



Notice of Funding Opportunity & Application Instructions  
**AMERICORPS MARYLAND FORMULA PLANNING  
GRANTS**  
2026-2027

All applications and required additional documents must be received [via the application portal](#) **no later than 11:59 pm May 5th, 2026.**

**Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for funding.**

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## NOTICE

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|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>COMMISSION NAME:</b>           | Maryland Department of Service and Civic Innovation                 |
| <b>FEDERAL AGENCY:</b>            | AmeriCorps  |
| <b>FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TYPES:</b> | Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 AmeriCorps State and National Planning Grants |
| <b>CFDA NUMBER:</b>               | 94.006  |

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**Summary Statement:** This is a funding opportunity for Institutions of higher education, local governments, school districts, nonprofit organizations, State Service Commissions, States and US Territories, Indian Tribes, and public health departments to apply for planning grants.

A planning grant provides financial support to organizations seeking to develop a new AmeriCorps program that will place AmeriCorps members solely within Maryland. Planning grant funds may not be used to enroll, support, or place AmeriCorps members, and no member service activities may occur during the planning period.

Applications will propose developing a new AmeriCorps program that includes a Member-focused career pathway that intentionally embeds workforce attributes into a service term. Those attributes might include building in career exploration, career coaching, work-based learning, durable and technical skills training, and credential or certification attainment as part of their service, and providing career transition support at the end of service. Priority will be given to organizations seeking to focus on developing Member-directed programming, refocusing existing staff, training that increases competency in areas associated with designing and implementing a workforce development program, and/or enabling career development pathways.

Applicants may request up to **\$240,000** in AmeriCorps share and are expected to provide matching funds.

### Applicants must:

- Propose a program that will operate within Maryland.
- Propose a program design equivalent to at least 10 Members that will scale to 20 members over the course of three years.
- Propose a design change that would qualify as a different project than efforts currently, as outlined in [§ 2522.340](#)
- Have a valid SAM registration and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI);
- Submit all required application components by the deadline.

### Important Dates

- Applications are due no later than **May 5th, 2026**, by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time.
- Successful applicants should be notified by **early June 2026**.
- Planning grant period is July 15, 2026- January 15, 2027.

**Disclosure:** Publication of this Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (Notice or NOFO) does not obligate AmeriCorps State and National (ASN) or the Maryland Department of Service and Civic Innovation (DSCI) to award any specific number of grants or to commit any amount of funding. The



actual amount, timing, and process of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

These application instructions conform to the Corporation for National and Community Service's requirements. All competitive funding announcements by the Corporation for National and Community Service, dba as AmeriCorps, are posted on [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov) and [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

**Public Burden Statement:** The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 80 hours per submission, including reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the required data, and completing the form. Comments on the burden or content of this instrument may be sent to AmeriCorps, Attn: Arminda Pappas, 250 E Street, SW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20525.

AmeriCorps informs people who may respond to this collection of information that they are not required to respond unless the OMB control number and expiration date displayed on page one are current and valid. (See 5 CFR 1320.5(b)(2)(i).)

**Privacy Act Notice:** The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C § 552a) requires that the following notice be provided to you: The information requested on the AmeriCorps Application Instructions is collected pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§ 12581 - 12585 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended, and 42 U.S.C. § 4953 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 as amended. Purposes and Uses - The information requested is collected for the purposes of reviewing grant applications and granting funding requests. Routine Uses - Routine uses may include disclosure of information to federal, state, or local agencies in response to lawfully authorized requests. In some programs, the information may also be provided to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to determine whether any prior criminal convictions exist. The information may also be provided to appropriate federal agencies and Department contractors that need to know the information for the purpose of assisting the Department's efforts to respond to a suspected or confirmed breach of the security or confidentiality of information maintained in this system of records, and the information disclosed is relevant and unnecessary for the assistance. Please see the Notice of Funding Opportunity for AmeriCorps' transparency information on grantmaking. The information will not otherwise be disclosed to entities outside of AmeriCorps without prior written permission. Effects of Nondisclosure: The requested information is mandatory for receiving benefits.

**Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act:** Grant recipients will be required to report at [www.FRS.gov](http://www.FRS.gov) on all subawards that equal or exceed \$30,000 and may be required to report on executive compensation for recipients and subrecipients. Recipients must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 CFR Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

**Indirect Cost Rates:** AmeriCorps allows applicants to include indirect costs in application budgets. Based on qualifying factors, applicants have the option of using the AmeriCorps-Fixed Percentage method (five/ten percent fixed administrative cost option), a federally approved indirect cost rate, a 15% de minimis rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly as outlined in 2 CFR § 200.413 Direct costs. Applicants who hold a federally negotiated indirect cost rate must use that rate if available, or use the 15% de minimis rate. Refer to: AmeriCorps Indirect Cost Rate (IDCR) User Instructions.

**Universal Identifier:** Applicants must include a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Applicants must obtain their UEI and register their entity through the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid SAM.gov registration, which must be renewed annually.

# The Maryland Governor’s Office on Service and Volunteerism (DSCI) Rights and Disclaimer

## **Interpretive Conventions**

Whenever the terms “shall,” “must,” “will,” or “is required” are used in these instructions in conjunction with a specification or performance requirement, the specification or requirement is mandatory. Failure to address or meet any mandatory requirement in a proposal may be cause for the DSCI’s rejection of an application.

Whenever the terms “can,” “may,” “should,” or “recommended” are used in these instructions in conjunction with a specification or performance requirement, the specification or requirement is desirable, but not mandatory. Accordingly, failure to address or provide any items so referred to will not be the cause for rejection of the proposal, but could result in a less favorable evaluation.

## **Cancellation/Partial Award/Non-Award**

Publication of these instructions does not obligate DSCI to award any specific number of grants. DSCI reserves the right to cancel this funding opportunity, to make a partial award, or to make no award if it determines that such action is in the best interest of the State of Maryland.

## **Right to Reject Proposals or Portions of Proposals**

DSCI may, in its discretion, reject any proposals or portions thereof.

## Application Requirements

SAM registration must be renewed annually. DSCI requires that applicants finalize a new registration or renew an existing one at least three weeks before the application deadline to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and physical address on all AmeriCorps grant applications. The legal applicant's name and physical address in the grant system must match exactly the applicant's SAM-registered information.

Applications must include a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), which is generated during the SAM registration process. AmeriCorps will not make awards to entities that do not have a valid SAM registration and Unique Entity Identifier. Applications must also include an Employer Identification Number (EIN). The organization's Grantee Administrator must enter the UEI and EIN as an organization attribute, which will apply this information to all applications for the organization.

This Notice and Application Instructions should be read together with the [AmeriCorps Regulations](#), Application Instructions, Performance Measure Instructions, and Mandatory Supplemental Information. *45 CFR 2520 – 2550*

### Ways to Request an Application Package

All information from this funding opportunity is available at [serve.maryland.gov](http://serve.maryland.gov). Applicants can also email [govs.md@maryland.gov](mailto:govs.md@maryland.gov) to request a printed copy of the Notice, Guidance, and Application Instructions.

### Late Submissions

All applications received after the submission deadline are considered late. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. To request consideration of a late application due to extenuating circumstances, an organization must:

- Submit a written explanation or justification of the extenuating circumstance(s) that caused the delay, including:
  - Timing and specific cause(s) of the delay;
  - Ticket number if a request for assistance was submitted to the AmeriCorps Hotline;
  - Information provided to the applicant by the AmeriCorps Hotline; and
  - Other documentation or evidence that supports the justification.
- Ensure that the GOSV receives the written explanation and any other relevant evidence via email to [govs.md@maryland.gov](mailto:govs.md@maryland.gov) no later than 24 hours after the application deadline.

Communication with DSCI staff, including an applicant's Portfolio Officer or the GOSV's general mailbox ([govs.md@maryland.gov](mailto:govs.md@maryland.gov)), is not a substitute for a written explanation. Applicants are required to continue working in the web-based system and with the AmeriCorps Hotline to submit the application.

## I. AmeriCorps Program Description

### Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding



AmeriCorps improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps members serve with organizations that address critical community needs, including education, economic opportunity, disaster response, environmental stewardship, public health, and support for veterans and military families. AmeriCorps State grants are awarded to eligible organizations to plan evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions that strengthen communities.

## Maryland Department of Service and Civic Innovation: Who We Are

The mission of Maryland’s Department of Service and Civic Innovation (DSCI) is to mobilize Marylanders to drive community impact, build meaningful careers, and forge stronger bonds across differences through service. The Maryland Governor’s Office on Service and Volunteerism (GOSV) at DSCI advances this mission by providing grants, leadership, resources, and strategic guidance to support programs that address critical local needs in areas like education, economic opportunity, and capacity building.

## Funding Priorities

### AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

For this funding opportunity, AmeriCorps has set the priorities below for consideration

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <p><b>Serve Communities:</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Serve communities with concentrated poverty, rural communities, and tribal communities.</li> <li>● Implement programs to expand access to high-quality youth mental health and substance use recovery services, and prepare AmeriCorps members to enter behavioral health careers. These may include individuals who have experienced substance use and mental health challenges to support youth mental health efforts and continued AmeriCorps work on the opioid epidemic.</li> <li>● Focus on improving the quality of life for veterans, active-duty members of the Armed Forces, and their families through models that provide effective interventions or services or that are designed to recruit veterans, military spouses, and their older children into national service, e.g., veterans serving in mentorship roles.</li> <li>● Focus on public safety, crime prevention, and/or partnerships between law enforcement and the community.</li> <li>● Focus on expanding outdoor recreation opportunities for future generations by maintaining public lands, supporting wildland fire mitigation and sustainable forest management, and providing reforestation services.</li> <li>● Create workforce pathways for AmeriCorps members, including deliberate training, such as pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities, certifications, and hiring preferences or support;</li> <li>● Focus on strengthening families, e.g., activities that support low-income parents through parenting education, responsible parenting, and healthy relationship skills.</li> </ul> |
|----------------------------------|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Benefit AmeriCorps Members:</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enhanced member experience by providing opportunities for skill attainment, personal growth, and connection to the community they are serving in support of a lifetime of civic participation. e.g., paying more than the minimum living allowance, transportation, housing, food, etc.;</li> <li>● Enhance and expand services to formerly incarcerated and at-risk youth and/or engage those youth as AmeriCorps members;</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Use Evidence:</b></p>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Utilize reports from the <a href="#">AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange</a> on programs assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence to scale, replicate, or adapt the intervention.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Faith-Based</b></p>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Faith-based organizations.</li> </ul>  |

### Maryland State Strategic Priorities

AmeriCorps Maryland Planning Grant applicants will propose programs that align with the following Maryland strategic priorities:

For the 2025–2026 Planning Grant cycle, DSCI will prioritize applicants that:

- Build service-to-career pathways that create structured pipelines from national service to employment, credential attainment, and long-term career advancement in high-demand industries across Maryland.
- Strengthen partnerships across sectors to expand cross-system collaboration among nonprofits, government agencies, educational institutions, and employers, thereby connecting member development opportunities and sustainable community impact.
- Build public health programming that targets young Marylanders’ capacity to access critical mental health resources and creates career pathways to help address the national shortage of mental health professionals.

Applicants should demonstrate how their proposed AmeriCorps program will achieve measurable outcomes that align with these state priorities and address documented community needs.

## III. Who Can Apply

### Eligible Applicants

The following Non-Federal organizations are eligible to apply:

- American Indian or Indigenous American Tribes;
- Institutions of higher education;
- Local governments, including school districts
- Nonprofit organizations

*In addition to Indian Tribes as defined in 2 CFR 200.1, Tribal organizations that are controlled, authorized, or chartered by Federally recognized Indian Tribes are also eligible to apply. If an entity applies for an award as a tribal organization that is controlled or chartered by one or more Indian Tribes [and the organization does not meet any of the other applicant eligibility types], the organization must provide copies or links to documentation that demonstrates that the organization is controlled or chartered by a federally recognized Indian Tribe. If an entity applies as an organization authorized by a federally recognized Tribe, or multiple specific federally recognized tribes, it must submit a resolution or other authorization adopted by the Tribal Council (or comparable tribal governing body) of each Indian Tribe. The authorization(s) must identify the entity applying for an AmeriCorps award by name as a tribal organization that is authorized by the Indian Tribe(s) for the purpose of applying for AmeriCorps funding (or federal grant funds generally).*

*Federally recognized Indian Tribes will also be eligible to apply for operating or planning grants under a separate Notice of Funding Opportunity for Indian Tribes at the [AmeriCorps.gov Funding Opportunities webpage](https://www.americorps.gov/funding-opportunities), with an application deadline in the spring.*

**Applicants must have [a valid SAM registration and Unique Entity Identifier](#) to receive an award.**

**Organizations that have unpaid federal tax liabilities, are debarred, or are described in 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code and lobby are not eligible.**

## **IV. Funding Information**

### **ESTIMATED AVAILABLE FUNDS**

Applicants should note that all funding decisions are contingent upon the availability of AmeriCorps funds. Requested award amounts may be reduced or adjusted based on available funds.

### **ESTIMATED AWARD AMOUNT**

Award amounts will vary depending on the scope of the projects.

### **PROJECT AND AWARD PERIOD**

Planning Grants will provide awards of up to **\$240,000** in AmeriCorps share for a planning period of up to six (6) months. The anticipated project start date is **July 15, 2026**, and the project end date is **January 15, 2027**.

### **Match Requirement**

Applicants are required to match funds provided by AmeriCorps. The applicant's match can be non-AmeriCorps cash and/or in-kind contributions. Applicants must demonstrate they can meet the match requirement when they submit their application. Applicants must say in their application if they have already secured the match funding.

Applicants are required to match at **24%** of the total project cost.

Example: If requesting \$100,000 AmeriCorps share: Minimum grantee share required = \$31,579

Formula: AmeriCorps Share ÷ (1 – .24) – AmeriCorps Share

Match may be cash, in-kind, state/local/private funds. Programs are allowed to use other allowable federal, state or local funding sources that can count toward the match. 121(e)(5) of NCSA (42 USC 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 Maryland Governor’s Office on Service and Volunteerism on an AmeriCorps Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout.

Programs that are unable to meet the match may submit a match waiver. Match waivers may be requested via the Additional Documents section of the grant portal.

## What We Do Not Fund

AmeriCorps funds cannot be used to fund the following program activities:

- Religious use. AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to provide religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in any form of proselytization.
- Political activity. AmeriCorps assistance may not be used by program participants or staff to assist, promote, or deter union organizing; or finance, directly or indirectly, any activity designed to influence the outcome of a Federal, State, or local election to public office.
- Contracts or collective bargaining agreements. AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.

**Prohibited Activities** – [Full text found here.](#)

## V. Application and Submission Information

Applications must be submitted electronically through the grant portal.

### Application Components

Complete applications must include the following elements:

- Cover Page
- Narrative Sections:
  - Executive Summary;
  - Program Design;
  - Organizational Capability;
  - Cost-Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy;
- Logic Model.
- Project Budget
- Required Additional Documents

## VI. Required Additional Documents

Your application might not receive funding if you do not upload your documents to the grant portal by the application deadline or if you do not label them correctly.

The following Additional Documents must be uploaded in the grant portal by the Notice's deadline.

**\*\*Please do not send multiple documents in one combined file, and do not send a single document in multiple files.\*\***

The file size limit is 10 MB. This limit is inclusive of all attachments associated with each submission. Individual files larger than 10 MB will not be received or reviewed.

*Do not submit any items that are not requested in this Notice or Application Instructions. AmeriCorps will not review or return them.*

**Unless otherwise noted, templates for the following supporting documents are available on the DSCI website at [serve.maryland.gov](http://serve.maryland.gov)**

| Audience       | Item  | Status   |
|----------------|---|--|
| All Applicants | 1. <b>Certificate of Good Standing.</b> Applicants must upload a PDF of their <a href="#">Certificate of Good Standing</a> from <a href="#">the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation</a> . <sup>1</sup>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted                                 |
|                | 2. <b>Federally approved indirect cost rate agreement,</b> if used to claim indirect/administrative costs. Applicants applying directly to AmeriCorps that include a state- or federally approved indirect cost rate amount in their budget, or use a de minimis rate, must enter the current approved indirect cost rate agreement information into the application portal at the same time they submit their application, and must submit the approved indirect cost rate agreement via the application portal. See Indirect Cost Rate User Instructions. | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
|                | 3. <b>Federal debt delinquency and federal debarment certification.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted                                 |
|                | 4. <b>Financial Documentation.</b> Most recent audit or independent financial statement with management letter (single audit if organization spends \$750,000 or more of federal assistance).   | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted                                 |
|                | 5. Non-Profits only: A copy of the Form 990 that was most recently filed as of the date of the submission.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
|                | 6. <b>State Support and Oversight Fee Calculator.</b> The document must be submitted as a PDF document.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
|                | 7. <b>Match Waiver (if applicable).</b> See Appendix F.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

If any of this required information is missing, the applicant may not receive credit for meeting their application requirements.

## VII. Review & Selection Process

Each applicant must describe their approach to building a workforce development or career pathway program for service members.

Applications must have a well-designed plan with clear justification for the requested funds. Reviewers will assess the quality of applications by using the selection criteria described below and will rate them accordingly.

<sup>1</sup> If an entity (business) is not in good standing with SDA the applicant must notify [govs.md@maryland.gov](mailto:govs.md@maryland.gov) and resolve all issues before purchasing a certificate.

Awards will be subject to review by one or more AmeriCorps senior officials or their designees, in accordance with the process described in [Executive Order 14332, “Improving Oversight of Federal Grantmaking.”](#)

DSCI will conduct:

- Compliance review
- Eligibility screening
- Risk assessment

DSCI reserves the right to:

- Make partial awards
- Fund at levels different from those requested
- Not make awards

## VIII. Selection Criteria

Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

| Categories/Subcategories                      | Percentage |
|---|------------|
| <b>Executive Summary</b>                      | <b>0</b>   |
| <b>Program Design</b>                         | <b>50</b>  |
| • <b>Community and Logic Model</b>            | <b>35</b>  |
| • <b>Notice Priority</b>                      | <b>15</b>  |
| <b>Organizational Capability</b>              | <b>25</b>  |
| <b>Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy</b> | <b>25</b>  |

## V. Application Review Criteria

Applications will be scored as follows:

### Program Design (50%)

Applicants must:

Propose an AmeriCorps program that addresses a compelling community need and offers workforce development components or a career pathway for members. The planning grant period should be used to explore curriculum, partnerships, and technology that would enable these programmatic components.

### Organizational Capability (25%)

Applicants must:

- Describe mission alignment.
- Outline staff structure and training that enables workforce development/career pathway program.
- Demonstrate state or federal grant management experience;
- Indicate audit status.

### Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25%)

Budget must:

- Be compliant with 2 CFR 200.
- Be sufficient for planning activities;
- Include required training travel costs.
- Include DSCI oversight fee.

## Selection for funding

The review and selection process are designed to:

- Identify how well eligible applications align with the application selection criteria.
- Build a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
  - Maryland State Funding Priorities
  - Meaningful representation of:
    - rural communities (see definition in Mandatory Supplemental Information)
    - innovative community strategies

AmeriCorps and DSCI reserve the right to adjust or change the review process if unforeseen circumstances make it impossible, impractical, or inefficient to execute it as planned.

AmeriCorps and DSCI reserves the right to refocus program dollars under this Notice in the event of disaster or other compelling needs.

An applicant who is denied any portion of funding may request reconsideration of the funding decision within 5 business days of receiving notice of the denial. Reconsideration will only be granted if there is a clear and substantial error. Any reconsideration of denied applications is entirely subject to the DSCI's discretion.

## Award Notification

Applicants will be notified of funding decisions via email. Notification will be sent to the following individuals listed in the application form: Legal Authorized Signatory, Primary Program Contact, Primary Fiscal Contact, and Pre-Award or Grant Manager Contact.

The Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) issued by DSCI is the only authorization to begin grant activities.

## APPLICANT RESOLUTION

After the application review process, before any grant awards are issued, DSCI or AmeriCorps may request additional information from an applicant to address any compliance or risk issues in the application. If the applicant does not respond promptly to these requests, then the applicant may be denied funding.

## TRANSPARENCY IN GRANTMAKING

AmeriCorps is committed to transparency in grant-making. A list of all approved applications for new and re-competing applications will be published on the AmeriCorps Funded Grants & [serve.maryland.gov](https://serve.maryland.gov) within 90 business days after all grants are awarded.

Further information about funded grants and subgrants is also available in USASpending.gov.

## IX. Federal Award Administration

### ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

#### 1. Uniform Guidance

All awards under this Notice must comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, as outlined in [2 CFR Parts 200](#) and [2205](#).

#### 2. Requests for Monitoring or Payment Integrity Information

AmeriCorps will request information from grantees to ensure compliance with legal requirements, including the [Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019](#). If grantees do not respond promptly to these requests, their funds may be placed on manual hold, in reimbursement-only status, or subject to other restrictions, as appropriate.

In addition, DSCI and AmeriCorps may, in appropriate circumstances, consider any prior failures to make timely responses when making funding decisions.

#### 3. AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions

All grants must follow the FY 2024 AmeriCorps General Terms and Conditions, the 2024 Program-Specific Terms and Conditions, and the 2026 DSCI Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions contain mandatory compliance and reporting requirements; applicants should review them before any Notice of Grant Award is issued. Current versions of the AmeriCorps General and Program-Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs are available on the AmeriCorps Manage Your Grant webpage.

## USE OF MATERIALS

To ensure that materials generated with AmeriCorps funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, AmeriCorps 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 per [2 CFR §200.315](#).

## Important Notices

All funding announcements by AmeriCorps (ASN) are posted on [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov) and [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). All funding announcements by the DSCI are posted on [serve.maryland.gov](http://serve.maryland.gov).

### Public Burden Statement:

Public reporting burden for the collection of information under this Notice of Funding is estimated to average 6 hours per submission, including reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining required data, and completing the application form. AmeriCorps informs people who may respond to this Notice of Funding that they are not required to respond unless the OMB control number and expiration date displayed on page one are current and valid. (see 5 CFR 1320.5(b)(2)(i)). This collection is approved under OMB Control #: 3045-0047, Application Instructions, State and National Competitive, New and Continuation, Expiration Date: September 30, 2026.

### Privacy Act Notice:

The Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. §552a, requires that the following notice be provided to applicants: The information requested on the AmeriCorps Application Instructions is collected pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§12592 and 12615 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, and 42 U.S.C. §4953 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended.

### Purposes and uses

The requested information is collected to review grant applications and fund requests. Routine uses may include disclosure of information to federal, state, or local agencies in response to lawfully authorized requests.

### Effects of Nondisclosure

The information requested is voluntary; however, to be a recipient of this grant program, disclosure of personal or sensitive information is required to receive benefits.

### Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act:

Grant recipients will be required to report at [www.FSRS.gov](http://www.FSRS.gov) on all subawards over \$30,000 and may be required to report on executive compensation for recipients and subrecipients. Recipients must have



the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 CFR Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

## XI. Other Information

### Technical Assistance

DSCI will host a technical assistance call to answer questions about the funding opportunity. Current grantees will be invited to these calls via Basecamp and/or email. Please visit DSCI's website for additional resources: [serve.maryland.gov](http://serve.maryland.gov)

## X. Contact Information

For questions regarding AmeriCorps Maryland Planning Grants:

**Maryland Department of Service and Civic Innovation**

AmeriCorps Maryland  
[govs.md@maryland.gov](mailto:govs.md@maryland.gov)

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*Produced and published at US taxpayer expense*



## Application Instructions

# **AMERICORPS PLANNING GRANTS**

**2026-2027**

All applications and required additional documents must be received **no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on May 5th, 2026.**

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

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## Application and Submission Information

Please use these application instructions if you are a new or recompeting applicant to AmeriCorps. If you are submitting a request for continuation to AmeriCorps, please see the Continuation Instructions in this document.

Use these instructions in conjunction with the Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity (Notice) and the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550. The AmeriCorps regulations include pertinent information (see Table 1, below). The Notice can be found on the website.

[See the full regulations online.](#)

## Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

| Topics                                   | Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations |
|--|--|
| Member Service Activities                | <a href="#">§2520.20 - §2520.55</a>    |
| Prohibited Activities                    | <a href="#">§2520.65</a>               |
| Tutoring Programs                        | §2522.900-2522.950                     |
| Matching Funds                           | §2521.35-2521.90                       |
| Performance Measures                     | §2522.500-2522.650                     |
| Selection Criteria and Selection Process | §2522.400-2522.475                     |

If there is any inconsistency between the AmeriCorps Regulations, the *Notice*, and the Application Instructions, the order of precedence is as follows:

1. AmeriCorps Regulations [45 CFR §§ 2520–2550](#) take precedence over the
2. *Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity/Notice of Federal Funding Availability*, which takes precedence over the
3. Application Instructions.

### Narrative Instructions

The narrative is a required part of the AmeriCorps application. It is your opportunity to convey in writing important elements that demonstrate both the need for your program and your organization's readiness.

For planning grants, the narrative is different from what will be required in the operational NOFO.

To create the narrative, applicants must use the provided template outlined below. Respond to each of the following in the order in which the item is presented. Before submitting, make sure to remove any instructions or criteria.

## Narrative Template

### A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (Required - 0 percent)

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. Do not deviate from the template below.

The [Name of the organization] proposes a planning grant to focus on the following program elements: (describe program elements). The proposed program will serve [the location(s) the AmeriCorps program will serve]. 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.

### B. PROGRAM DESIGN (50 PERCENT)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the following criteria below.

1. Describe the need within your current program design to further support workforce development of AmeriCorps Members
2. Describe your plan to use this planning grant period to build out workforce development or career pathway opportunities for members. Include the activities, systems, and/or framework you will develop with the planning grant to support AmeriCorps Members in gaining skills and preparing for employment after their term of service ends
3. Describe target demographic of members receiving these future support activities.
4. Describe how this planning grant will propose a shift in project design that is meaningfully different from your existing program. In a single paragraph, summarize the proposed changes and how it meets one or more of the eligibility criteria for a different project (listed below):
  - a. The objectives and priorities of the projects;
  - b. The nature of the services provided;
  - c. The program staff, participants, and volunteers involved;
  - d. The geographic locations in which the services are provided;
  - e. The populations served; and
  - f. The proposed community partnerships.
5. Describe a clear and logical planning process, including a detailed description of the planning activities and which staff are leading them.

The planning grant period should be used to explore curriculum, partnerships, and technology that would enable new programmatic components. Examples of activities that could take place during this planning grant include, but are not limited to:

- Attend a conference or training on workforce development or career pathways.
- Develop member profile—who would be participating in this program element? Where are they from? What are their goals? What is their education/work background?
- Develop a member training plan that outlines opportunities for skill attainment, credential/credit attainment, career exploration, and/or networking.
- Establish partnerships with local institutions to secure credit/credentialing opportunities for members.
- Develop a plan for member career coaching and support. This could be done locally or in partnership with a provider.
- Develop recruitment and retention goals and plans for years 1-3.

#### C. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY (25 PERCENT)

*Applicant must respond with a narrative to the following criteria.*

- Describe the organization's plan to hire or transition staff to support the planning grant. Identify the primary program and primary fiscal contacts for the planning grant application, including secondary contacts if applicable. Indicate if primary contacts would be new hires to the organization or existing staff.
- Describe the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan the proposed program.
- Describe the organization's history, if any, with state or federal grants within the last seven years.
- Describe plans to engage community members and partner organizations in the planning process.

#### D. COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (25 PERCENT)

*Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the questions below in the actual budget that will be submitted in the application portal.*

- How will the applicant use data to ensure that the new program meets the needs of members and the demands of the workforce?
- The applicant provides a description of budget expenses that support data collection, continuous improvement activities, and evaluation.

#### LOGIC MODEL INSTRUCTIONS

The logic model is a required part of the AmeriCorps application. It is a visual representation of your AmeriCorps program design.

The following information outlines the categories in which text must be entered for the logic model module.

For the purpose of the AmeriCorps planning grant, we have provided the exact information you must enter, so all you must do is copy and paste what you see below into the appropriate column. However, you must read through the information in each column from left to right so your organization has a clear understanding of what will be required during your planning grant period, if you are chosen for funding.

**There are two column categories on which you need to complete information that is specific to your planning grant proposal which is highlighted in yellow – the “problem” and “inputs” columns.**

## Requirements

| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Problem</b></p>                          | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Inputs</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">What we invest (including # and type of AmeriCorps Slots)</p>   |
|--|---|
| <p>INSERT PROBLEM you hope the future AmeriCorps program will address.</p> | <p>INSERT STAFF who will support the planning of this AmeriCorps program and have responsibility for managing and reporting on the planning grant.</p> <p>INSERT OTHER STAKEHOLDERS that will play a role in helping to plan and implement the program, i.e., community partners</p> <p>INSERT MATCH FUNDING – Cash or In Kind</p> <p>INSERT ANY OTHER RESOURCES that you will use to help support the planning of the program.</p> |

## Budget Instructions

Applicants must submit a complete and mathematically accurate budget using the required Maryland budget narrative template.

The budget must:

- Request no more than **\$240,000** in AmeriCorps share.
- Include a required **24% match** of total project costs.
- Include only costs that are allowable, reasonable, and allocable in accordance with **2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Guidance)**.
- Provide itemized calculations for each line item (no lump sums, miscellaneous, or contingency amounts).
- Exclude unallowable expenses, including entertainment and gifts.
- Exclude fractional amounts (no cents).

Applicants must include:

- Current approved indirect cost rate, if applicable.
- All non-AmeriCorps funding is necessary to support the project.

- Match source(s), amount, type (cash or in-kind), funding classification (Private, State/Local, or Federal), and whether secured or proposed.

The total match reported must equal exactly the Grantee Share reflected in the budget and Executive Summary.

Planning Grant budgets may include **planning activities only** for the approved project period.

## Budget Categories

### A. Section I – Program Operating Costs

#### 1. Personnel

- List each staff position separately with salary and percentage of FTE devoted to the grant.
- Budgeted positions must align with the application narrative.
- 

Direct service performed by volunteers may not be included as a match.

#### 2. Fringe Benefits

- Identify fringe categories and provide calculation methodology.
- Fringe exceeding 30% must be itemized and justified.
- Leave and holidays must be included in salary, not fringe.

#### 3. Staff Travel

- Provide purpose and itemized calculations (mileage, per diem, lodging, etc.).
- Reimbursement rates may not exceed federal rates unless justified.
- Only domestic travel is allowable.

Required travel must include:

- Commission-sponsored trainings (1–2 staff; no overnight stay).
- Minimum **\$1,500** for one staff member to attend the America’s Service Commission National Service Training Conference.

#### 4. Supplies

- Include consumable supplies only.
- Itemize any single item costing \$1,000 or more.

#### 5. Contractual and Consultant Services

- Include allowable consultant costs related to planning activities.

#### 6. Other Operating Costs

##### State Support and Oversight Fee

State Support and Oversight Fee. The State Support and Oversight Fee will be used to support commission staff time spent on providing necessary training and technical assistance, and risk-based oversight to subrecipients, along with training and other support costs for the portfolio. The fee structure has been updated for 2026-2027 and will be based on 2% of 98% of Section I and Section II costs, not including the State Support and Oversight Fee itself. These costs must be budgeted for in the CNCS share. The fee amount is determined based on the total costs in Section I before the fee is added to Section I:

$$([\text{CNCS Share Section I}] + [\text{CNCS Share Section II}]) \times (2\%) \times (98\%) = \text{State Support and Oversight Fee}$$

After the fee is calculated, the CNCS Share Section I will increase by the amount of the State Support and Oversight Fee. MD GOSV will not collect administrative costs in Section III.

#### C. Section III – Administrative / Indirect Costs

Administrative costs may not exceed **5% of the CNCS share actually expended**

Applicants must use one of the following methods:

1. CNCS Fixed Percentage Method
2. State or Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate (required if one exists)
3. 10% De Minimis Rate (if eligible under 2 CFR 200.414(f))

Applicants using an approved rate or de minimis rate must enter the required rate information in the application portal.

Administrative costs must comply with 2 CFR Part 200 and applicable AmeriCorps regulations. Costs directly attributable to the project must not be included as indirect costs.

#### Match Requirements

Planning Grants require a **24% match of total project costs**.

Match may include federal (non-AmeriCorps), state, local, private, or other allowable funds consistent with AmeriCorps regulations.

If using other federal funds as a match:

- Ensure compliance with both funding sources.
- Report the amount and source in the required AmeriCorps financial reporting.

In the “Source of Funds” section, applicants must:

- Identify each source separately.
- Indicate secured or proposed status.
- Identify cash or in-kind classification.
- Identify funding type (Private, State/Local, Federal).

Total match must equal exactly the Grantee Share in the budget and Executive Summary.

## **Required Additional Documents**

Your application might not receive funding if you do not upload your documents to the grant portal by the application deadline or if you do not label them correctly.

The following Additional Documents must be uploaded in the grant portal by the Notice’s deadline.

**\*\*Please do not send multiple documents in one combined file, and do not send a single document in multiple files.\*\***

The file size limit is 10 MB. This limit is inclusive of all attachments associated with each submission. Individual files larger than 10 MB will not be received or reviewed.

*Do not submit any items that are not requested in this Notice or Application Instructions. AmeriCorps Maryland will not review or return them.*

**Unless otherwise noted, templates for the following supporting documents are available on the DSCI website at [serve.maryland.gov](http://serve.maryland.gov)**

| <u>Audience</u> | <u>Item</u>   | <u>Status</u>  |
|-----------------|---|--|
| All Applicants  | 1. <b>Certificate of Good Standing.</b> Applicants must upload a PDF of their <a href="#">Certificate of Good Standing</a> from <a href="#">the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation</a> . <sup>2</sup>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted                                 |
|                 | 2. <b>Federally approved indirect cost rate agreement,</b> if used to claim indirect/administrative costs. Applicants applying directly to AmeriCorps that include a state- or federally approved indirect cost rate amount in their budget, or use a de minimis rate, must enter the current approved indirect cost rate agreement information into the application portal at the same time they submit their application, and must submit the approved indirect cost rate agreement via the application portal. See Indirect Cost Rate User Instructions. | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
|                 | 3. <b>Federal debt delinquency and federal debarment certification.</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted                                 |
|                 | 4. <b>Financial Documentation.</b> Most recent audit or independent financial statement with management letter (single audit if organization spends \$750,000 or more of federal assistance).   | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted                                 |
|                 | 5. <b>Non-Profits only: A copy of the Form 990</b> that was most recently filed as of the date of the submission.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
|                 | 6. <b>State Support and Oversight Fee Calculator.</b> The document must be submitted as a PDF document.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
|                 | 7. <b>Match Waiver (if applicable).</b> See Appendix F.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted<br><input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

If any of this required information is missing, the applicant may not receive credit for meeting their application requirements.

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<sup>2</sup> If an entity (business) is not in good standing with SDA the applicant must notify [govs.md@maryland.gov](mailto:govs.md@maryland.gov) and resolve all issues before purchasing a certificate.