

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
SERVE DC – THE MAYOR’S OFFICE ON VOLUNTEERISM



**NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

**NOTICE:** ATTENDANCE AT ONE OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SESSIONS IS **REQUIRED** IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR THIS GRANT. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SESSIONS VIA CONFERENCE CALL ARE SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 11, 2013 (3:30PM-4:30PM) AND MARCH 25, 2013 (3:30PM-4:30PM). ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND IN THIS NOTICE.

**Dates**

Applications are due on **April 3, 2013 by 5:00pm**. Required notices of intent to apply are due on **March 28, 2013**.

**Summary**

Serve DC announces the availability of School Turnaround AmeriCorps State funding for Fiscal Year 2013 (FY 2013) to eligible organizations. This competitive grant program, designed to strengthen and improve our nation’s lowest-performing schools, will engage AmeriCorps members in roughly 60 turnaround schools across the country. Subject to the availability of appropriations for FY 2013 and guidelines of the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), new applicants with high-quality proposals proposing single-state applications in Washington, DC will compete nationally for funds made available through Serve DC and CNCS.

AmeriCorps is a national service network that provides full- and less than full-time opportunities for participants, called members, to serve their communities and build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to meet local environmental, educational, public safety, homeland security, or other human needs. Within these issue areas, programs may submit proposals that address specific problems of local communities.

The School Turnaround AmeriCorps initiative is a collaborative effort by CNCS and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to increase educational achievement, high school graduation rates, and college readiness for students in our nation’s lowest-performing elementary, middle, and high schools. School Turnaround AmeriCorps, in coordination with local school and LEA turnaround efforts will support schools and communities in improving student performance. CNCS and ED expect to make \$5 million available for this grant competition. The actual level of funding is subject to the availability of full-year appropriations. The total amount of an applicant’s grant request must not exceed \$13,300 per Member Service Year. Serve DC anticipates notifying awardees by mid-July 2013.

*Serve DC will utilize the CNC Notice of Funding Opportunity (CNCS Notice) and CNCS Application Instructions with the amendments outlined in this Notice. The CNCS Notice and Instructions can be found on [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov) (see School Turnaround AmeriCorps FY13).*

## **Purpose of School Turnaround AmeriCorps Funding**

Grants will fund projects that address multiple student needs and are aligned with comprehensive school turnaround plans. The CNCS *Notice* outlines specific guidance for priorities, requirements, and performance measurement. All grants funded under the CNCS *Notice* must include one or more of the following:

- Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.
- Establishing a school culture and environment that improve school safety, attendance, and discipline and address other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs.
- Accelerating students' acquisition of reading and mathematics knowledge and skills;
- Increasing graduation rates through strategies such as early warning systems, credit-recovery programs, and re-engagement strategies.
- Increasing college enrollment rates through college preparation counseling assistance to include completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and college applications, and educating students and their families on financial literacy for college; or
- Supporting school implementation of increased learning time.

## **Serve DC Priorities**

Serve DC will continue to focus on AmeriCorps programs that align with local priorities outlined in the "One City Action Plan" (<http://mayor.dc.gov/page/one-city-action-plan>) and the 2013-2015 District of Columbia State Service Plan ([www.serve.dc.gov](http://www.serve.dc.gov)) with a focus on economic opportunity, education, and sustainability.

## **Funding Available**

Awards will provide both operating funds and AmeriCorps member slots. Award amounts will vary. Grant amounts may be lower than the requested amount. Applicants are encouraged to apply for a minimum of 20 Member Service Years (MSYs). CNCS and ED expect to make annual grant awards of between \$250,000 and \$1,000,000 for cost reimbursement grants and between \$16,000 and \$80,000 for education-award fixed-amount grants.

## **Award Period**

Unless otherwise specified, the grant generally covers a three-year project period. In approving a multi-year project period, CNCS generally makes an initial award for the first year of operation. In most cases, the application is submitted with a one-year budget. Continuation funding for year 2 and year 3 is contingent upon satisfactory performance, demonstrated capacity to manage the grant, compliance with grant requirements, and availability of federal appropriations. CNCS and ED reserve the right to adjust the amount of a grant award for subsequent years, or elect not to continue funding on any or all of these bases.

## **Types of Grants**

As the DC Commission on National and Community Service, Serve DC will only accept single-state applications for programs proposed to operate only in Washington, DC. Applicants seeking information on National Direct grants or Indian Tribe Grants should consult the CNCS website at [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov).

## Types of Funding

AmeriCorps grants can be awarded on a cost reimbursement or fixed-amount basis.

### 1. Cost Reimbursement Grants

Cost reimbursement grants fund a portion of program operating costs and member living allowances with flexibility to use all of the funds for allowable costs regardless of whether or not the program recruits and retains all AmeriCorps members. There is a grantee cost share requirement for these grants.

### 2. Education Award Fixed-Amount Grants (EAP)

Programs apply for a small fixed-amount per MSY and use their own resources to cover all other costs. Programs can access funds under the grant based on the number of members they enroll. EAPs may enroll less-than-full-time members in addition to full-time members. There is no match or financial reporting requirements, but programs must raise significant funds through other sources to operate the program. CNCS does not encourage organizations that do not already operate an AmeriCorps program to apply for a fixed-amount grant.

## Eligibility

Public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; schools or LEAs; institutions of higher education; government entities within states (e.g., cities, counties); Indian Tribes; and labor organizations, are eligible to apply. Partnerships and consortia of these entities are encouraged to apply, with one entity of an applying partnership or consortia designated as the lead applicant.

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

Existing AmeriCorps grantees may apply; however, receiving funding previously from CNCS or another federal agency is not a prerequisite to applying under the CNCS *Notice*. Organizations that have never received funding from CNCS or AmeriCorps are eligible to apply for the grants described in the CNCS *Notice*. New organizations should submit applications with the understanding that the general practice is to award no more than 50 member slots for new grantees.

The CNCS *Notice* invites applications for AmeriCorps grants from eligible organizations that improve academic outcomes for students in eligible schools. For purposes of the CNCS *Notice*, eligible schools are defined as Tier I and Tier II schools that are receiving School Improvement Grants (SIG) funds to implement one of the four SIG models<sup>1</sup>; Tier I and Tier II schools that, at the time of the applicant's application submission, have been formally notified that they will receive SIG funds to implement a SIG model in the 2013-2014 school year; and priority schools that are implementing in the 2012-2013 school year or will implement in the 2013-2014 school year interventions aligned with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility turnaround principles<sup>2</sup>. Grants will fund projects that serve eligible schools not

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<sup>1</sup> For a listing of SIG schools, please visit <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/awardedchs.xls>. As described in this *Notice*, only those SIG schools that are Tier I or Tier II schools and are implementing one of the four SIG models may be served by grantees.

<sup>2</sup> To be eligible to receive services by programs funded through School Turnaround AmeriCorps grants, schools must have been identified as a priority school by their SEA at the time of the applicant's application submission and must either (1) be implementing interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in the 2012-2013 school year or (2) are committed to implement interventions

currently served by a national service program (e.g., AmeriCorps State and National, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), Foster Grandparents, etc.), or will support expansion and better coordination of existing national service activities in those schools. All projects funded under the CNCS *Notice* are expected to improve student academic performance, academic engagement, attendance outcomes, or some combination thereof, in eligible schools.

### **Selection Criteria**

Serve DC will utilize the CNCS Assessment Criteria below during the initial review of applications, which will utilize Serve DC staff and peer reviewers. Serve DC will also assess applications based on the guidelines and requirements outlined in the CNCS *Notice* and CNCS Application Instructions. Following Serve DC's initial review of applications, a decision will be made as to which programs Serve DC will recommend to CNCS for funding consideration. The CNCS assessment and selection process is outlined in the CNCS *Notice*.

*Program Design (50 percent)*

*Organizational Capability (25 percent)*

*Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)*

### **Application Submission and Serve DC Requirements**

Serve DC will utilize the CNCS *Notice* and Application Instructions as posted on [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov). Applicants should visit the CNCS website regularly for updated information related to this grant competition. Applicants must review the instructions below to determine areas where the CNCS and Serve DC guidance are different. Unless otherwise instructed in this *Notice*, applicants must follow the guidance outlined in the CNCS *Notice* and Application Instructions.

### **Seasons of Service Days**

Successfully funded programs will be required to participate in at least two (2) Seasons of Service Days. Examples include 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance (in September) or Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service (in January).

### **Serve DC National Service Program Director Events**

The AmeriCorps Program Director (or his/her designee) will be present at all Serve DC Program Director Meetings, orientations, training events, and AmeriCorps special events. The sub-grantee will ensure that AmeriCorps Members are provided with the appropriate supervision at all Washington, DC AmeriCorps special events.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

AmeriCorps members can receive training in emergency preparedness in order to be ready to mobilize in the event of a national emergency, major catastrophic event, or federally declared disaster. CNCS has indicated that, depending on the type and origin of the declaration, members could be redeployed to provide response and recovery support to affected areas. Members will assist in a disaster when a special emergency has been declared by the appropriate authorizing

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aligned with the turnaround principles in the 2013-2014 school year. Lists of priority schools are posted on the website of each state educational agency. For the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education, please see: <http://osse.dc.gov/accountability>.

official. Members will be required to receive basic CPR/First AID through Serve DC. Program staff will be strongly encouraged to complete the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training.

### **Orientation and Member Swearing-In**

Members will be required to complete a one- hour Serve DC Orientation and be sworn in by the State Commission within 30 days of the start of their service year. Serve DC will hold orientation and swearing-in ceremonies monthly in July, August, and September.

### **Local Member and Volunteer Recruitment**

In support of the District's efforts to increase District residents' access to civic engagement, education and employment opportunities, programs will be required to report on efforts and strategic plans to recruit and retain members and volunteers from the local community. This may include, but is not limited to, engagement with DC Public and Public Charter Schools, the Community College of the District of Columbia, the University of the District of Columbia, and other community-based partners across the District.

### **Reporting Requirements**

All approved applicants will be required to submit the following reports (and any others per CNCS/Serve DC guidelines and requirements):

- *Progress Reports (Quarterly):* Must identify the status of progress of tasks and performance measures as provided in the Application and Budget approved by Serve DC and CNCS
- *Periodic Expense Reports (Monthly):* Must identify funds expended during the Reporting Period
- *Federal Financial Reports (Bi-Annually):* Must identify funds expended to date during the Reporting Period
- *Volunteer Generation Reports (Monthly):* Must identify the number of the Non-AmeriCorps Member Volunteers generated through AmeriCorps program (State Performance Measure)
- *AmeriCorps Member Timesheet Reports (Monthly):* Must submit AmeriCorps Member timesheets on a monthly basis in the OnCorps Reporting System
- Individuals receiving either a stipend, salary, living allowance, or earning a National Service Education Award must follow the National Service Criminal History check rules which include the National Sex Offender Public Registry, Statewide criminal history registry, and FBI (only those who have recurring access to the vulnerable population must undergo an FBI check).
- *Performance Measures Requirements:* One performance measure related to AmeriCorps Member Development and one performance measure related to Non-AmeriCorps Member Volunteer Generation. *These measures must be submitted separately in a Word document as part of the application package and not included in the eGrants application.*

### **Required Technical Assistance Sessions**

Serve DC will conduct two technical assistance sessions via conference call. Applicants are required to participate in one of the two sessions. The technical assistance sessions will be held on March 11, 2013 (3:30pm-4:30pm) and March 25 (3:30pm-4:30pm). To register, email [Kristen.henry@dc.gov](mailto:Kristen.henry@dc.gov). Additionally, CNCS will conduct two technical assistance sessions via conference call and applicants are highly encouraged to participate. Registration is required to participate

and information for the CNCS technical assistance sessions can be found in the CNCS *Notice* (see [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov)).

### **Alternative Match**

Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative match requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at 45 CFR § 2521.60(b). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed project is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined in the CNCS Application Instructions. Single-state applicants must submit a request for alternative match to [Kristen.henry@dc.gov](mailto:Kristen.henry@dc.gov) by **5:00pm on March 28, 2013**. See page 42 of the CNCS Application Instructions (Attachment H).

### **Content and Form of Application Submission**

Single-state applicants must submit applications to Serve DC via eGrants as outlined in the CNCS *Notice* and applicants must submit nine (9) hard copies of the full application to the Serve DC office (2000 14th Street NW, Suite 101, Washington, DC 20009). Applicants must electronically submit their applications via the CNCS web-based system, eGrants. Applicants should create an eGrants account and begin the eGrants application creation process at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline.

Applications must be received in eGrants and hard copy to the Serve DC office **no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 3, 2013**. Applications must be entered in to the CNCS eGrants online system and all required hard-copy documents must be submitted to Serve DC. If the applicant experiences technical difficulties with eGrants that are unresolved, the applicant must contact the Serve DC office immediately. The applicant must be able to document the issue in an email and the correspondence must include the eGrants help desk ticket number. Serve DC determines whether or not to accept a late application for review on a case-by-case basis. Any changes to the application deadline will be shared with attendees of technical assistance sessions via email.

Applicants must submit one (1) hard copy of each of the items listed below:

1. Original signed copy of the SF424 Facesheet (see Appendix A in CNCS Application Instructions)
2. Most recent A-133 Audit or Form 990
3. Labor concurrence (if applicable as required under 45 CFR 100 (c)) on behalf of your programs, depending on amount of funds and history with CNCS\*
4. Program evaluations (as required under 45 CFR 2522.730)\*
5. Letter(s) of support from schools and LEAs\*

Applicants must provide Serve DC with nine (9) hard copies of their completed application to include the documents below:

1. SF424 Facesheet (does not need to be original, signed copy)
2. Application (including Performance Measures)
3. State Performance Measures (Word Document)\*
4. Budget
5. Budget Narrative

*\*Required supporting attachments (e.g., letter(s) of support from schools and LEAs, evaluations, Labor Union Concurrence, State Performance Measures, and Indirect Cost Rate Agreements) should be emailed by the application deadline to [Kristen.henry@dc.gov](mailto:Kristen.henry@dc.gov) SUBJECT: School Turnaround AmeriCorps and reference the legal applicant's name and eGrants Application ID. Include the name of the document and organization in the file name. Letter(s) of support should be submitted as a single document and not multiple files.*

In eGrants, Serve DC applicants must select "School Turnaround AmeriCorps Commission State Competitive FY 2013" or "School Turnaround AmeriCorps Commission Competitive Education Awards program (EAP) FY 2013."

#### **Serve DC Contact**

For additional information or to RSVP for one of the technical assistance sessions, please contact by telephone or email:

Kristen Henry

National Service Director

[Kristen.henry@dc.gov](mailto:Kristen.henry@dc.gov)

(202) 727-8003

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