2022 AMERICORPS SENIORS SENIOR DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM WORKFORCE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

<mark>Last Updated: November 22, 2022</mark>

Overview:

This document supplements the AmeriCorps Seniors FY2023 Senior Demonstration Program Workforce Development (WFD), in partnership with Public Health AmeriCorps (PHA) Notice of Funding Opportunity and Application Instructions. These FAQs will be updated periodically. New or updated questions will be clearly indicated within each section.

Contents

1. Award Information

1.1. How does my organization determine how much federal funding we should apply for?

As stated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (Notice), applicants can determine the scope of the work of the project that will be for a three-year grant award. ==Update 11/22:== The total of all wards will not exceed $5,000,000. This is the total of the funds to be awarded across multiple awarded applications.

1.2. Can an organization that wins this opportunity sub-contract to another organization to run AmeriCorps Seniors WFD?

No.

1.3. What are the responsibilities of a sponsor with respect to project management responsibilities? For example, can an AmeriCorps WFD grantee contract out any of these key management responsibilities?

The applicant, or sponsor, is required to manage the grant, including completion of financial and programmatic reporting, training and support of volunteers, and general oversight of the program. Subcontracting to another entity to do this is not allowed.

1.4. If our organization desires to purpose public health careers programming and assist older adults in secure employment in professional, skilled labor, or para-professional careers, do we submit one application?

Applicants have the following option:

1. Submit two applications, one for the public health track and the WFD track: or

2. Submit one application to the WFD track that has all the career options for volunteers.

1.5. ==Updated 11/22:== How do we determine Cost Per Placement?

For this program, AmeriCorps Seniors will allow the program to propose a cost per placement. This will allow programs to provide the training and resources necessary to support and retain job placement. Applicants are asked to determine the cost per placement, considering training, credentialling, certification, networking, follow-up, and frequency of follow-up. Cost per placement should demonstrate the best value to the federal government and be clearly defined and justified in the application. The cost per placement is the cost to support the placement of unduplicated volunteers. Take the total amount request in federal share (CNCS Share) divided by the total number of volunteers you expect to be placed in employment.

Example. $300,000 in federal share (CNCS Share) / 100 volunteers to be placed

in employment over three years= $3,000 in cost per placement.

1.6. <mark>**Updated 11/22:**</mark> **Is there a maximum or minimum for the stipends provided to volunteers.**
No. Applicants are to purpose a competitive stipend to remove barriers for older adults' service. AmeriCorps Seniors is looking to the applicants to define and justify what a competitive stipend is for their project.

1.7. <mark>**Updated 11/22:**</mark> **Is there an Appendix A listing areas that are open for applicant to apply?**

No. This NOFO is not restricted to any areas. Applicants can apply to any geographic area in America.

2. Eligible Organization

2.1. Can two or more organizations jointly apply for one grant?

No. One organization must be identified as the sponsor organization (the applicant). Other organizations could become volunteer stations (locations volunteers will be placed), however, would not be considered the grantee.

2.2. We are in the process of becoming a new non-profit and do not yet have an UEI, IRS non-profit status document, or a 990. Can we still apply?

No. The applicant organization must be an established non-profit at the time the application is submitted. If the organization does not yet have a 501(c) non-profit designation, it is not eligible to apply. Written proof that an organization has a 501(c) non-profit designation by the Secretary of State (or similar governmental organization in your state) would be sufficient documentation for the documentation requirement #14 in the Grant Application Instructions. Please refer to the Notice for specific requirements and applicant eligibility.

2.3. Does a legal applicant need to have an address in the county?

Although having an address in the community to be served is not required, the legal applicant should have sufficient local presence to directly manage the proposed AmeriCorps Seniors grant. The operation of an AmeriCorps Seniors grant cannot be delegated to another organization, even if the other organization is an affiliate of the legal applicant.

2.4. Are labor organizations eligible to apply?

No, labor organizations are not eligible to apply.

3. Selection Criteria and Review

3.1. How should applicants address the selection criteria described in the Notice for cost effectiveness & budget adequacy?

Please follow the Notice E.1.e Other section and the specific questions related to

Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

3.2 Selection Criteria E.1.d. Organizational Capability asks about staff positions. Is a full time SDP Director required for this competition or can there be a part time AmeriCorps Seniors WFD Director?

A sponsor may negotiate the employment of a part-time project director with AmeriCorps when it can be determined that such an arrangement will not adversely affect the size, scope and quality of project operations.

The applicant should clearly define in the organizational capability narrative staff positions and how those positions will ensure the accomplishment of program objectives.

3.3 The Grant Application Instructions say to include the narrative components listed for STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES in the Work Plan – so what do we write in this narrative section? Or in the Strengthening Communities narrative only included only in the Work Plans?

As stated in the Grant Applications Instructions, "Your Work Plans should align with the Strengthening Communities Narrative section of your grant application. Work Plans translate the narrative information that you provided into organized task plans that include the inputs (unduplicated volunteers), service activities, outputs, and outcomes. The Work Plans also provide a place for you to set targets for outputs and outcomes."

Reviewers will be assessing the work plans and the strengthening communities narrative to ensure that they are aligned.

The character limit is 2000 characters for the community need statement, instrument description, and the service activity description in the work plans. There will be limited data that you will be able to put in those texts' fields. The strengthening community's narrative will give you the opportunity to answer the selection criteria E.1.b. Program Design.

3.4 How is the UEI number used during the review?

The UEI number is one of the items considered during the financial review. A UEI number directly ties to an organization's credit profile and should be obtained as soon as possible. An organization must have a UEI number prior to submitting an application.

3.5 <mark>Updated 11/22:</mark> If an FGP/SCP Director is already in place do we need to hire a new director if the WFD application is approved?

This opportunity is a Senior Demonstration program and should be operated as a separate program. Proposals will be evaluated on their ability to operate the program and meet the requirements outlined in the grant.

3.6 <mark>Updated 11/22:</mark> If our agency already has an AmeriCorps Seniors program (FGP, RSVP, SCP, and SDP) with AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers, can the volunteers participate in the WFD program, for example, be co-enrolled in both programs?

No, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers cannot be dually enrolled in both an AmeriCorps Seniors FGP, RSVP, SCP, or SDP programs and the WFD SDP program. It is encouraged for current grantees considering applying for the WFD program, to assess the availability to recruit additional volunteers who are seeking employment.

4. eGrants

4.1. How do I enter my authorized representative name in my application?

The authorized representative for your organization must login to eGrants with their own user account, click on the assurances and conditions, and submit the grant application. This will allow their name to show up as the authorized representative on the grant application.

4.2. I cannot complete the validate function for the performance measures. When I go to validate, it says that I must have a performance measure for all objectives. What am I doing wrong?

It is likely that you have checked an objective on the first Performance Measure screen and have not entered a work plan for that objective. Contact the National Service Hotline at 1-800-942-2677 or via webform if further assistance is needed.

4.3. What should be entered in the "Other" narrative section?

See section E.1.e Other- Evaluations Plan for full description of the Other Narrative criteria.

4.4. We intend to hire someone new for the project director position if the grant was awarded. Who should we enter as the project director in eGrants if that person is not yet hired?

You may enter another person who is currently at your organization, such as the person who would be the project director's supervisor. If the grant is awarded, the project director's name can be updated later in eGrants.

4.5. Our organization's headquarters is located separately from where the AmeriCorps Seniors WFD project office would be located. Which address should be listed as the project location address in eGrants?

Please see eGrants instructions on how to enter the organization headquarters address. When entering the project location (see the Grant Application Instructions), enter the project location address.

4.6. Are footnotes or endnotes allowed in the application narrative?

No. eGrants does not support the use of footnotes or endnotes.

4.7. Is there a specific font or font size that should be used for the narrative?

eGrants will format all font entered to a specific size. Font size cannot be altered in eGrants.

4.8. In order to estimate the length of my narratives, I am trying to set up my

Microsoft Word document to correspond exactly with the spacing and font size that eGrants uses for the printable version of an application. What spacing and font does the eGrants system use?

The eGrants system uses Georgia font, 11 point. The line spacing is 1.8, multiple. The header is 0.81" from the top, the footer is 0.24" from the bottom, the left indentation is 0.08", and the right indentation is 0.12".

4.9. **When I view the printable version of my application in eGrants, part of the service activity description is cut off by a page break and is not included on the following page. Will reviewers be able to see the full description?**

Yes. We will ensure that during the review there is a process for reviewers to view the entire description.

4.10. **I have been emailing my required documents to AmeriCorpsSeniros@cns.gov, but the documents section of my application in eGrants still shows 'not sent' next to each document. Why is this?**

You must manually update the document section of eGrants to indicate whether you have sent each document. It does not update automatically based on documents emailed.

4.11. **When I view the pdf of my application narratives, I see upside down question marks instead of the apostrophes and other special characters that I entered. How can I fix this?**

eGrants does not support the use of special characters. There is not a solution for this issue other than to type your narratives without special characters. Reviewers will be aware of this issue.

4.12. **Are tables allowed in the narratives section? If so, can the text within the tables be single- spaced?**

Tables are not permitted in the narrative section. eGrants only supports text.

5. Budget

5.1. **There are two sections to enter the Source of Matching Funds, one in Budget Section I and another in Budget Section II. Do I have to complete both?**

It depends on which sections contain your non-federal funds. If you include non-federal funds (grantee share) in the budget for both Budget Section I and Budget Section II, then you would complete the Source of Matching Funds in both Budget Section I and Budget Section II. If you only have non-federal funds in one of the budget sections, then you would only complete the Source of Matching Funds for the particular section where you budget your grantee share.

5.2. <mark>Updated 11/22:</mark> **The NOFO indicates that the funds provided will be for the entire three-year period of the grant award; the application instructions,**

while mentioning multi-year funding it's within the context of renewals and specifically mentions that awards will be made for a one-year period. How should our application note the 3 years of funding?

The NOFO states, applicants should include second- and third-year budget amounts in their budget application. Please include two-line items labeled "Requested Amount Year 2" and "Requested Amount Year 3" with the total amount to be requested for each of those years (without further breakout).

5.1. In the indirect cost budget section, if we enter our indirect costs in the grantee share column rather than the CNCS share column, do we still have to submit our indirect cost rate agreement?

No. Applicants are no longer required to submit an indirect cost rate agreement to AmeriCorps. Instead, they enter the details of the approved agreement in eGrants, following the instructions in the Application Instructions.

5.2. Please clarify how the "Excess Amount" category is to be used in calculating the budget.

The Excess column of the budget may be used to reflect the amount of non-federal cash and in-kind contributions generated by a sponsor in excess of the required percentage. An applicant is not required to utilize the excess column, but may do so if they choose. For instance, if project staff spend time on fundraising, the applicant may choose to reflect the amount of time spent on fundraising in the excess column as time spent on these activities cannot be paid for through CNCS funds or through non-federal funds that are part of the required non-federal share.

5.3. We do not yet have an approved negotiated indirect cost rate agreement but we hope to have one in the next few months. How should we handle this?

At the time the application is submitted, if an indirect cost rate agreement is not yet approved, the costs would have to be budgeted as direct costs. If the application is awarded and the indirect cost rate agreement is approved, an amendment could be done at a later time to adjust the budget for the new indirect cost rate agreement.

5.4. Can federal funds from other sources be used towards the non-federal match?

Federal funds from other federal agencies, in most cases, are not allowed to be used as match on AmeriCorps Seniors grant awards. However, some federal agencies may specifically designate that their federal funding is allowed to be used as match on another federal award, such an AmeriCorps Seniors grant award. The applicant is responsible for determining whether a federal agency may allow their funding to be used as match on an AmeriCorps award. All AmeriCorps awards must operate in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audits Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), which can be found on page 17 of the FGP/SCP Notice.

5.5. What is the length of time for the fiscal year or budget year for American AmeriCorps Seniors WFD?

The project and budget period is for thirty six months. Applicants will receive funding for three years upfront, to support programming. This means an application would not be needed for the second year of funding, however fiscal and programmatic reports would still be expected on regular cycle.

5.6. Where can I find a definition of allowable in-kind funding?

As stated in the Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR Part 200, third-party in-kind contributions means the value of non-cash contributions (i.e. property or services) that – (a) benefit a federally assisted project or program; and (b) are contributed by non-federal third parties, without charge, to a non-federal entity under a federal award.

5.7. Are dues for membership in the AmeriCorps Seniors Associations and other professional associations allowable as a grant cost? If so, how much do these dues typically cost?

Yes, under 2 CFR § 200.454, membership dues in professional associations are an allowable cost. AmeriCorps Seniors grantees can include membership dues for AmeriCorps Seniors and other professional associations in their grant budgets. They can be budgeted as AmeriCorps share and required grantee share, and as excess. Travel related with these associations can also be budgeted.

For typical cost of these dues, contact the professional association that you intend to join.

5.8. Can AmeriCorps Seniors WFD funds be used to hire a data manager?

Yes, AmeriCorps Seniors WFD funds may be used to help a sponsor provide levels of staffing and resources appropriate to accomplish the purposes of the project and carry out its project management responsibilities.

5.9. How do I know what volunteer insurance to include in the budget?

Information regarding volunteer insurance requirements and other reimbursable expenses are included in AmeriCorps Seniors' program specific regulations and while this funding is under Senior Demonstration, volunteer insurance is still required.
Volunteer insurance could be obtained through an organization such as CIMA: http://www.cimaworld.com/nonprofits/protecting- volunteers/ or another volunteer insurance provider.

- Stipend programs - Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) type of programs, please review the cost reimbursement section of the Federal Regulations at 45 CFR §2552.46

- Stipend programs - Senior Companion Program (SCP) grants, please review the cost reimbursement section of the Federal Regulations at 45 CFR §2551.46
- Non-stipend programs - RSVP of programs, please review the cost reimbursement section of the Federal Regulations at 45 CFR §2553.43

6. Required Documents

6.1. Our organization is a department within city government. Does the Operational and Financial Management Survey need to be completed as though it is for the entire city government or only for our department?

The Operational and Financial Management Survey (OFMS) should be completed for the entire city government.

7. Volunteers and Volunteer Stations

7.1. Is more than one volunteer station required?

There is no required number of volunteer stations. All AmeriCorps Seniors WFD projects are required to have least one operating volunteer station.

7.2. Can a volunteer station be included in more than one Performance Measure if there is more than one service activity occurring at the station?

Yes. Each Performance Measure is developed based on the service activities selected for an output or output/outcome pair, not based on one particular volunteer station. One volunteer station may have many service activities occurring there and so may appear in more than one Performance Measure.

7.3. Where can I find a list of station types for the station roster?

If your application is selected for funding, the station roster must be submitted no later than 6 months from award start date. Your application should be submitted in eGrants without the station roster section completed. It is required that at least one active volunteer station be listed on the station roster for each Geographic Service Area (GSA) list on the application.

7.4. Does 'unduplicated volunteers' mean that a program must recruit new and unique volunteers every year?

No. AmeriCorps Seniors encourages sponsors to make all efforts to retain volunteers.

7.5 Can volunteers from existing AmeriCorps Seniors grants (FGP, SCP and/or RSVP) also serve in an AmeriCorps Seniors WFD grant and be counted as unduplicated volunteers in both? For example: If we are a FGP grantee and we are a awarded an SDP grant that includes tutoring, can we have an existing FGP volunteer from our traditional program ALSO serve in the SDP grant for mentoring? If so, will that same volunteer be counted as unduplicated for each grant? Can that same volunteer get paid stipends for the separately tracked hours for the separate activities for each grant?

Volunteers who serve on both grants cannot be counted as unduplicated volunteers on both grants. The volunteer should be counted in the area where he/she will make the most impact in terms of the type of service or in terms of the scope of service, such as the most number of hours served.

Volunteers can be included the Total Volunteers section of performance measures.

Award grantees must insure they have proper tracking and documentation systems to ensure volunteers are being count as unduplicated volunteers once.

8. Performance Measures

8.1. What is a work plan?

The work plan is a part of the grant application used to show how the sponsoring organization's volunteers will serve in their communities and achieve specific results. The work plan contains one or more Performance Measures.

8.2. How frequently will I report on performance measures? How much time per month does it involve?

You will be required to submit a full progress report annually on your progress toward your targets. Additionally, you will report on outputs semi-annually.

As stated in the Notice, recipients are required to provide bi-annual progress reports and bi-annual financial and narrative progress reports through eGrants. The time varies per grantee based on their internal recordkeeping. On average, AmeriCorps Seniors expects a burden of about 4 hours per report.

8.3. How does an applicant determine the Primary Focus Area?

The Primary Focus Area should be selected to align with the overall purpose of the grant proposal. See Appendix II: Performance Measures for list of focus areas.

8.4. What is the difference between the Focus Areas and the funding priorities?

The Focus Areas are specific avenues in which volunteers of AmeriCorps Seniors can make an impact based on legislative statue for the AmeriCorps Seniors programs. Funding Priorities are social issues of specific interest to AmeriCorps Seniors.

9.   Other

9.1.   Is there a contact person that I can send questions to about this competition?

All questions for this competition must be sent to AmeriCorpsSeniors@cns.gov. Although there is not a contact person for one- on-one technical assistance, questions submitted to this inbox will receive responses through this FAQ document.

9.2.   If an organization submits an application for this opportunity, is it obligated to remain in the opportunity until its completion, or can it withdraw its application at any time during the competition?

An organization may withdraw its application by sending an email as soon as possible to AmeriCorpsSeniors@cns.gov any time after grant application submission.

9.3.   I would like to request information about the proposal in Spanish.

Please submit a request to AmeriCorpsSeniors@cns.gov for any material you wish provided in Spanish.