2022-2023 Pennsylvania AmeriCorps State Planning Grants

Request for Applications

Spring Competition

Applications due by 5:00 pm March 3, 2022

Information and Technical Assistance Session:

Friday, February 11, 2022, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

[Register Here](#)

The Honorable Tom Wolf

Governor, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Jennifer Berrier
Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry

Contents

PA AmeriCorps State Planning Grants: 2022-2023 Spring Request for Applications

PA AmeriCorps State Planning Grants: 2022-2023 Spring Request for Applications

The Funding Opportunity

PennSERVE is pleased to announce the opportunity to apply for AmeriCorps state planning grants. This opportunity is open to community and faith-based organizations, government agencies, and educational institutions (see detailed information about eligible applicants on page 14).

AmeriCorps planning grants are awarded to organizations with the following goals:
- Identifying community needs they would address through an AmeriCorps program
- Assessing their capacity to operate an AmeriCorps program and manage an AmeriCorps grant
- Designing an AmeriCorps program
  - Developing a plan for member service activities
  - Developing a theory of how those service activities will lead to change
  - Developing a method of measuring the outcomes of AmeriCorps member service
- Developing policies, procedures, and member recruitment, and management materials

Planning grants are distinct from AmeriCorps program grants. Planning grantees do not operate an AmeriCorps program or enroll AmeriCorps members. Organizations use planning grants to become better prepared to compete for an AmeriCorps program grant in the following grant cycle; however, a Planning Grant award does not guarantee the applicant will be awarded a program operating grant in future cycles. When developing an AmeriCorps program design, planning grantees should plan for a minimum of five full-time equivalent members (five Member Service Years).

PennSERVE intends for the grant and project period of this planning grant to be August 20, 2022 – August 19, 2023; final dates will be determined once the grant is awarded. PennSERVE and the AmeriCorps agency reserve the right to adjust the amount of a grant and/or the grant period.

AmeriCorps planning grants awarded by PennSERVE are Cost Reimbursement Grants. These Cost Reimbursement grants typically fund staff time devoted to the activities in the approved grant narrative. They also often include staff training and travel costs, as well as the cost of hiring subject matter experts to assist with program development. Awardees submit a budget and financial reports, and agree to meet all due dates and requirements as a condition of grant reimbursement. For this competition, Planning Grant awards may not exceed $50,000.

PennSERVE

PennSERVE, Pennsylvania's state service commission, encourages, develops, and facilitates volunteerism and service. Each year, PennSERVE awards federal funding to AmeriCorps programs. Through funding and support, PennSERVE engages Pennsylvania residents in strengthening our communities. Each year, PennSERVE awards approximately $12 million in federal funding from the AmeriCorps agency to AmeriCorps programs.

Table 1: PennSERVE 2022 State Service Plan Funding Priorities

Education	- PreK-12 - College access and completion - Adult basic education
Health	- Mental health - Access to healthy food - Reducing alcohol and/or drug abuse - Ongoing health impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic

Economic Opportunity	• Improving housing access for individuals and families experiencing homelessness • Workforce development
Education/Health/ Economic Opportunity	• Bridging the digital divide and increasing technology access for underserved or under-connected communities • Empowering individuals and families, including youth and young adults, who are impacted by the juvenile and/or criminal justice system; efforts may include but are not limited to diversion, re-entry, and engaging credible messengers to provide or connect individuals with support, treatment, or other services.
Program Structure	• Programs that strategically embed the workforce development of AmeriCorps members in program design • Programs that embed principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion in program design • Programs that provide a living allowance above the minimum required by the federal AmeriCorps agency

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is a program funded by the U.S. Congress under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 94.006. The national organization supporting AmeriCorps is the Corporation for National and Community Service d/b/a AmeriCorps. The AmeriCorps agency's legal authority to award these grants is found in the National and Community Service Act (NCSA) of 1990, *as amended*, 42 U.S.C. § 12501 *et seq*.

The AmeriCorps agency brings people together to tackle the country's most pressing challenges, through national service and volunteering. AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serve with organizations dedicated to the improvement of communities. AmeriCorps helps make service to others a cornerstone of national culture.

The AmeriCorps agency receives AmeriCorps program funding from Congress and awards funding to state commissions, including PennSERVE, to grant and oversee AmeriCorps programs in each state.

AmeriCorps Focus Areas

The Serve America Act, Pub.L. 111–13, Apr. 21, 2009, emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on the following focus areas:

Disaster Services
Grants will support increased and improved disaster services for individuals and communities to prepare and adapt to disasters, including but not limited to climate change events. Activities will provide support to increase preparedness for disasters, improve readiness to respond to disasters, support recovery efforts from disasters, and/or assist in the implementation of pre-disaster mitigation and adaptation measures. Grants will support communities and individuals in planning for disasters, with an emphasis on engaging disadvantaged communities in the planning process.

Economic Opportunity
Grants will provide support for and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people; help economically

disadvantaged people to have improved access to services that enhance financial literacy; transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable housing; and/or have improved employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.

Education
Grants will provide support for and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children; improved school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children; improved educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools; and/or prepare economically disadvantaged students for success in post-secondary educational institutions.

Environmental Stewardship
Grants will support responsible stewardship of the environment, while preparing communities for challenging circumstances and helping Americans respond to and recover from disruptive life events: programs that conserve natural habitats, protect clean air and water, maintain public lands, support wildland fire mitigation, cultivate individual and community self-sufficiency, and provide reforestation services after floods or fires.

Healthy Futures
Grants will provide support for activities that will address the opioid crisis; increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible; and/or increase physical activity and improve nutrition.

Veterans and Military Families
Grants will improve the quality of life of veterans and improve military family well-being; increase the number of veterans, wounded warriors, military service members, and their caregivers, families, and survivors served by AmeriCorps programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through AmeriCorps programs.

AmeriCorps Members

Planning grantees use their awards to design and assess their capacity to manage programs that engage AmeriCorps members in community service. AmeriCorps members engage in community service and may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. They are recruited, trained, supervised, and managed by organizations that receive AmeriCorps program grants. Upon successful completion of service, AmeriCorps members receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

Special Requirements for AmeriCorps Programs in Pennsylvania

When developing a planning grant proposal, please note the following requirements for AmeriCorps program grants:

- AmeriCorps programs funded by PennSERVE must have enough staff to manage the size and scope of the AmeriCorps program. In general, programs funded by PennSERVE require at least one full-time equivalent (FTE) dedicated to AmeriCorps program management. **All planning grant applicants must include at least .5 FTE.**

- PennSERVE programs must identify as AmeriCorps programs.

- AmeriCorps programs may be required to participate in other local disaster preparedness and/or response efforts, including but not limited to emergency management training, management of volunteers, and public health outreach. AmeriCorps members may be asked, or offered the opportunity, to participate in disaster services as needed.

- AmeriCorps programs funded by PennSERVE have required training activities for program staff and yearly AmeriCorps Week activities for AmeriCorps members. Applicants must include the cost of travel to these events in their budgets. Please note: Planning grant recipients attend these training activities.

- AmeriCorps programs funded by PennSERVE use a specific online program management system. Planning grant recipients use this system for financial reporting. The instructions below show how to include the cost of this system in your budget.

Submission Requirements

Applicants make their initial submission as either a Word document or PDF attachment to an email. In the second stage, selected applicants will submit applications in the AmeriCorps agency's web-based system, eGrants. Instructions for eGrants submission will be provided with preliminary funding notifications.

Due Dates and Funding Timeline

Applications are due by 5:00 pm on March 3, 2022. Please see Table 2 for complete application and funding timelines. See Table 3: Required Application Documents for a complete list of required documents and delivery instructions. PennSERVE may consider late submission requests that include documentation of the rationale for the request and reserves the right to accept such applications on a case-by-case basis. Additional deadlines may be required throughout the application process, including deadlines for required revisions and responses to clarification questions.

Table 2: Application/Funding Timeline

Applications due	March 3, 2022, 5 p.m.
PennSERVE Feedback and Clarification Period; revisions may be required	April 4 – 22, 2022
Preliminary grant award notifications, resolutions, and eGrants entry	May 25 – June 3, 2022
Grant/Program Period Begins (pending receipt of grant award from the AmeriCorps agency)	August 2022

Narratives

Submit your narrative as a Word document or PDF. The character limit for all narrative sections combined (Planning Proposal and Organizational Capability) should not exceed 25,000.

Tips for a Strong Narrative
- **Answer the questions in order.** Use headings to show which question you are answering.

- **Explain how.** Be sure to describe *how* the proposed project will meet the criteria. Simply stating that it will be met is not enough.
- **Provide requested information only.** Though it is important to include information about your organization that is relevant to this application, a full history or your organization is not necessary.
- **Assume the reviewer knows nothing about you.** Even if you have received funding from PennSERVE or the AmeriCorps agency in the past, do not assume your reviewers know anything about you, your proposal, your partners, or your beneficiaries. If you use an acronym, be sure to write it out the first time you use. It. Define words that people outside your organization or field may not know.
- **Get feedback.** Before you submit your application, let someone who is completely unfamiliar with your project read and critique the project narrative.

1. Executive Summary (Required – 0 percent)

Please fill in the brackets of these sentences to complete the executive summary. Do not deviate from the template below.

The [Name of the organization] proposes to develop an AmeriCorps program serving in [the location(s) the AmeriCorps program will serve] that will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)]. For the Planning Grant, the AmeriCorps investment of $[amount of request] will be matched with $[amount of projected match], $[amount of local, state, tribal, and federal funds] in public funding and $[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding. No AmeriCorps members will be needed to execute this plan.

The Planning Grant will be used to [describe the rationale for applying for a Planning Grant and what you hope to achieve during the one-year period].

2. Program Design (50 percent)
a. Program Concept (25 points)

- Where would your AmeriCorps members serve? This may be one or more counties, municipalities, neighborhoods, as well as specific organizations where they will be based (we refer to such places as service sites or host sites).
- Describe the proposed role(s) of the AmeriCorps members. What services would they provide and to whom?
- How do you anticipate that AmeriCorps member service would benefit the places where they serve?
- Describe the skills, knowledge, and experience that AmeriCorps members will gain during service. How will service prepare AmeriCorps members for careers or post-secondary education? For AmeriCorps members who have already completed post-secondary education and/or those who have retired, what support do you provide in transitioning from service to their next opportunity?
- How do you plan to engage the community to be served in determining AmeriCorps member service activities? How will you obtain ongoing community feedback as you plan and potentially operate this program?
- If proposing to add or expand an AmeriCorps component to an existing program or initiative, explain how the addition/expansion of AmeriCorps will enable the organization to better meet the community need; and clearly describe the difference in scope and/or program design.

b. Planning Process/Timeline (25 points)

Describe your proposed planning process, including

- A detailed description of who is leading it
- A well-developed timeline for planning activities
- Information about existing community partnerships, or potential for partnerships to be developed, with well-defined roles for partners
- A description of how you will use the planning period to develop the components necessary to manage an AmeriCorps program.

3. Organizational Capability (35 percent)

a. Organizational Background and Staffing (18 points)

- Describe your organizational experience and record of accomplishment in your proposed area of programming.
- Describe your experience managing federal grants (if any).
- List the staff who will participate in the planning process and what their roles will be.

b. Compliance and Accountability (17 points)

- Does your organizational currently have monitoring and oversight procedures to support compliance with laws and regulations that govern your work? If so, please describe.

4. Budget (15 percent)

Use the Budget Instructions (Appendix A) and Budget Checklist (Appendix B) to prepare your budget. Please submit in the budget template; download from
https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/pennserve/grants/Pages/default.aspx.

PennSERVE will evaluate your budget based on the following:

- Your proposed costs align with the activities described in the narrative.
- You show how you calculated each budget item.
- You include PennSERVE required costs, which are listed in the Budget Instructions.
- You request no more than $50,000.
- You include a 24% match.
- If you choose to include Section 3 costs, also known as administrative costs, you include a full calculation and stay within the maximum allowable.

Prohibited Activities

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or the AmeriCorps agency, staff and members may not engage in the following activities (see 45 C.F.R. § 2520.65):

1. attempting to influence legislation;

2. organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;

3. assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;

4. impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;

5. engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;

6. participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;

7. engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;

8. providing a direct benefit to—

   a. a business organized for profit;

   b. a labor union;

   c. a partisan political organization;

   d. a nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; or

   e. an organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph 7. above, unless the AmeriCorps agency assistance is not used to support those religious activities;

9. conducting a voter registration drive or using the AmeriCorps agency funds to conduct a voter registration drive;

10. providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; or

11. such other activities as the AmeriCorps agency may prohibit.

Per the AmeriCorps agency guidance, the following activities are also prohibited:

- **Census Activities.** AmeriCorps members and volunteers associated with AmeriCorps grants may not engage in census activities during service hours. Being a census taker during service hours is categorically prohibited. Census-related activities (e.g., promotion of the Census, education about the importance of the Census) do not align with AmeriCorps State and National objectives. What members and volunteers do on their own time is up to them, consistent with program policies about outside employment and activities.

- **Election and Polling Activities**. AmeriCorps member may not provide services for election or polling locations or in support of such activities.

Staff paid for with planning grant or matching funds may not engage in these activities while on grant time. AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above

on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-AmeriCorps agency funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing any of the above activities on their personal time.

Required Documents

Please see the complete list of required documents in Table 3 Documents should be attached to an email and sent to pennserve@pa.gov with the subject line "(Your Organization's Name) – Application Documents."

In the body of the email, please list each document that you have attached. If necessary, send your documents in multiple emails to reduce file size; PennSERVE cannot accept emails with attachments over 5MB.

Application Narratives and Budget

Required narratives must be submitted via email as a Word document or PDF. A budget must be submitted using the budget template provided. Specific criteria for the narratives and budget are provided in this RFA. If selected for funding, the narratives, budget, and a set of performance measures must be entered into eGrants.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania AmeriCorps State Program Subgrantee Application/Agreement

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania AmeriCorps State Program Subgrantee Application/Agreement must be complete and submitted via email. If selected for funding, these documents, along with the completed application as submitted in eGrants, becomes a grant agreement between the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry and the applicant. All fields must be complete and, where applicable, signed by the authorized representative.

Federal Indirect Cost Rate Agreement

Applicants who hold a federal negotiated indirect cost rate must submit a valid indirect cost rate document to PennSERVE with the application.

Delinquent on Federal Debt

Any applicant that is delinquent on any federal debt must disclose this information at the time of application by submitting a complete explanation to pennserve@pa.gov at the same time they submit their application.

Table 3: Required Application Documents

Documents to be emailed as attachments to pennserve@pa.gov.	All Applicants	If Applicable
PennSERVE AmeriCorps State Application • Narratives • Budget; download template from https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/penn-serve/grants/Pages/default.aspx	X	
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania AmeriCorps State Program Sub-grantee Application/Agreement (complete and signed): • Application/Agreement Coversheet	X	

• Certifications and Assurances • SF-424B • Audit Clause and Additional Conditions • FFATA Download from https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/pennserve/grants/Pages/default.aspx		
Federally approved Indirect Cost Agreement		**X – Required if not submitted to PennSERVE within the last 12 months (March 2021)**
Delinquent on federal debt explanation		**X**

System Requirements

DUNS

Applications must include a DUNS number and an employer identification number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform. PennSERVE recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date.

SAM.gov

After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at https://www.sam.gov/ and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete and, if a grant is awarded, throughout the life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. **Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and address on all grant applications to PennSERVE and AmeriCorps agency.** Applicants that do not comply with these requirements may become ineligible to receive an award.

It is recommended that applicants **finalize a new SAM registration or renew an existing one at least two weeks before the application deadline**. This should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. It typically takes seven to ten days to finalize SAM.gov registration. To complete the registration process, you will need to submit detailed information on your organization in various categories relevant to federal procurement and financial transactions:
- General information, such as organization name, EIN, DUNS, location, income, and number of employees;
- Corporate information, such as organization type (e.g., state government, nonprofit);
- Financial information, such as financial institution, bank account numbers, and credit card information; and
- Point of contact information, such as primary and alternate points of contact.

Specific requirements and detailed instructions on how to register are available in the SAM user's guide (www.sam.gov/sam/SAM_Guide/SAM_User_Guide.htm). You should review the guide before you begin the registration process.

The Federal government is implementing Unique Entity Identifiers (UEI) as part of the SAM registration process to eventually replace DUNS numbers. AmeriCorps may ask applicants to add the UEI to their application as part of the clarification or pre-award process. AmeriCorps is adding a field to capture the UEI in eGrants. If you already have a UEI and the UEI field is available in eGrants, you can enter it at the time you submit your application.

PA Vendor ID
Pennsylvania requires that all grant applications/agreements and contracts include a Pennsylvania Vendor Number. All applicants must be registered as vendors to apply, to be awarded funds, or to be paid. Vendor numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the Vendor Data Management Unit at 717-346-2676 or 1-877-435-7363, or online at www.vendorregistration.state.pa.us (click on "Non-Procurement Vendor Site"). It may take up to two weeks to receive a vendor number. If you are unable to obtain a Pennsylvania vendor number in a timely fashion, you may submit the application prior to receiving your vendor number; however, no grant will be awarded without a Pennsylvania vendor number.

Agency Contact
Inquiries about this funding opportunity should be directed to PennSERVE at pennserve@pa.gov. The subject of the email should be "AmeriCorps Spring Application Question <Applicant Name>."

Reallocation of Funding
PennSERVE reserves the right to reallocate funding in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.

Application Resources
All applicants are urged to review the **AmeriCorps Regulations:** https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title45/45chapterXXV.tpl

Table 4: Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Topics	Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations
Member Service Activities	§2520.20 - §2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§2520.65
Tutoring Programs	§2522.900-2522.950
Matching Funds	§2521.35-2521.90
Member Benefits	§2522.240-2522.250
Calculating Cost Per Member Service Year (MSY)	§2522.485
Performance Measures	§2522.500-2522.650
Evaluation	§2522.500-2522.540 and §2522.700-2522.740

| Selection Criteria and Selection Process | §2522.400-2522.475 |

Eligible Applicants

The following non-federal entities (as defined in 2 C.F.R. § 200.69) who have DUNS numbers and are registered in the system for award management (SAM) are eligible to apply:

- Indian tribes (2 C.F.R. § 200.54);
- institutions of higher education (2 C.F.R. § 200.55);
- local governments (2 C.F.R. § 200.64);
- nonprofit organizations (2 C.F.R. § 200.70); and
- states (2 C.F.R. § 200.90).

Programs applying to PennSERVE must operate their program only within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. If your planning grant leads you to develop a multi-state program, you would apply directly with the AmeriCorps agency for program funding.

In addition, under Section 132A(b) of the NCSA, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this RFA.

Note that under section 745 of Title VII, Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, if the AmeriCorps agency is aware that any corporation has any unpaid federal tax liability which—

- has been assessed,
- for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and
- that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, that corporation is not eligible for an award under this RFA. (However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation which a federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has determined that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the federal government.) A similar restriction may be enacted with the appropriation which will fund awards under this RFA.

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 for AmeriCorps funding.

These application/agreement instructions are to be used by all applicants interested in applying for Pennsylvania AmeriCorps State grants.

Review and Selection Process

The grant selection process includes the following steps:

1. determining whether a proposal complies with the application requirements, such as deadlines and eligibility requirements;
2. applying the basic selection criteria articulated in the AmeriCorps regulations;
3. determining the level of alignment with the criteria detailed throughout this RFA; and
4. ensuring innovation and geographic, demographic, and programmatic diversity across the Penn-SERVE AmeriCorps portfolio.

PennSERVE will select applications for funding using a multi-stage process that includes reviews by staff and/or peer reviewers and approval by the Pennsylvania Advisory Board.

In evaluating your application for funding, reviewers will assess your program design, organizational capability, and the program's cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy. The weights assigned to each category and sub-category are listed in the narrative outline. Reviewers will measure your application narrative against these criteria and weigh them accordingly.

PennSERVE may request additional clarification concerning your application or require revisions as needed.

Documents that Govern the Grant/Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The RFA, Subgrantee Application Agreement and approved application are all part of the binding commitment under the grant. Also included in the binding agreement are the requirements of applicable sections of the NCSA of 1990 and other applicable statutes. Awards will also be subject to the AmeriCorps regulations and grant terms and conditions, as described below.

Uniform Guidance

All awards under this notice are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), now consolidated in [2 C.F.R. Parts 200](#) and [2205](#).

Requests for Improper Payment Information

The AmeriCorps agency may, from time to time, request documentation from recipients to monitor the award or to comply with other legal requirements, such as the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002, *as amended*. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on temporary manual hold, reimbursement only, or other remedies as appropriate. In addition, the AmeriCorps agency may, in appropriate circumstances, consider in its funding decisions any previous failures to make timely responses.

AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions

All awards made under this RFA will be subject to the 2022 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, and the 2022 AmeriCorps State and National Specific Terms and Conditions. These terms and conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the Terms and Conditions for the AmeriCorps State and National Grants is available at https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2021ASNProgram508TC20210603.pdf.

National Service Criminal History Check Requirements

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, national service participant, or volunteer) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend, or education award through a program receiving AmeriCorps funds. This includes staff that receive part of their salary through a subgrant. An individual is

ineligible to serve in a position that receives such AmeriCorps funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award. Please budget appropriately for full checks on all covered individuals. Grantees should utilize the two vendors the AmeriCorps agency has engaged to conduct the required NSCHCs. Failure to conduct an NSCHC may result in significant disallowed costs.

Unless the AmeriCorps agency has provided a recipient with a written exemption or written approval of an alternative search procedure, recipients must perform the following checks.

All staff and national service participants funded by the AmeriCorps/CNCS Share or Grantee Share of the approved grant budget who are 18 or older at the start of work or service must undergo NSCHCs that include:
- A nationwide name-based check of the NSOPW;
- A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; and
- A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

All NSCHC components must be complete and adjudicated before the start of work or service. See 45 C.F.R. §§ 2540.200–2540.207 and https://americorps.gov/grantees-sponsors/history-check for complete information and FAQs.

All funded programs must complete the NSCHC eCourse provided by the AmeriCorps agency annually; and submit certification of course completion to PennSERVE as part of the grant record.

Use of Material

To ensure that materials generated with AmeriCorps funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, the AmeriCorps agency reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so (2 C.F.R. § 200.315 (b)).

Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to provide:
- reporting via the PennSERVE-determined online reporting system, including a mid- and end-of-year report;
- monthly expense reports and invoices for reimbursement;
- quarterly and year-end aggregate financial reports;
- participation in both desk and on-site monitoring by PennSERVE and/or the AmeriCorps agency; and
- any additional reporting as required by PennSERVE and/or the AmeriCorps agency.

PennSERVE will report on all grantee performance to the AmeriCorps agency on a semi-annual basis, or as required by the agency.

Match Requirements

A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 C.F.R. § 2521.60 and below.

Table 5: Grantee Match Requirements Based on Year of Funding

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

Section 121(e)(5) of the NCSA of 1990, *as amended*, 42 U.S.C. § 12571(e)(5), requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds. Grantees must track and report on that match to PennSERVE quarterly.

Program requirements, including requirements on match, are in the AmeriCorps regulations and summarized below.

- Minimum grantee share is 24 percent of program costs for the first three years. Overall grantee share of total program costs increases gradually beginning in Year 4 to 50 percent by the tenth year of funding and any year thereafter. Match requirements based on year of funding are in Table 5. Cost reimbursement grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as you meet the minimum match of 24 percent for the first three years, and the increasing minimums in years thereafter. See 45 C.F.R. §§ 2521.35–2521.95 for the specific regulations.
- The acceptable sources of matching funds are federal, state, local, and/or private sector funds, in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements.

- In the "Source of Funds" field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the match. Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (private, state/local, or federal) for your entire match. Define all acronyms the first time they are used.
- Section 121(e)(5) of NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12571(e)) requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to the AmeriCorps agency on a Federal Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout.

Note: The AmeriCorps agency legislation permits the use of non-AmeriCorps agency federal funds as match for the grantee share of the budget. Please discuss your intention of using federal funds to match an AmeriCorps grant with the other agency prior to submitting your application. Section 121(e)(5) of the NCSA, 42 U.S.C. § 12571(e)(5), requires that grantees that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant report the amount and source of these funds to the AmeriCorps agency. If you use other federal funds as match, you must ensure you can meet the requirements and purpose of both grants. PennSERVE grantees that use federal funds as match will be required to obtain and maintain letters from the federal agency(ies) that expressly permit use of funds as match and will be required to report the sources and amounts on quarterly financial reports.

PA AmeriCorps State Planning Grants: 2022-2023 Spring Request for Applications

Appendix A. Budget Instructions

Please use budget template provided; download from
https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/pennserve/grants/Pages/default.aspx

Section I. Program Operating Costs

Complete Section I, Program Operating Costs, of the Budget Worksheet by entering the "Total Amount," "CNCS Share," and "Grantee Share" for Parts A-I, as follows:

A. Personnel Expenses

Under "Position/Title Description," list each staff position separately and provide a brief five or six-word position description, salary, and percentage of FTE devoted to this award. Each staff person's role must be described in the application narrative and each person mentioned in the narrative must be listed in the budget as either CNCS or Grantee share. Because the purpose of this grant is to enable and stimulate volunteer community service, do not include the value of direct community service performed by volunteers.

B. Personnel Fringe Benefits

Under "Purpose/Description," identify the types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position. Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Workers' Compensation, retirement, SUTA, health and life insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If a fringe amount is over 30%, please list separately. Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item.

C. 1. Staff Travel

Describe the purpose for which program staff will travel. Provide a calculation to include costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel-related expenses multiplied by the number of trips/staff. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage (not to exceed the federal mileage rate), daily per diem, and similar supporting information. Only domestic travel is allowable.

- Include costs for at least one staff person to attend required training during the program year: one two-day training. Assume the training will be held in Harrisburg, PA. Include costs for applicable travel, meals, and lodging.

- Include costs for at least one staff member to attend the National Service Regional Training Conference. Assume the conference will be held out of state. Include costs for applicable travel, meals, and lodging.

- Please itemize costs. For example: Two staff will attend the National Service Regional Training Conference. 2 staff x $750 airfare + $50 ground transportation + (two-day) x $200 lodging + $50 per diem = $2,000.

2. Member Travel

N/A FOR PLANNING GRANTS

D. Equipment

PA AmeriCorps State Planning Grants: 2022-2023 Spring Request for Applications

Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year AND an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit (including accessories, attachments, and modifications). Any items that do not meet this definition should be entered in E. Supplies below. Purchases of equipment are limited to 10% of the total Corporation funds requested. If applicable, show the unit cost and number of units you are requesting. Provide a brief justification for the purchase of the equipment under Item/Purpose.

E. Supplies

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials, including equipment that does not fit the definition above. You must individually list any single item costing $1,000 or more.

F. Contractual and Consultant Services

Include costs for consultants related to the project's operations, except evaluation consultants, who will be listed in Section G and H below. There is not a maximum daily rate.

G. 1. Staff Training

Include registration costs of $250/person for at least one staff member to attend the National Service Regional Training Conference.

Include the costs associated with training staff on project requirements and training to enhance the skills staff need for effective project implementation, i.e., project or financial management, team building, etc. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate. There is not a maximum daily rate.

2. Member Training

N/A FOR PLANNING GRANTS

H. Evaluation

Include costs for project evaluation activities, including additional staff time or subcontracts, use of evaluation consultants, purchase of instrumentation, and other costs specifically for this activity not budgeted in Personnel Expenses. This cost does not include the daily/weekly gathering of data to assess progress toward meeting performance measures, but is a larger assessment of the impact your project is having on the community, as well as an assessment of the overall systems and project design. Indicate daily rates of consultants, where applicable.

I. Other Program Operating Costs

Allowable costs in this budget category should include when applicable:

1. Criminal history background checks for all employees or other individuals who receive a salary or similar payment from the grant (federal or non-federal share). Please include the cost for these checks for staff.

2. Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.

3. Utilities, telephone, Internet and similar expenses that are specifically used for AmeriCorps project staff, and are not part of the organization's indirect cost/admin cost allocation pool. If such expenses are

budgeted and shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.

Section II. Member Costs

N/A FOR PLANNING GRANTS

Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs (optional)

Definitions

Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives Corporation funds and do not include particular project costs. These costs may include administrative staff positions. For organizations that have an established an indirect cost rate for federal awards, administrative costs mean those costs that are included in the organization's indirect cost rate agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the organization's overall operation and are further described in Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance.

Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs (choose either A, B OR C below)

PennSERVE is not electing to retain a share of the federal funds available to programs for administrative costs in 2022 – 2023. PennSERVE reserves the right to elect to retain a share of the 5% of federal funds available to programs for administrative costs up to 2% in future funding years.

Applicants choose one of three methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a CNCS-fixed percentage rate method or a federally approved indirect cost rate method or a de minimis method. Regardless of the option chosen, the CNCS share of administrative costs is limited to 5% of the total CNCS funds actually expended under this grant. Do not create additional lines in this category.

A. CNCS-Fixed Percentage Method

Five Percent Fixed Administrative Costs Option

The CNCS-fixed percentage rate method allows you to charge administrative costs up to a cap without a federally approved indirect cost rate and without documentation supporting the allocation. If you choose the CNCS-fixed percentage rate method (Section IIIA in eGrants), you may charge, for administrative costs, a fixed 5% of the total of the CNCS funds expended. In order to charge this fixed 5%, the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10% of all direct cost expenditures.

1. To determine the maximum CNCS share for Section III: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding shares of Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can request as Corporation share. The factor 0.0526 is used to calculate the 5% maximum amount of federal funds that may be budgeted for administrative (indirect) costs, rather than 0.0500, as a way to mathematically compensate for determining Section III costs when the total budget (Sections I + II + III) is not yet established. Enter this amount as the CNCS share for Section III A.

2. To determine the Grantee share for Section III: Multiply the total (both CNCS and grantee share) of Sections I and II by 10% (0.10) and enter this amount as the grantee share for Section III A.

3. Enter the sum of the CNCS and grantee shares under Total Amount.

B. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate

If you have a federally approved indirect cost rate, this method must be used and the rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs, not to exceed the 5% maximum federal share payable by CNCS. Specify the Cost Type for which your organization has current documentation on file, i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost rate. Supply your approved IDC rate (percentage) and the base upon which this rate is calculated (direct salaries, salaries and fringe benefits, etc.). CNCS does not restrict the overall indirect cost rate claimed. It is at your discretion whether or not to claim your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate in the Rate Claimed field.

1. Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both the CNCS and Grantee shares, as prescribed by your established rate agreement (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other). Then multiply the appropriate direct costs by the rate being claimed. This will determine the total amount of indirect costs allowable under the grant.

2. To determine the CNCS share: Multiply the sum of the CNCS funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as the CNCS share of indirect costs.

3. To determine the Grantee share: Subtract the amount calculated in step 2 (the CNCS administrative share) from the amount calculated in step 1 (the Indirect Cost total). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for administrative costs.

C. De Minimis Rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs

Organizations who have never, at any point in time, held a federally negotiated indirect cost rate (except for those non-Federal entities described in Appendix VII to Part 200-States and Local government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, paragraph (d)(1)(B)) and who receive less than $35 million in direct federal funding, may indefinitely use a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Additional information regarding what is included in MTDC and use of this option can be found at 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.414 (f) and 200.68. If this option is elected, it must be used consistently across all federal awards.

Source of Match

In the "Source of Funds" field that appears at the end of Budget Section III, enter a brief description of the match. Identify each match source separately. Identify if the match is secured or proposed. Include dollar amount, the match classification (cash or in-kind), and the source type (Private, State/Local, or Federal) for your entire match. Define all acronyms the first time they are used. The total amount of Source of Match should equal the Grantee Share amount.

Appendix B: Budget Checklist

Below is a checklist to help you make certain that you submit an accurate budget narrative that meets AmeriCorps requirements.

In Compliance?	Section I. Program Operating Costs
Yes __ No __	Costs charged under the Personnel line item directly relate to the operation of the AmeriCorps planning grant?
Yes __ No __	Staff indirectly involved in the management or operation of the applicant organization is funded through the administrative cost section (Section III.) of the budget? Examples of administrative costs include central management and support functions.
Yes __ No __	Staff fundraising expenses are not charged to the grant? You may not charge AmeriCorps staff members' time and related expenses for fundraising to the federal or grantee share of the grant. Expenses incurred to raise funds must be paid out of the funds raised. Development officers and fundraising staff are not allowable expenses.
Yes __ No __	All positions in the budget are fully described in the narrative?
Yes __ No __	The types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position are described? Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Workers' Compensation, retirement, SUTA, health and life insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If the fringe amount is over 30%, please list separately.
Yes __ No __	Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item?
Yes __ No __	The purpose for all staff travel is clearly identified?
Yes __ No __	You have budgeted funds for staff travel to PennSERVE sponsored meetings in the budget narrative?
Yes __ No __	Funds for the purchase of equipment (does not include general use office equipment) are limited to 10% of the total grant amount?
Yes __ No __	All single equipment items over $5000 per unit are specifically listed?
Yes __ No __	Justification/explanation of equipment items is included in the budget narrative?
Yes __ No __	All single supply items over $1000 per unit are specifically listed?
Yes __ No __	You only charged to the federal share of the budget member service gear, with the exception of safety equipment, that includes the AmeriCorps logo?
Yes __ No __	Are all consultant services budgeted below the maximum federal daily rate of $750/day? Is the daily rate noted in all sections of the budget narrative where consultants are proposed?
Yes __ No __	Does the budget reflect adequate budgeted costs for project evaluation?
Yes __ No __	Have you provided budgeted costs for criminal history checks of all grant-funded staff?
Yes __ No __	Are all items in the budget narrative itemized and the purpose of the funds justified?

In Compliance?	Section II. Member Costs – No items budgeted in this section for Planning Grants

In Compliance?	Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs
Yes __ No __	Applicant has chosen Option A – Corporation fixed percentage method and the maximum federal share of administrative costs does not exceed 5% of the total federal funds budgeted? To determine the federal administrative share, multiply all other budgeted federal funds by .0526.
Yes __ No __	Applicant has chosen Option A – Corporation fixed percentage method and the maximum grantee share is at 10% or less of total budgeted funds?
Yes __ No __	Applicant has chosen Option B – federally approved indirect cost rate method and documentation on file? Administrative costs budgeted include the following: (1) indirect costs such as legal staff, central management and support functions; (2) costs for financial, accounting, audit, internal evaluations, and contracting functions; (3) costs for insurance that protects the entity that operates the project; and (4) the portion of the salaries and benefits of the director and any other project administrative staff not attributable to the time spent in direct support of a specific project.
Yes __ No __	Applicant has chosen Option B – The maximum grantee share is at 10% or less of total budgeted funds, less the 5% CNCS share?
Yes __ No __	Applicant has chosen Option B-the type of rate, the IDC rate percentage, the rate claimed and the base to which the rate is applied has been specified?
Yes __ No __	Applicant has chosen Option C – a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs has been budgeted?

In Compliance?	Match
Yes __ No __	Is the overall match being met at the required level, based on the year of funding?
Yes __ No __	For all matching funds, proposed vs secured, the source(s) [private, state, local, and/or federal], the type of contribution (cash or in-kind), and the amount of match, are clearly identified in the narrative and in the Source of Funds field in eGrants?
Yes __ No __	The amount of match is for the entire amount in the budget narrative. (The total amount of match equals the amount in the budget?)

PA AmeriCorps State Planning Grants: 2022-2023 Spring Request for Applications

Appendix C: Alternative Match Instructions

Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as the minimum match of 24 percent for the first three years, and the increasing minimums in years thereafter, are maintained. See 45 C.F.R. §§ 2521.35–2521.90 for the specific regulations.

Special Circumstances for an Alternative Match Schedule: Under certain circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at 45 C.F.R. § 2521.60(b). To qualify, you must demonstrate that your program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined below.

A. Rural County: In determining whether a program is rural, AmeriCorps will consider the most re-cent Beale code rating published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the county in which the program is located. Any program located in a county with a Beale code of 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9 is eligible to apply for the alternative match requirement. See Appendix G for the Table of Beale codes.

B. Severely Economically Distressed County: In determining whether a program is located in a se-verely economically distressed county, AmeriCorps will consider the following list of county-level characteristics. See Appendix G for a list of website addresses where this publicly available infor-mation can be found.
   1. The county-level per capita income is less than or equal to 75 percent of the national average for all counties using the most recent census data or Bureau of Economic Analysis data;
   2. The county-level poverty rate is equal to or greater than 125 percent of the national average for all counties using the most recent census data; and
   3. The county-level unemployment is above the national average for all counties for the previous 12 months using the most recently available Bureau of Labor Statistics data.
   4. The areas served by the program lack basic infrastructure such as water or electricity.

C. Program Location: Except when approved otherwise, AmeriCorps will determine the location of your program based on the legal applicant's address. If you believe that the legal applicant's ad-dress is not the appropriate way to consider the location of your program, you must provide rel-evant facts about your program location in your request. AmeriCorps will, in its sole discretion, determine whether some other address is more appropriate for determining a program's loca-tion.

   If your program is located in one of these areas, see the instructions below for applying for this alternative match schedule. **You must submit your alternative match schedule request to PennSERVE at the time of application.**

   If approved for the alternative schedules, programs will base their budget in the upcoming application on the approved alternative match. The alternative match requirement will be in effect for whatever portion of the three-year project period remains or if applying as a new grantee, for the upcoming three-year grant cycle.

D. Instructions for the Alternative Match Schedule: Programs must send their request to Penn-SERVE for review. PennSERVE will then forward the request to the AmeriCorps agency for consideration. Upon PennSERVE approval, the AmeriCorps agency will review your request, notify PennSERVE if you qualify for the alternative schedule, and provide instructions for entering your budget into eGrants under the Alternative Match Schedule. To submit a request for an alternative match, submit an email to PennSERVE at the time of the application as follows:

E-mail subject line: AmeriCorps Alternative Match Request

Send your request in memo format. You must respond to each item below. Please include both the item and your response in your request.

1. Basis of Request
   a. Identify the basis for your request as either a rural county or a severely economically distressed community as described above.
   b. Describe where your program operates and include the address of the legal applicant.
2. Rural Counties
   a. Describe the economic conditions.
   b. Confirm that your county has a Beale code of 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9.
3. Economically Distressed Counties:
   a. Provide your county per-capita income, poverty, and unemployment levels.
   b. Demonstrate that your county per-capita income, poverty, and unemployment levels are above or below the national averages. Identify the data source(s) used to make your determination.
   c. Provide any other statistics you deem relevant to demonstrate your county is economically distressed.
4. Program Location: If you believe the location of your program should not be based on the address of the legal applicant, describe your justification for requesting an alternative location(s).
5. Other: Provide any other justification and information for your request that is not presented in the responses to the above.

Appendix D: Rural Programs, Rural Intermediaries, Beale Codes, and County-Level Economic Data

RUCA codes classify U.S. census tracts using measures of population density, urbanization, and daily commuting. Census tracts with an urban cluster population less than 50,000 are considered rural (RUCA codes four – 10). For more information about RUCA codes, please visit the USDA website found here: http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-commuting-area-codes.aspx

Rural intermediaries primarily serve communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure. PennSERVE and the AmeriCorps agency recognize that severely under-resourced communities may have limited capacity to successfully apply for and implement an AmeriCorps program due to the size and organizational capacity of eligible applicant/host site organizations or the lack of available matching funds in these communities. Thus, it may be effective for a single eligible applicant (intermediary) to develop an application and oversee the implementation of an AmeriCorps program that engages multiple grassroots nonprofits that individually do not have the necessary organizational or fundraising capacity to apply for and run an AmeriCorps program independently. Given the desire to address community needs holistically, the nonprofits that make up the consortium may have different focus areas and thus the nonprofit intermediary will be multi-focused.

Applications seeking consideration as a Rural Intermediary must demonstrate that they will be serving in rural severely under-resourced communities, that their application represents a consortium, that the activities provided by the consortium collectively address a compelling community need or set of needs, and that they have sufficient financial and management capacity to act as an umbrella organization for the consortium. Applicants seeking consideration under this priority area may submit a narrative that does not exceed 12 pages in eGrants.

The eligible applicant (intermediary) should submit one application which describes:

- how the partnership/consortium will be organized, and AmeriCorps resources will be allocated between the partnering entities (intermediary and consortium members);
- the proposed theory(ies) of change and program model(s); and
- how the intermediary will utilize an identified consortium of nonprofits/eligible applicants who are well positioned to achieve outcomes identified in the theory of change.

Applicants must email memoranda of understanding or signed letters of commitment from all members of the consortium to pennserve@pa.gov by the application due date to be considered for this priority area.