



NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)

OPERATING PARTNER APPLICATION

Maryland Department of Service and Civic Innovation (DSCI)

Section 1: Authority and Purpose

This NOFO is issued by the Maryland Department of Service and Civic Innovation (DSCI) for the award of supplemental grants through a competitive process under the authority of the Maryland Corps/Service Year Option Program (Program) authorized in Subtitle 2 of Title 21 of the Maryland State Government Code. DSCI seeks operating partners (Operating Partners) to serve as workforce intermediaries and program administrative partners to help DSCI scale the Program in high-demand industries, such as, but not limited to, healthcare, education, youth mental health, public safety, and technology/AI, by managing substantial member cohorts and providing additional support services. Target enrollment for the 2026-27 Program year is 1,200 members, with a focus on the Service Year Option pathway.

Section 2: Definitions

For purposes of this NOFO:

1. Operating Partner means an organization selected under this NOFO that, in addition to approved Host Site Partner responsibilities, serves as a workforce intermediary and program administrative partner to manage substantial Program member cohorts and provide additional support services.
2. Host Site Partner (HSP) means an organization approved by DSCI under the Program's HSP application to hire and/or host members and carry out standard Program responsibilities pursuant to an HSP grant agreement.
3. Member means a Program participant enrolled in the Maryland Corps/Service Year Option Program for the 2026-27 Program year.
4. Grant Agreement means the written agreement executed between DSCI and the Operating Partner specifying the award amount, term, scope, reporting, payment terms, and other conditions.
5. Good Standing means the entity's legal status to do business in Maryland, including active registration and good standing with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT), demonstrated by a current Certificate of Good Standing issued by SDAT.
6. Quarter means each three-month period within the Program year aligned to DSCI's reporting and reimbursement schedule.

Section 3: Scope of Work and Deliverables

Operating Partners will work in coordination with DSCI to achieve Program objectives. DSCI provides substantial oversight, including access to statewide professional development, career success coaching, and administrative support tools such as application portals. Operating Partner duties will be tied to one or more of the following deliverables and outputs:

1. Recruitment and Matching: a. Recruit and screen prospective Members and HSPs sufficient to support approved cohort size, with documented applicant pipelines and conversion metrics [e.g., applications received, interviews conducted, matches completed] b. Facilitate matching processes between Members and HSPs, documenting placement timelines and acceptance rates.
2. Employer/HSP Support and Engagement: a. Serve as primary relationship manager for assigned HSPs; document engagement cadence [e.g., monthly/quarterly check-ins], issue resolution logs. b. Support supervision and mentoring structures; provide technical assistance to HSP supervisors; track HSP satisfaction and support needs.
3. Training and Credential Completion: a. Develop or secure industry-specific professional development that is additive to Program-provided training; maintain curricula/attendance records. b. Track Member participation and credential attainment rates; report completions against plan.
4. Member Support and Administration: a. Oversee Member participation, performance, and progress; document retention, completion eligibility, and exit outcomes. b. Manage employer-Member issues; maintain case notes and documented referrals to DSCI supports. c. Ensure members and host placement sites adhere to program requirements.
5. Outcomes Tracking and Reporting: a. Maintain outputs and outcomes consistent with the approved application and this NOFO; submit required reports. b. Notify DSCI of major challenges or opportunities that materially affect cohort size, placements, training delivery, or performance.
6. Compliance with DSCI Data and Reporting Standards: a. Use DSCI-specified templates/systems; ensure data accuracy, completeness, and timeliness. b. Maintain records supporting reported activities, expenditures, and outcomes; provide access for monitoring.

Section 4: Relationship and Eligibility

The relationship between DSCI and an Operating Partner is a partnership in which the Operating Partner determines how to best achieve key Program objectives, and DSCI provides substantial oversight and support tools.



Eligibility and prerequisites:

1. **Organizational Experience.** At least three (3) years of prior experience effectively managing similar responsibilities for a comparable program or initiative with oversight of cohorts of at least 20 people.
2. **HSP Application and Approval.** The organization must have previously submitted an 2026-27 application to be an HSP for the Program. A prerequisite for receiving an Operating Partner grant is approval to be a 2026-27 Program HSP for a cohort of at least 20 Members and execution of the HSP grant agreement.
3. **Cohort Size.** Operating Partners must plan to manage substantial cohorts ranging from 20 to 100+ Members, with the minimum cohort size of at least 20 Members tied to the approved HSP cohort described above.
4. **Contingency of Operating Partner Award.** Execution of an Operating Partner Grant Agreement is contingent upon completion of all prerequisites in items 1–3 and DSCI's final approval.
5. **Good Standing with SDAT.** a. At Application: Applicants must be legally recognized to do business in Maryland and currently in Good Standing with SDAT; upload a current Certificate of Good Standing with the application. b. At Award: Good Standing must be current as of the date of award; DSCI may require an updated Certificate prior to execution. c. Throughout Term: Good Standing must be maintained throughout the grant term; DSCI may request updated evidence upon request or as a condition of reimbursement.
6. **Other Requirements.** All certifications, information, and documents provided in the HSP Application, including financial statements and tax forms, are incorporated by reference and will be used for evaluation.

Section 5: Funding Structure and Award Information

1. **Term and Availability.** Grants will be approved for a three-year term, subject to the availability of appropriations and contingent on satisfactory performance and compliance with grant terms and conditions.
2. **Funding Amount.** Grants will be awarded up to \$150,000 per Program year. DSCI reserves the right to award partial funding for less than the full dollar amount requested based on available resources, quality of the application, and alignment with program priorities.
3. **Grant Agreement.** The exact grant amount will be specified in a Grant Agreement between DSCI and the grantee.

Section 6: Payment Terms

1. **Reimbursement Basis.** This is a quarterly reimbursement-based grant. Funds will be disbursed following the close of each Quarter and after submission and approval of all required



documentation. On a case-by-case basis, some funds may be awarded at or near the beginning of the program to ensure timely payment of members.

2. Documentation Standards. Reimbursement packages must include: (a) the DSCI reimbursement form; (b) general ledger detail and transaction listing tying to reported costs reflected in the approved budget; (c) payroll registers/allocation for personnel; (d) vendor invoices, proofs of payment, and contracts for non-personnel costs; and (e) cost allocation documentation for shared/indirect costs consistent with the approved budget.

3. Conditioned on Approval. Payment is conditioned on DSCI's determination that documentation is complete, accurate, allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the approved scope and budget.

Section 7: Reporting and Records

1. Required Reports. Grantees must submit quarterly program narrative reports and quarterly financial reports using DSCI templates (which will be provided to selected Operating Partners). Reports must accurately reflect the goals, activities, and performance measures outlined in the approved application.

2. Records and Access. Maintain books, records, source documents, and data supporting reported activities, outcomes, and expenditures for three (3) years after grant closeout, and provide DSCI reasonable access for monitoring, desk reviews, and site visits.

Section 8: Application and Submission Information

Timeline and communications:

1. NOFO Posted: Tuesday, May 19, 2026.

2. Information Session: Wednesday, May 27th at 1:00-1:30pm (virtual - Zoom <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/Oza6gxHKQWW0oJVGFbitRQ>).

3. Questions: Submit questions to dsci.grants@maryland.gov.

4. Submission Method: Submit complete applications via <https://forms.gle/tt39NMgTvnJ3L6rz7>

5. Rolling Review and Interviews. Applications will be reviewed and approved on a rolling basis until funds are exhausted beginning in June 2026. Finalists will participate in an interview and may be asked for clarifications or additional information. DSCI may request written clarifications at any time during review.

6. Notices. Applicants will receive written notice of award or denial. Awards are contingent on satisfaction of prerequisites and successful Grant Agreement execution.

Links and references: 1. HSP Application: See link to related HSP grant application and information: <https://dsci.maryland.gov/hsp/mcsyo>



Section 9: Application Content Requirements (Submitted via form at this link: <https://forms.gle/tt39NMgTvnJ3L6rz7> applications will not be accepted via email)

Provide the following:

1. Organization's Legal Name.
2. EIN Number.
3. SDAT Certificate of Good Standing (upload current Certificate).
4. Primary Point of Contact Name.
5. Primary Point of Contact Title.
6. Primary Point of Contact Email.
7. Finance Point of Contact Name.
8. Finance Point of Contact Title.
9. Finance Point of Contact Email.
10. Cohort Plan. State how many Members you propose overseeing as an Operating Partner and identify both (a) Members directly hired if granted the HSP grant, and (b) additional Program Members to be supported as Operating Partner. Include ramp-up assumptions and targets.
11. Experience. Describe experience managing cohorts of 20+ individuals concurrently; identify the largest cohort to date and the scope of responsibilities (e.g., recruitment, payroll, professional development, placement, etc.).
12. Strategic Fit. Explain alignment with your mission and strategic objectives.
13. Service and Impact. Describe the service Members will perform and expected impact for Marylanders.
14. Operating Model. Outline proposed responsibilities as an Operating Partner and how you would achieve success, including member and placement site recruitment and matching; program and employer management; industry-specific training and credentialing; and/or member support/coaching and administration.
15. Staffing Model. Describe the staffing model to oversee Members. Address capacity for cohorts of 20–100+ (roles, full-time employee allocation, supervision ratios, and contingency coverage).
16. Budget and Narrative. Submit a proposed budget itemizing personnel (with titles, responsibilities, and percent full-time employee), fringe, travel/other, equipment, supplies, contractual, training, operational, other, and indirect costs, with detailed justification demonstrating necessity, reasonableness, and allocability to grant objectives. For nonprofits,



unless requesting the de minimis rate, provide documentation supporting the proposed indirect cost rate in accordance with Md. State Finance and Procurement Article § 2-208.

Section 10: Reservation of Rights, Disclaimers and Certifications

1. The publication of this NOFO does not oblige DSCI to award any specific number of grants or to commit any amount of funding.
2. DSCI may: (a) reject any or all applications; (b) cancel, amend, or reissue this NOFO; (c) make partial awards; (d) fund without discussion; (e) negotiate scope, budget, or conditions; and (f) award subject to the availability of appropriations.
3. The actual level and timing of grant funding are subject to the availability of annual appropriations.
4. ***By submitting the application, I certify that I am an authorized representative of the applicant organization and that I have the authority to submit this application on its behalf. I certify that all information contained in this application and its attachments is true, complete, and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I acknowledge that submitting false, fictitious, or fraudulent information may constitute a violation of the Maryland False Claims Act (Md. Code Ann., Gen. Prov. § 8-101 et seq.) and can result in civil penalties, damages, and disqualification from state funding.***

Contact

For questions or assistance, contact: dsci.grants@maryland.gov