envision what AmeriCorps members will be doing on a daily basis in program delivery and what the overall goals and outcomes are for the program.

Serve Delaware Application Selection Criteria		
Category	Percentage	Sub-Categories and Weights
Executive Summary	5%	NA
Program Design	70%	A. Problem/Need B. AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed and Measurable Community Impact C. Member Training D. Member Supervision F. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification
Organizational Capability	20%	A. Organizational Background and Staffing B. Compliance and Accountability C. Past Performance For Current Grantees and Former Grantees Only D. Continuous Improvement
Budget Adequacy and Cost Effectiveness	5%	A. Cost Effectiveness B. Budget Adequacy

MINIMUM PROGRAM SIZE

Applicants should apply for a minimum of five (5) Member Service Years (MSYs) or the equivalent number of less than full-time members. AmeriCorps programs should be large enough to make a significant difference in communities; therefore, Serve Delaware requires applicants to request a minimum number of MSYs regardless of whether members serve individually or in teams. To that end, Serve Delaware encourages joint collaborative applications among organizations that have similar organizational missions, identified program goals and community partner agencies.

PROPOSALS INSTRUCTIONS & DUE DATE

Grant proposal applications must be received by Serve Delaware no later than **November 20, 2013, by 11:00a.m.** Applicants must submit their proposals via eGrants and all related materials in a PDF document and sent to charles.a.harris@state.de.us. ***Proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted.***

To be considered as having a full and complete Proposal application, the following items must be included to Serve Delaware. More detail is on the following pages.

1. Proposals Face sheet – reference Appendix A
2. Assurances and Certifications – reference Appendix B
3. Executive Summary – maximum one-half page in length
4. Proposals Narrative – maximum of 10 pages, double-spaced with 1” margins, responding to all components outlined below
5. Budget Summary Worksheet – reference Appendix C.1 or C.2
6. Program Design Information Sheet – reference Appendix D
7. Logic Model Worksheet – reference Appendix E
8. Additional Information - Proof of 501(c)3 non-profit status

APPLICATIONS COMPONENTS

1. **SF424 Facesheet** – Appendix A
2. **Signed Assurances and Certification Sheet** – Appendix B
3. **Executive Summary** – Not to exceed a maximum of half-page in length. Please refer to the template outlined on page 18 of the 2014 AmeriCorps NOFO
4. **Application Narrative** – not to exceed a maximum of 10 pages. The narrative should cover the three-year grant cycle period for which you are requesting funds. The Narrative includes descriptions of the **Program Design** and **Organizational Capability**. Successful applicants will respond to each of the following sections.

Section I: Rationale and Approach/Program Design (Reference NOFO, pages 18-23)

A. Problem/Need – Describe the community needs AmeriCorps members will be addressing. Provide information about the extent/severity of the need in the community(ies) where your proposed AmeriCorps members will serve and cite specific relevant data such as unemployment rate as well as the poverty rate.

B. AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed and Measurable Community Impact –

In addition to completing the Logic Model worksheet, describe how the intervention is designed to address the problem described in the previous section and what evidence there is to support that the intervention will lead to the outcomes identified in the theory of change. Be able to answer the question: Why should CNCS invest in this

Applicants that selected Tier 1 or Tier 2: CNCS' expectation is that at least 30 percent of your MSYs are in the complementary program measures or priority measures above. If that is not the case, please explain in the narrative why it was not possible to meet the 30% threshold.

In this section, applicants shall provide a description of the studies and evaluations conducted that provide evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the proposed population and community challenge. This section shall include specific citations of studies and/or publicly available evaluation and research reports.

A. Member Training – Describe your plan for anticipated training topics and the timeline for member training. Include Describe how you will ensure that members and generated volunteers are aware of and are adhering to the rules regarding prohibited activities.

B. Member Supervision – Describe your plan for supervising members and how the plan ensures that members will receive adequate support and guidance.

- C. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification** – How will the program participants know they are AmeriCorps members? How will the communities in which they serve know they are AmeriCorps members? How will the applicant’s program ensure that its participants will wear the AmeriCorps logo daily? How will the applicant ensure participants are prepared to speak about their AmeriCorps experience to members of the community?

Section II: Organizational Capability

- A. Organizational Background and Staffing** – Describe how the organization has the experience, staffing and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program. Explain who will staff the AmeriCorps program and what their specific role will be and their relevant experience to manage an AmeriCorps program. Describe your organization’s prior experience administering AmeriCorps grants or other federal funds.
- B. Compliance and Accountability** – Describe how your organization will ensure full compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations at the host agency and service sites (if applicable). Also describe how your organization plans to prevent and detect compliance issues in general, in particular monitoring program and service sites.
- C. Past Performance For Current Grantees and Former Grantees Only for recompeting applicants and formula Grantees)** – Applicants should specifically respond to past enrollment and retention rates, and if less than 100% was not achieved what strategies are in place for improvement. Also describe past performance in meeting performance measures and program outcomes. Describe any compliance issues and areas of weakness/risk identified during the last full year of program operation at your organization, your subgrantees (if applicable), and service site locations (if applicable). If the applicant, its subgrantees, and/or service site locations had compliance or areas of weakness/risk identified, provide an explanation and describe the corrective action taken and your plan for improvement.
- D. Continuous Improvement** – Describe the plans for soliciting timely and regular feedback from internal and external stakeholders to inform continuous improvement efforts. Describe the plans for using data to inform continuous improvement.

Section III: Budget Adequacy and Cost Effectiveness

- A. Cost Effectiveness** – Cost effectiveness will be evaluated by analyzing cost per MSY in relation to your program design. Having a low cost per member is a competitive advantage. New applicants that submit with a low cost per MSY and recompeting applicants that submit with a lower cost per MSY than

previously funded may receive higher priority for funding. If the applicant requests above the maximum, it must justify your request. Please note that such requests are rarely approved.

- B. **Budget Adequacy** – Applicants must fill out the budget and complete the budget narrative in eGrants and provide the following information in the application narrative:
- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project.
 - Discuss the adequacy of the budget to support the program design and objectives.
 - Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments (in-kind, and cash) secured to date and the sources of these commitments.
 - Describe plans for securing additional resource commitments, potential sources, and timeline.

5. **Budget Summary Worksheet** – Appendix C.1 or C.2

The proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your narrative. Applicants will use the Cost Reimbursement Budget Worksheet or Fixed Amount Budget Worksheet based on program design.

Please keep in mind the following:

- All the amounts you request must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.
- Itemize each cost and present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.
- Do not include unallowable expenses, e.g., entertainment costs (which include food and beverage costs) unless they are justified as an essential component of an activity.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).

6. **Program Design Information Sheet** –Appendix D

7. **Logic Model Worksheet** – Appendix E

8. **Proof of Non-Profit Status**