



LOUISIANA SERVE COMMISSION

FY10 AmeriCorps*State Application Packet

INSTRUCTIONS

**Deadline
November 13, 2009**



LOUISIANA SERVE COMMISSION AmeriCorps Grants Overview
Guidance and Forms for the Single Request For Proposal (RFP) Process for the
2010-11 AmeriCorps*State program year

Request for All Applicants at this time: New, Recompete and Continuing Applications

Title	2010-11 AmeriCorps*State Competitive / Formula Grants	
Funding Authority	CFDA # 94.006	
Funding Purpose	Support AmeriCorps national service programs that engage citizens in service to their local communities	
Type of Award (s)	Cost Reimbursement	
Funds Available	\$363 million nationwide / \$1,200,000 statewide	
Project Amount(s)	Up to \$13,000 per AmeriCorps MSY (Member Service Year)	
Individual Award Parameters	Anticipated 12 AmeriCorps State Competitive / Formula grant programs of no less than 5 to approximately 50 MSYs each	
Funding Period	Program funding is for a one-year period between September 2010 and December 2011	
Match Requirements	overall minimum match of 24%, based on number of previous years of CNCS funding;(match sources can be cash and/or in kind)	
Eligible Applicants	Local non-profits, faith-based organizations, state and local governments, and educational institutions	
Time Burden	The time required to complete this collection of information is estimated to average 40 hours.	
Proposal Submission	ALL Proposals must be submitted in eGrants by November 13, 2009, 4:00 p.m. Central Time (NO facsimiles or emails will be accepted)	
Timeline	LSC Review Completed; negotiation period begins	Dec 4, 2009
	Final Application Due Date	Jan 13, 2010
	Competitive Applications due to CNCS	Jan 26, 2010
	Anticipated Notification of Competitively funded programs by CNCS	June 2010
	Formula Phase of process begins	June 1, 2010
	Formula Applications due to CNCS	July 6, 2010
	Anticipated Notification of approved formula grants	August 2010

IMPORTANT! Applicants will be required to participate in a technical assistance webinar.

Thursday, October 15, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. - NEW & RECOMPETE APPLICANTS ONLY

Tuesday, October 27, 2009 1:00 p.m. – NEW & RECOMPETE APPLICANTS ONLY

Wednesday, October 28, 2009 10:00 a.m. – CONTINUATION APPLICANTS ONLY

Materials and information provided will be the same on both calls.

To register for a webinar, please email strahan@crt.state.la.us.
 You will be provided a call-in number and log in information once you register.

Applicants must participate in a webinar to be considered for funding.

AmeriCorps*State FY 2010 Program Application Instructions

This packet includes application instructions for the following:

New Programs – A new program has no previous AmeriCorps funding or has not had AmeriCorps funding for the past 5 years. New applicants must use the instructions for New or Recompeting Programs beginning on page 4.

Recompeting Programs – A recompeting program is a current AmeriCorps grantee completing their final year of funding and applying for another multiple-year cycle of funding. Recompeting applicants must use the instructions for New or Recompeting Programs beginning on page 4.

Continuing Programs – Continuing programs are current AmeriCorps grantees completing the first or second year of their multiple-year grant funding cycle. Continuing applicants must use the instructions for Continuing Programs on page 15.

Your application for funding **must be submitted** via the federal online eGrants system. We **strongly** recommended that you write your entire application in a **word processing software package (ex., Microsoft Word) first**, then copy and paste the document in eGrants by the deadline. We also recommend that you create your eGrants account and begin your application at least 3 weeks before the deadline and began pasting your application into eGrants no later than 10 days before deadline. This will allow you time to address technical issues prior to deadlines. The application submission deadline for this funding competition is **November 13, 2009, 4:00 p.m. Central Time**.

Please note that eGrants contains character limitations. Therefore, due to the structure of eGrants, we use character limits rather than page limits. Characters are the letters, punctuation, **and spaces** included in your document. Your word processing software can provide a character count. In eGrants, you will enter text for Section A. Rationale and Approach, B. Member Outputs and Outcomes, C. Community Outputs and Outcomes, D. Organizational Capacity, E. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, and F. Evaluation Plan. **You may not exceed 71,000 characters in these six sections combined. The character count includes spaces and punctuation.**

Please note that the Narratives Section also includes fields for Clarification Information, Amendment Justification, and Continuation Changes. **These are not required fields. They will be used to enter information for clarification following review, request amendments once a grant is awarded, and enter changes in the narrative in continuation requests. Please enter N/A in these fields.**

This packet includes all the instructions you will need to complete the application, whether you are new, recompleting or continuation. The initial part of the packet contains instructions on how to complete the narrative portion of the application, with new and recomplete instructions first (page 4) and continuation instructions starting on page 15. Instructions for actually initiating an application in eGrants can be found at the end of these instructions in Appendix A. Detailed instructions for completing the budget section of the application will be found in Appendix D. Please complete all narrative & budget components first in a word processing program, and then copy and paste into eGrants using the appendix instructions.

The Corporation expects state and multi-state grantees to consult and coordinate activities at the local level, as specified in the statute Section 131. [42 U.S.C. 12583]. Specifically, multi-state applicants and grantees are expected to:

- Consult with the State Commissions of each state in which the organization plans to operate.
- Participate in the State Commission's annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state service plan, as well as appropriate training and other events.
- Include State Commissions on the National grantee's mailing list and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

State Commissions are expected to:

- Consider the schedules and needs of National programs in their states when planning annual events and technical assistance activities.
- Include National programs in their annual needs assessment and training plan development activities, and in the development of their state service plan.
- Add AmeriCorps National personnel in their state to their mailing list and invite them to appropriate training and other events.

Application Instructions for New and ReCompeting Programs ONLY

The following instructions are only for organizations that are not currently operating an AmeriCorps program or current grantees operating in their **THIRD** year of a three-year grant cycle.

If you are already a State Formula or State Competitive grantee, and are submitting an application for a second program, please contact your Commission. The Commission will have to contact their Corporation Program Officer in order to open your new application.

Applications must be submitted in eGrants at www.nationalservice.org/egrants no later than **November 13, 2009, 4 p.m. Central Time.**

What Components are Included in Your Application:

Your application will ultimately consist of the following components.

- I. SF424 Facesheet
- II. Narrative
- III. Evaluation Summary or Plan
- IV. Documents
- V. Amendment Justification
- VI. Budget
- VII. Review & Submit
- VIII. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (optional)

I. SF424 Facesheet (Applicant and Application Section)

Complete or update the Applicant Information and Application Information sections in eGrants. You will find directions in Appendix B.

II. Narrative (Narratives Section)

The narrative section of the application is your opportunity to convince reviewers that your project meets the selection criteria. Below are some general suggested guidelines to help you present your project in a way the reviewers will find compelling and persuasive.

- **Lead from your program strengths and be explicit.** Do not make the mistake of trying to stretch your program description to fit each strategic initiative, special consideration, and priority articulated in the regulations or the *Notice*. Focus on the special considerations and priorities that apply to your program.
- **Be clear and succinct.** Reviewers are not interested in jargon, boilerplate, rhetoric, or exaggeration. They are interested in learning precisely what you intend to do, and how your project responds to the three selection criteria presented below.
 - **Avoid circular reasoning.** The problem you are addressing should not be described as the lack of the program you are proposing.
 - **Explain how.** Avoid simply stating that the criteria will be met.
 - **Don't make assumptions.** Even if you have received funding from the Corporation in the past, do not assume your reviewers know anything about you, your program, your partners, or your beneficiaries.
- **Use an impartial proofreader.** Before you submit your application, let someone who is completely unfamiliar with your project read and critique the project narrative.

Also, the narrative in your application for funding must meet two key requirements:

- (1) the narrative must be written to address the components of an AmeriCorps program **in the order listed below**, and
- (2) the narrative must adhere to the character limitations listed above.

In each of the application sections below, you will first find boxes with the selection criteria from the AmeriCorps regulations. These boxes will be followed by guidance on how best to respond to the criteria. Please remember the character limitations.

Program Design

§ 2522. 425 What does the Corporation consider in assessing Program Design? (50%)

In determining the quality of your proposal's program design, the Corporation considers your rationale and approach for the proposed program, member outputs and outcomes, and community outputs and outcomes.

A. Rationale & Approach CRITERIA

A. Rationale and Approach (10%). In evaluating your rationale and approach, the Corporation considers the following criteria:

- (1) Whether your proposal describes and adequately documents a compelling need within the target community, including a description of how you identified the need;
- (2) Whether your proposal includes well-designed activities that address the compelling need, with ambitious performance measures, and a plan or system for continuous program self assessment and improvement;
- (3) Whether your proposal describes well-defined roles for participants that are aligned with the identified needs and that lead to measurable outputs and outcomes; and
- (4) The extent to which your proposed program or project:
 - (i) Effectively involves the target community in planning and implementation;
 - (ii) Builds on (without duplicating), or reflects collaboration with, other national and community service programs supported by the Corporation; and
 - (iii) Is designed to be replicated.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING CRITERIA

a. Compelling Community Need:

Describe the compelling community need that your program will address within the target community. Why did you select this need as your focus? Include a description of how you and your community partners identified the compelling community need(s). Please provide source of information for all statistical data used to demonstrate the need(s). If your program will operate at multiple sites, demonstrate a compelling need in each community you propose to serve.

Tutoring programs only:

- If your program will operate at multiple school sites, identify the schools that you intend to serve. Include a description of compelling needs at each school you propose to serve, including summary of each school's performance data.

b. Description of Activities and Member Roles:

- Provide a detailed description of the activities/services you propose to address the identified need.
- Identify the number of members and member types requested.
- Explain how the types of Members slots you are requesting (for example, fulltime, half-time, quarter-time, etc.) align with the program design and activities.

PLEASE NOTE: The Louisiana Serve Commission will only consider applications for review if they include a minimum of the equivalent of 5 MSYs.

- Describe in detail Members' roles in these activities and how these activities/services directly relate to addressing the identified need. Include a "typical day for a member."
- Explain your program structure, including where Members will serve (for example, at the applicant organization or at local service sites).
- How will you ensure that your program does not violate non-duplication, non-displacement, and non-supplementation requirements? See 45 CFR § 2540.100 for information on these requirements.
- Describe how you will plan for member development, training and supervision, and how this plan contributes to achieving your desired outcomes. NOTE: All AmeriCorps members must be provided with a Pre-Service Orientation (PSO).
- Describe how you will ensure Members' compliance with rules on prohibited service activities, including how Members will be informed of prohibited activities and monitored for compliance. See 45 CFR § 2520.45, 45 CFR § 2520.65 for a list of prohibited service activities.
- How will receiving an AMC grant add value to your existing service activities?

Tutoring programs only:

- Describe the tutoring methods to be used, including the identification of specific tutoring programs or curricula that will be used. Describe how the methods and programs are scientifically based, consistent with and complementary to the regular school program.

- Describe a typical tutoring day for a member to include a tutoring schedule and description of where services will be provided.

c. Measurable Outputs and Outcomes:

- Describe at least one aligned measurable output, intermediate outcome, and end outcome you expect to achieve as a result of your members’ activities. While you are not required to report on end outcomes, you must describe the long-term impact you expect to achieve.
- What systems / specific instruments / methods will you use to track outputs and intermediate outcomes?

Note: You will develop more detailed performance measures in eGrants, including outputs and intermediate outcomes, how they will be measured, your targets for each year, and the data you will gather, during the post-review clarification period.

Indicate here if you plan to operate a program in one of the five focus areas (Education, Healthy Futures, Clean Energy, Veterans, or Opportunity) and whether you will be using standard performance measures.

Sample language: My program will address of the Healthy Futures priority area and we will/will not be using standard performance measures.

d. Plan for Self-Assessment and Improvement:

- Describe your plans for tracking and evaluating progress toward meeting and achieving your performance measures.
- What are your plans for continuous program improvement?
- How will you identify strengths and weaknesses, resolve problems, and gather feedback from and provide feedback to members, service sites, and partners?

e. Community Involvement:

- Describe how you involved the target community (or target communities) in identifying the needs and activities. Which community partners and stakeholders were involved? What roles did they play, and what were their responsibilities in the planning process?
- Explain how you will continue to engage your community partners and stakeholders throughout the three year program period. What will be their ongoing roles and responsibilities?

f. Relationship to other National and Community Service Programs:

Describe the extent to which your program will build on (without duplicating) or reflects collaboration with other national and community service programs in your area that are supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

g. Potential for Replication:

Describe the extent to which your program may be replicated by other communities. Discuss any plans or strategies for replication.

B. Member Outputs & Outcomes CRITERIA

B. Member outputs and outcomes (20%). In evaluating how your proposal addresses member outputs and outcomes, the Corporation considers the extent to which your proposal or program:

- (1) Includes effective and feasible plans for, or evidence of, recruiting, managing, and rewarding diverse members, including those from the target community, and demonstrating member satisfaction;
- (2) If you are a current grantee, has succeeded in meeting reasonable member enrollment and retention targets in prior grant periods, as determined by the Corporation;
- (3) Includes effective and feasible plans for, or evidence of, developing, training, and supervising members;
- (4) Demonstrates well-designed training or service activities that promote and sustain postservice, an ethic of service and civic responsibility, including structured opportunities for members to reflect on and learn from their service; and
- (5) If you are a current grantee, has met well-defined, performance measures regarding AmeriCorps members, including any applicable national performance measures, and including outputs and outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING CRITERIA

a. Member Recruitment and Recognition:

- Describe in detail your plans for recruiting members for your program and how your recruitment efforts include outreach to diverse populations, including those from the communities served and persons with disabilities.
- Describe the criteria you will use to select your Members, including specific qualifications, characteristics, or backgrounds.

- Explain how you will reward Members for their service and how you will assess Members' satisfaction with their service. Also, include a plan to conduct member performance evaluations (**required mid and end of term**).
- Discuss your strategies to ensure that members complete a full term of service (retention).

Tutoring programs only:

Describe how your strategy for recruiting and selecting members complies with AmeriCorps requirements for member tutoring qualifications. Members who tutor must have a high school diploma, and successfully complete high-quality, research-based pre- and in-service training for tutors. This requirement does not apply to a member enrolled in an elementary school or secondary school who is providing tutoring through a structured, school-managed cross-grade tutoring program. Tutoring programs must offer a curriculum that is high quality, research-based, and consistent with the State academic content standards required by section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311) and the instructional program of the local educational agency.

b. Member Development, Training and Supervision:

- Describe in detail your plans for orienting Members to AmeriCorps, the community, their service/placement sites, and the services that they will perform.
- Describe in detail how you will adequately train Members to perform all the activities they will engage in and, as necessary, provide them with ongoing training throughout their terms. Provide a general timeline for training and identify the training curricula and materials you will use. **Required trainings include:**
 - 1) **project specific training**
 - 2) **CPR & First Aid**
 - 3) **Diversity Appreciation**
 - 4) **Citizenship**
 - 5) **Disability Awareness & Sensitivity**
 - 6) **Conflict Resolution**
 - 7) **Life after AmeriCorps**

- Describe a Member supervision plan that ensures Members will receive adequate support and guidance throughout their terms.

Tutoring programs only:

Describe how your strategy for training Members complies with AmeriCorps requirements for Member tutor training that is high quality and research based, consistent with the instructional program of the local agency or with state academic content standards, includes appropriate member supervision by individuals with expertise in tutoring, and provides specialized pre-service and in-service training consistent with the activities the member will perform.

c. Ethic of Service and Civic Responsibility:

Demonstrate how you will incorporate structured opportunities for participants to reflect on and learn from their service in order to promote a lifelong ethic of service and civic responsibility.

d. Member Enrollment and Retention:

The Louisiana Serve Commission and CNCS reviews your enrollment and retention rate (in percentages) on an annual basis. The retention rate is calculated by comparing the number of members allotted to the number of members who receive education awards. If your enrollment or retention rate has been or is currently below **100%**, please **provide an explanation** and describe the corrective action planned or taken to improve enrollment and/or retention.

C. Community Outputs & Outcomes CRITERIA

C. Community outputs and outcomes (20%). In evaluating whether your proposal adequately addresses community outputs and outcomes, the Corporation considers the extent to which your proposal or program:

- (1) Is successful in meeting targeted, compelling community needs, or if you are a current grantee, the extent to which your program has met its well-defined, community-based performance measures, including any applicable national performance measures, and including outputs and outcomes, in previous grant cycles, and is continually expanding and increasing its reach and impact in the community;
- (2) Has an impact in the community that is sustainable beyond the presence of Federal support (For example, if one of your projects is to revitalize a local park, you would meet this criterion by showing that after you have completed your revitalization project, the community will continue its upkeep on its own);
- (3) Generates and supports volunteers to expand the reach of your program in the community; and
- (4) Enhances capacity-building of other organizations and institutions important to the community, such as schools, homeland security organizations, neighborhood watch organizations, civic associations, and community organizations, including faith-based organizations

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING THE CRITERIA

a. Sustainability

- Outline your plans for ensuring that the impact of your program in the community is **sustainable beyond the provision of federal support**. In this section you may describe:
 - how your *community partnerships and relationships* will lead to a significant community investment in the programs' continued operation;
 - how you will *diversify your funding sources* to include a wide range of stakeholders (such as state, local, and private sector funding);
 - how your *strategies for recruiting and supporting* volunteers will sustain member activities after your AmeriCorps grant ends; and
 - how the community will *continue to meet the compelling community need(s)* after your AmeriCorps grant ends.

b. Volunteer Recruitment and Support

- Describe how your program will use volunteers to expand the reach of the program and its services in the community.
- Provide a discussion of how you will recruit, support, and recognize volunteers.
- Identify how many volunteers you expect to recruit and the number of hours of service they will provide. Also, discuss if your volunteers will be episodic (committing to one-time or occasional events) or ongoing (committing to a regular, ongoing role in the program). If selected for funding, you will be required to report on actual volunteer recruitment levels.
 - Describe the role that members will play in your volunteer recruitment and support efforts.
 - Describe the training volunteers will receive, including identification of qualified trainers.
 - Describe your organization's plans for mobilizing, supporting, and managing volunteers.
 - Describe your plan to conduct a required annual stakeholder satisfaction survey and provide a description of how the survey information will be used to improve program operations and/or services.

Note: The Louisiana Serve Commission recommends all grants to conduct at least an annual Satisfaction Survey of community stakeholders. Please describe how you will include this required survey and the subsequent use of survey results into your plans for self-assessment and/or program improvement.

c. Capacity Building:

- Describe how the proposed program will strengthen the capacity of service sites, other organizations and institutions important to the community such as schools, homeland security organizations, neighborhood watch organizations, civic associations, and community organizations, including faith-based organizations (NOT YOUR ORGANIZATION).
- Describe the members' role in capacity building activities.
 - Describe plans to participate in at least one national service day.
 - Describe any plans to identify and collaborate with other national service programs in the geographic area.

D. Organizational Capability CRITERIA

§ 2522.430 How does the Corporation assess my organizational capability? (25%)

(a) In evaluating your organizational capability, the Corporation considers the following:

- (1) The extent to which your organization has a sound structure including:
 - (i) The ability to provide sound programmatic and fiscal oversight;
 - (ii) Well-defined roles for your board of directors, administrators, and staff;
 - (iii) A well-designed plan or systems for organizational (as opposed to program) self-assessment and continuous improvement; and
 - (iv) The ability to provide or secure effective technical assistance.
- (2) Whether your organization has a sound record of accomplishment as an organization, including the extent to which you:
 - (i) Generate and support diverse volunteers who increase your organization's capacity;
 - (ii) Demonstrate leadership within the organization and the community served; and
 - (iii) If you are an existing grantee, you have secured the matching resources as reflected in your prior grant awards;
- (3) The extent to which you are securing community support that recurs, expands in scope, or increases in amount, and is more diverse, as evidenced by—
 - (i) Collaborations that increase the quality and reach of service and include well-defined roles for faith-based and other community organizations;
 - (ii) Local financial and in-kind contributions; and
 - (iii) Supporters who represent a wide range of community stakeholders.

(b) In applying the criteria in paragraph (a) of this section to each proposal, the Corporation may take into account the following circumstances of individual organizations:

- (1) The age of your organization and its rate of growth; and
- (2) Whether your organization serves a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of philanthropic and corporate resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING CRITERIA

1. Sound Organizational Structure

(a) Ability to Provide Sound Programmatic and Fiscal Oversight:

- Provide a brief history of your organization, including the year your organization was established.
- Describe your organization's experience in the proposed areas of activity and your experience operating and overseeing a program comparable to the one proposed. Include specific examples of your prior accomplishments and outcomes.
- Describe your capacity to manage a federal grant and to provide monitoring of service site(s) and submitting financial and programmatic reports in a timely manner.
- If you are proposing a multi site program,
 - Describe your process for selecting service sites
 - Describe how your site selection process incorporates the criteria required by AmeriCorps Regulations, which comprise quality, innovation, sustainability, quality of leadership, past performance, community involvement, and the special considerations. Refer to 45C.F.R. § 2522.47
 - Describe how are you able to support and oversee service sites
 - Describe your current or previous programmatic and funding relationships with the sites
 - Describe how you ensure they have adequate programmatic and/or financial capabilities
 - Describe how you develop connections among sites through common program elements or activities to ensure that your overall mission and vision for the AmeriCorps program is maintained at each site?

(b) Board of Directors, Administrators, and Staff:

- Describe your organization's management and staff structure and how the board of directors (if applicable), administrators, and staff members will be used to support your program.
- Identify the key program and fiscal positions responsible for your proposed program. Describe the background and experience of key staff members, or your plans to recruit, select, train, and support additional staff if necessary.

Note: At least a half-time Program Director/Coordinator is required for any size program. However, if the program has 10 or more members, a full-time Program Director / Coordinator is strongly recommended.

(c) Plan for Self-Assessment or Improvement:

Describe how your organization undertakes ongoing assessment and improvement of its systems, structure, staffing, and other capacities to ensure that it remains sound and well managed. *Note: This prompt is referring to the self-assessment practices of your organization **in general**, whereas your previous responses regarding self-assessment or improvement should have been related to the AmeriCorps program.*

(d) Plan for Effective Technical Assistance:

- Demonstrate how you are able to provide or secure any needed financial and programmatic training and technical assistance for your program, and if applicable, your service sites.
- Describe plans for providing financial and programmatic orientation, training and technical assistance to your program and service sites.
- Explain how you will identify and respond to your programs' and, if applicable, your service sites' ongoing training and technical assistance needs.

2. Sound Record of Accomplishment as an Organization

(a) Volunteer Generation and Support:

Describe how your organization recruits volunteers to increase your own organizational capacity (again, discussing your ORGANIZATION as a whole, not just how you use volunteers to expand the reach of the AmeriCorps program in the community).

(b) Organizational and Community Leadership:

Provide examples of how your organization/agency has demonstrated leadership as an organization. Describe awards received by the organization or individuals within the organization, public positions of leadership such as staff serving on other community boards, or participation in community events, task forces, and other community activities.

Recompeting OR Continuation Applications (current grantees) only:

(c) Success in Securing Match Resources:

Describe your successes and challenges in securing match resources for prior grant awards, including the current grant cycle and, if applicable, previous awards.

3. Success in Securing Community Support

(a) Collaboration:

- Describe any collaboration you have developed that increases the quality and reach of the services provided by your program.
- Discuss the roles that community organizations, including faith-based organizations, play in these collaborations.

(b) Local Financial and In-kind Contributions:

Discuss examples of how local financial and in-kind contributions have continued over time, expanded in scope, increased in amount, or become more diverse.

(c) Wide Range of Community Stakeholders:

- Provide a list of the various types of community stakeholders in your organization.
- Discuss examples of how non-financial support from your community stakeholders has continued over time, expanded in scope, increased in amount, or become more diverse.

4. Special Circumstances:

In applying the organizational capability criteria to each application, reviewers may also take into account the following circumstances of individual organizations:

- The age of your organization and its rate of growth; and
- Whether your organization serves a resource-poor community such as
 - a rural or remote community,
 - a community with a high poverty rate,
 - a community with a scarcity of philanthropic and corporate resources, and/ or difficult-to-reach populations.

If you feel that any of these circumstances have an impact on your organizational capability that has not already been discussed, please include a description.

E. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy CRITERIA

§ 2522.435 How does the Corporation evaluate the cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy of my program? (25%)

(a) In evaluating the cost-effectiveness (15%) and budget adequacy (10%) of your proposed program, the Corporation considers the following:

- (1) Whether your program is cost-effective based on:
 - (i) Your program's proposed Corporation cost per MSY, as defined in §2522.485; and
 - (ii) Other indicators of cost-effectiveness, such as:
 - (A) The extent to which your program demonstrates diverse non-Federal resources for program implementation and sustainability;
 - (B) If you are a current grantee, the extent to which you are increasing your share of costs to meet or exceed program goals; or
 - (C) If you are a current grantee, the extent to which you are proposing deeper impact or broader reach without a commensurate increase in Federal costs; and
- (2) Whether your budget is adequate to support your program design.

(b) In applying the cost-effectiveness criteria in paragraph (a) of this section, the Corporation will take into account the following circumstances of individual programs:

- (1) Program age, or the extent to which your program brings on new sites;
- (2) Whether your program or project is located in a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of corporate or philanthropic resources;
- (3) Whether your program or project is located in a high-cost, economically distressed community, measured by applying appropriate Federal and State data; and
- (4) Whether the reasonable and necessary costs of your program or project are higher because they are associated with engaging or serving difficult-to-reach populations, or achieving greater program impact as evidenced through performance measures and program evaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON ADDRESSING THE CRITERIA

1. Cost Effectiveness

Corporation Cost per Member Service Year (MSY):

- Your Corporation cost per MSY is determined by dividing the Corporation's share of budgeted grant costs by the number of member service years you are requesting in your grant. It does not include child care or the cost of the education award a member earns serving with your program.
- One MSY is equivalent to at least 1700 service hours, a full-time AmeriCorps position.
- The Corporation cost per MSY will be automatically calculated once you enter your budget in eGrants.
- The maximum cost per MSY allowable is published each year in the *Notice*.
- Cost effectiveness will be evaluated by analyzing cost per MSY in relation to your program design. If you request the maximum, please justify.
- **Diversity of Funding:** Demonstrate how your program has or will obtain diverse nonfederal resources for program implementation and sustainability.
- **Sources of Match Funding:** Identify the sources of non-Corporation funding and commitments (in-kind and cash) that you have obtained to fulfill the matching requirements, the additional commitments you plan to secure, and how you will secure them. In the budget, you must list and detail the sources of your match funds.
- **Decreased Reliance on Federal Support - Current grantees only:** Describe the extent to which you are increasing your share of costs to meet or exceed program goals, or the extent to which you are proposing deeper impact or broader reach without a commensurate increase in federal costs.

2. Budget Adequacy

Discuss the adequacy (competence, capability, satisfactoriness) of your budget to support your program design, including how it is sufficient to support your program activities and how the budget is linked to your desired outputs and outcomes.

F. Evaluation Summary or Plan

If you are competing for the first time, please enter N/A in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field since it pertains only to re-competing grantees. Beginning in 2007, if you are an existing grantee or re-competing for AmeriCorps funds for the first time since the AmeriCorps rule took effect (July 2005), you must submit a summary of your evaluation efforts or your evaluation plan to date, or a copy of any evaluation that has been completed, as part of your application for funding. Submit your summary or plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan Narrative field in eGrants. If you have a completed evaluation report when re-competing for the first time, submit your report as part of your application. Completed evaluations must cover a period of at least one year, and a formal report is required to be submitted with applications for period year 7 or more. Grantees with an average annual grant of \$500,000 (over five years) are required to arrange for an independent evaluation of their program. Smaller grantees must at least submit an internal evaluation that is designed and conducted by qualified staff. The primary difference between the independent evaluations and the internal evaluation is **who** conducts the evaluation study. Your own staff and other stakeholders can serve as internal evaluators. You are encouraged to design your evaluation so that it will yield data most useful to you. You may opt for an impact evaluation, or you may conduct a process or management evaluation. You are not required to conduct an experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation that proves causality, which is required of grantees that receive \$500,000 or over, although you are allowed to conduct this type of study. CNCS and Louisiana Serve Commission expect the same high level of quality which is required of a larger grantee, regardless of the type of evaluation you decide to conduct. Applicants may view the CNCS website for evaluation tools and resources at www.nationalserviceresources.org/ or link to the Evaluation Frequently Asked Questions (see question #5 regarding internal evaluations) at:

http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/manage/commcenter_detail.asp?tbl_pr_id=382

G. Amendment Justification

Enter N/A. This field will be used if you are awarded a grant and need to amend it. Please delete any information previously entered in the field before entering new information.

H. Clarification Information

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period. Please delete any information previously entered in the field before entering new information.

I. Continuation Update

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter changes in your narratives in your continuation requests. Please delete any information previously entered in the field before entering new information.

J. Performance Measures

All AmeriCorps programs must develop and agree to work toward specific annual accomplishments. Your accomplishments or goals help determine how well the services provided by your program assisted those served. You must determine how the success of your program will be evaluated by establishing predetermined performance measures. Performance Measures must demonstrate a clear, logical link between the need, activity, outputs and outcomes. The Corporation does not require you to enter performance measures unless and until the Corporation notifies you that you have been selected for consideration for a grant. You are welcome to begin to enter information in these fields, but it will not be required until after the grant review process. **If you decide to wait until then to enter your performance measures you will still need to enter your Service Categories. In addition, because eGrants requires content in the performance measure fields in order to submit, you must enter NA in the text fields and a number in the data fields. This information will not be reviewed.**

If you choose to enter your detailed performance measures at the time of application, the following instructions titled *Service Categories* will guide you through the process of entering information in the fields for the required aligned measure. These are also the instructions you will use if you are selected for consideration for a grant.

1. Serve America Act Priorities

In eGrants, the Serve America Act Priorities (Education, Healthy Futures, Clean Energy, Veterans, and Opportunity) are listed in the Performance Measures section. If you will be working in one of these areas, please select the appropriate priority area(s).

2. Issue Areas and Service Categories

In eGrants, the service categories are located in the Performance Measures Section. In this section you will select issue areas and service categories that describe your program activities. First select an issue area, and then choose service categories from the pull down menu. When you have selected all applicable service categories, indicate which service category is the primary and which is the secondary in importance to your program. Only one service category can be indicated as the primary, and one as the secondary. If you have selected the Education, Healthy Futures, or Clean Energy Serve America Act priorities, the appropriate issue area will be selected for you.

You are required to align at least one set of performance measures in your primary service category. **In eGrants, you will align the measures by entering two different Result Types and Result Statements for one Performance Measurement Title. The two Result Types are Output and Intermediate Outcome. These terms are defined as follows:**

- **output-** Outputs are counts of the products or units of service.
- **intermediate outcome-** Intermediate outcomes indicate positive changes that contribute to the long term change.

An example is as follows:

PROGRAM FOCUS: Disaster Relief: AmeriCorps Members conduct intakes, assist families with paperwork, and make referrals to help families who were dislocated by hurricanes.

OUTPUT: Number of displaced families registered as documented by intake forms. Outputs are counts of the products or services.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME: Families have permanent or semi-permanent housing and/or temporary or permanent employment as documented by case files, certification of employment and client follow-up surveys. Intermediate: **Shows change** or impact of service.

In order to align a set of performance measures in eGrants:

- First select Add Performance Measure in eGrants.
- Enter the Title, the Measure Category, and the Service Category from the pull down menus.
- Enter a sentence or two on Needs and Activities, and Result Type.
- For the Output Result Type, enter a Result Statement, Indicators, Targets, Number or Percentage, Instruments, and Performance Measure Statement.
- **Add New Result** for the Intermediate Outcome and complete the pertinent fields.
- **Do not Add New Performance Measure in order to add an Intermediate Outcome for your aligned measure.**
- Once you have aligned one set of measures, i.e., completed two Result Types (Output and Intermediate Outcome) for one Performance Measurement Title, you may continue to Add New Performance Measures as appropriate for your program design.

The worksheet in Appendix D is provided as a tool to help you think through the development of your performance measures and assemble the information you will need to input into eGrants. For example, to create one set of aligned performance measures you would complete two worksheets—one for an output and one for an intermediate outcome.

There is no limit on the number of performance measures that a program can submit. The applicant can submit additional relevant measures of their performance in other areas, which do not necessarily need to be aligned. For example, a tutoring program can submit a set of performance measures around tutoring and, in addition, provide various outputs and intermediate outcomes relating to other program activities such as volunteer recruitment or member development.

The CNCS National Training and Technical Assistance provider for evaluation and performance measures is Project STAR. Project STAR provides six examples of a set of aligned performance measures for AmeriCorps at the website below.

http://nationalserviceresources.org/resources/online_pubs/perf_meas/sets_perf_meas.php?search_term=aligned%20performance%20measures.

If you decide to build performance measures from a Project STAR sample, be sure to review all of the information and modify the performance measures to reflect the unique characteristics of the target community, members and their service.

F. Documents

More detailed information relating to the documents and submission information can be found in Appendix A. After you have submitted the documents, change their status in eGrants from the default "Not Sent" to the applicable status ("Sent," "Not Applicable," or "Already on File at CNCS"). You will need to submit:

1. Financial/Audit information
2. Program evaluations
3. AmeriCorps Risk Assessment (NEW APPLICANTS ONLY)
4. Labor Union concurrence (if necessary)
5. federally approved indirect cost agreement (if budgeted)

G. Budget (Budget Section)

Preparing Your Budget

Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your application narrative. We will consider the information you provide in this section as part of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy component of our selection criteria. **We strongly suggest that you develop your budget first and then input those numbers in eGrants.**

Your total AmeriCorps budget consists of federal dollars (the amount you are requesting from the Louisiana Serve Commission) and the match (cash or in-kind) that your agency is committing.

The budget format will consist of three sections:

Budget Section 1: Program Operating Costs

Budget Section 2: Member Support Costs

Budget Section 3: Administrative/Indirect costs

The first step in preparing your budget is to determine the total amount of federal (Louisiana Serve Commission) funds that you are eligible to receive. **Your total federal share cannot exceed \$13,000 per MSY.** This amount depends upon how many and the type of Members you are requesting.

One MSY is equivalent to 1700 service hours or one full-time Member. The cost per MSY **does not** include childcare or the cost of the education award a member may earn through serving with your program. The AmeriCorps Member benefits chart (see Overview of AmeriCorps document) has the MSY equivalent for each type of AmeriCorps position. For example, one MSY is equal to one full-time Member (1.000). Two half-time Members (0.500) are equal to one MSY. In order to be considered for funding in the FY10 application process, a legal applicant must outline a budget that includes a corps of at MINIMUM the equivalent of 5 MSYs.

You should then begin to complete each section of the budget based upon the needs of the program. Some costs, such as member living allowance will be set costs. Member living allowance costs should be calculated by taking

the amount of living allowance (see chart for living allowance amounts) and multiplying it by the number of actual members (not MSY) that you are requesting. For example, if you are requesting 10 full-time Members, your total Member costs will be 10 x \$11,800 (the minimum living allowance amount for full-time Members). For each section of the budget, determine the amount of money needed to effectively operate your program, and then determine what amount will be requested from federal funds and what amount your organization will commit. Remember, your total amount of federal funds requested cannot exceed \$13,000 per MSY.

As you prepare your budget:

- All the amounts you request must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.
- Your detailed budget narrative must provide a full explanation of the proposed costs including their purpose and the basis of your calculation.
- For the Staffing, Travel, and Evaluation line items, and wherever else it may increase clarity, present your calculations in the form of an equation, e.g., Two (2) staff traveling @ \$350/trip for 2 trips = \$1400; or, Salary \$60,000 @ 20% devoted to program = \$12,000.
- 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).

Please refer to the relevant OMB Circulars on allowable costs for further guidance. The OMB circulars are online at www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars.

- A-21 - Cost Principles for Educational Institutions
- A-87 - Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments
- A-122 - Cost Principles for Non Profit Organizations

Follow the instructions in Appendix C to prepare your detailed budget and enter it into eGrants. Your budget must follow the same order as the Budget Worksheet in Appendix D. In eGrants, you are required to input numbers in the budget and complete the budget narrative.

Reminders:

- Equipment costs must not exceed 10% of the total Corporation share.
- Administrative costs must not exceed 5% of the total Corporation funds requested.
- Match should be identified at an overall percentage, starting at 24%, with the overall grantee share of total program costs increasing gradually beginning in Year 4 to 50% by the tenth year of funding and any year thereafter.
- In all sections of the budget, you should clearly and specifically identify the source and total dollar amount of cash match from private, state and local and federal funds, and the source and total amounts of in-kind support. All acronyms should be defined the first time they are used to reference non-Corporation programs and sources.
- The CNCS matching requirements may be waived in limited circumstances. See 45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90, for the regulatory match and waiver requirements. Additional Information, Section H includes resources to help you apply for these waivers.
-

Note: Most federal funds are not authorized to be used as match for another federal grant. While the Corporation's legislation may permit the use of non-Corporation federal funds as match for the grantee share of the budget for operating and administrative costs, the determining factor is the other federal agency. You must ensure that your use of another federal agency's funds as match for this national service program grant is permitted by the other agency.

Application Instructions for Continuing Programs ONLY

The following instructions are only for current grantees operating in their **FIRST** or **SECOND** year of a three-year grant cycle. If your program is currently in the final year of its grant cycle, you must apply using the instructions for New or Recompete applicants (please see page 2 of these application instructions).

Continuation Expansions

Based on our anticipated appropriation, and the expected volume of new and recompeting applications in 2010, the Corporation does not expect to approve any requests for expansion (additional members or funding) within continuation requests in fiscal year 2010. If any expansions are considered, preference will be given to expansions that address the Corporation's strategic initiatives, include low cost MSYs, and expansions of programs demonstrating outcomes that have exceeded their goals.

Continuation applications must be submitted in eGrants at www.nationalservice.org/egrants, no later than **November 13, 2009, 4 p.m. Central Time.**

How to Submit Your Continuation Request:

- Submit your continuation request in eGrants.
- To create your continuation request in eGrants, click **Continuation** on your eGrants home page. You will be shown a list of grants that are eligible to be continued. Select the grant you wish to continue. **Make sure you select the correct one.** The system will copy your most recently awarded application.
- Edit your continuation application as directed in the continuation request instructions below. When you have completed your edits, click the **SUBMIT** button.

Be sure you also review the *Notice* when preparing your request. If you have questions about the content of your continuation request, please contact your program officer. **If you experience problems using eGrants, contact the eGrants Help Desk at (888) 677-7849 or (202) 606-7506, or email at egrantshelp@cns.gov.**

I. SF424 Facesheet (Applicant and Application Section)

Update the Applicant Information and Application Information sections in eGrants, if necessary.

II. Narrative (Narratives Section)

Your original application will appear in the narrative sections Rationale and Approach, Community Outputs and Outcomes, Organizational Capability, Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, Evaluation Summary or Plan, Amendment Justification, Clarification Information, and Continuation Changes, as appropriate.

If you have changes in any of these areas, please document them in the *Continuation Changes* field in eGrants. Delete information previously entered in the *Continuation Changes* field before entering new information. **Do not enter continuation changes in the original fields.** If you are not proposing changes to your continuation request, simply leave your original narrative as it is, and enter No Changes in the *Continuation Changes* field.

Enrollment

If you enrolled less than 100% of slots received during your last full year of program operation, provide an explanation, and describe your plan for improvement in the *Continuation Changes* field.

Retention

If you were not able to retain all of your members during your last full year of program operation, provide an explanation, and describe your plan for improvement in the *Continuation Changes* field. We recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model. We expect grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible.

III. Performance Measures (Performance Measures Section)

Your performance measures are automatically copied from your previous year's application into the continuation application. **If you need to revise your performance measures**, please do the following:

- For each performance measure needing revision, select the Performance Measure Type to adjust – Output and Intermediate Outcome, and click View/Edit
- Make any necessary changes in the verbage, numbers, evaluation tools, etc. as needed.
- Save the measure

You do not need to complete the "Need to be Addressed" section, so please type "Not Applicable" in that text box.

Review and update your performance measures if necessary.

IV. Budget

Your budget data from the previous year's application will also be automatically copied into your continuation application. Please review and revise the budget as necessary for the upcoming year to ensure that it is consistent with your continuation application. Please keep in mind that as part of the Corporation's 2008 appropriations, Congress changed the requirements for matching AmeriCorps grants, so your match may increase.

You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as you meet an overall increasing match requirement, starting with 24% (years 1, 2, and 3), and increasing up to a maximum of 50% (year 10+), according to the following table:

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

In order to determine your required match level, please refer to your grant application in eGrants. The number of program years you have received funds appears on the budget and budget narrative screens, immediately under the total budget section. If you have any questions regarding your budget, please refer to the FAQ sheet on the Louisiana Serve Commission website (www.volunteerlouisiana.gov) or send an email to strahan@crt.state.la.us.

End of Narrative Instructions

