

## **NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY 2019-2020 AMERICORPS PROGRAMS**

Volunteer Mississippi and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) are pleased to announce the availability of federal funds to support new Mississippi AmeriCorps programs to start September 1, 2019 for a 12-month program cycle.

***WHAT IS AMERICORPS?*** AmeriCorps is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, an independent federal agency created to connect Americans of all ages and backgrounds with opportunities to give back to their communities and their nation. CNCS - through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund - has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action. The mission of Volunteer Mississippi is to engage and support Mississippians of all ages and backgrounds in service to their communities. Administering and supporting AmeriCorps programs, our partners, provides opportunities for Mississippians to address documented needs in our communities.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions/practices to strengthen communities. Each applicant must clearly describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to solve a significant community problem. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, full time members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award of up to \$6,095 from the National Service Trust that members can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans. Members who serve in a less than full time capacity receive an education award based upon position enrolled in.

***WHY SHOULD MY ORGANIZATION APPLY FOR A MISSISSIPPI AMERICORPS PROGRAM?*** AmeriCorps Mississippi provides people-power. Funds provided through AmeriCorps Mississippi support a team of members who provide direct service to build or improve communities and services and generate volunteers to support their efforts. If there are needs in your community in the priority areas that you believe can be addressed by the involvement of people serving together, then this program may be for you. Grant funds can considerably enhance current programs, but cannot duplicate or displace current employees.

***WHAT ARE THE 2019 AMERICORPS FOCUS AREAS & FUNDING PRIORITIES?*** The Corporation's purpose is to maximize the power of service and volunteering to improve lives in communities across the country. Through all its programs, CNCS expands economic opportunity – helping Americans acquire the skills, education, and training they need for productive employment. By helping more Americans graduate, pursue higher education, and find work, national service provides immediate and long term benefits by expanding individual opportunity, building family stability, and creating more sustainable, resilient communities.

In order to carry out Congress' intent and to maximize the impact of investment in national service, CNCS has the following ***2019 AmeriCorps Funding Priorities and/or Focus Areas*** - CNCS seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in:

**DISASTER SERVICES:** Grant activities will provide support to increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters, improve individuals' readiness to respond to disasters, help individuals recover from disasters, and/or help individuals mitigate disasters.

**ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY:** Grants will provide support 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 and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children, improve school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children, improve educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools, and/or support economically disadvantaged students' preparation 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.

**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 with the purpose of reducing obesity. **FUNDING PRIORITY:** reducing and/or preventing prescription drug and opioid abuse.

**VETERANS and MILITARY FAMILIES:** Grants will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength, increase the number of veterans, wounded warriors, military service members, and their families served by CNCS programs, and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS programs.

**RURAL INTERMEDIARIES:** organizations that demonstrate measurable impact and primarily serve rural communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.

**SAFER COMMUNITIES:** programs that focus on public safety and/or partnerships between law enforcement and the community.

**FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?** Public or private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations; institutions of higher education; government entities within states or territories (e.g., cities, counties); labor organizations; partnerships and consortia; and Indian Tribes are encouraged to apply. The Corporation encourages organizations that have never received funding from the Corporation or AmeriCorps to apply for the grants described in the *Notice of Funding Opportunity*.

**WHAT TYPE OF GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE?** This grant is made for one program year. Additional funding for the remainder of the three-year cycle is contingent upon numerous factors, including, but not limited to, satisfactory performance, demonstrated capacity to manage the grant, compliance with grant requirements, agency priorities, and the availability of appropriated funds.

**PROGRAM SIZE AND GRANT SIZE.** Programs must be large enough to achieve a demonstrable impact on the community served. Thus, while the actual size of each program may vary depending on the size of the community and/or organization it operates in, the design of the program, and other factors, applicants are encouraged to apply for a minimum of twenty (20) AmeriCorps members. A 20-member full time corps averages \$303,840 in federal funds per program annually and all requests require match funds.

**IS THERE A MATCH REQUIREMENT?** There is an overall grantee match requirement of 24% for the first 3-year funding period. This match can be cash and/or in-kind. Overall grantee share of total program costs increases gradually to 50% by the tenth year of funding. Other federal funds used as match for this program must be tracked and reported.

**DO PLACEMENT SITES CONTRIBUTE FINANCIALLY TO THE COST OF SUPPORTING AMERICORPS MEMBERS?** Partner contributions to AmeriCorps programs depend on the structure of individual partnerships and programs. In some cases, placement sites do contribute cash to the program; in other cases, placement sites might contribute in-kind services, supplies, trainers, facilities, evaluation expertise, or other services and equipment. Each partnership is unique to a given location and program.

**WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF OPERATING AN AMERICORPS PROGRAM?**

- Recruiting, selecting, placing, training, and supervising AmeriCorps members.
- Designating a full-time coordinator to manage the program.
- Submitting progress reports reflecting progress towards meeting performance measurements, monthly expenditure reports, and financial status reports.
- Participating in training and technical assistance sessions for program directors and staff.
- Participating in statewide AmeriCorps member events and activities.

**WHAT IF YOU ONLY WANT TO INVOLVE ONE OR A FEW AMERICORPS MEMBERS?** You have numerous options, some of which include: You can find an agency to apply for and manage the funds (as a fiscal agent) that would then place the members at host service sites throughout a community, county, region or statewide; you can search our online program directory of existing AmeriCorps programs (found at [www.volunteermississippi.org/](http://www.volunteermississippi.org/)) which will provide you with names and contact information for programs in your area, or you can contact the Corporation for National and Community Service State Office, which manages AmeriCorps\*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) and Senior Corps programs. For more information on AmeriCorps\*VISTA and Senior Service Corps contact 601.965.5664 or [ms@cns.gov](mailto:ms@cns.gov).

**WHERE CAN I FIND INSTRUCTIONS AND WHEN IS THE APPLICATION DUE?** The CNCS documents may be accessed [here](#). Grant applications are due to MCVS via eGrants no later than **November 12, 2018**. All potential applicants should submit a **Letter of Intent** and **Readiness Assessment**, the template for which can be obtained from Judy Stein ([judy@volunteermississippi.org](mailto:judy@volunteermississippi.org) or 601.842.6700) **by November 5, 2018**. MCVS will provide applicants with additional instructions once Letter of Intent and Readiness Assessment have been received. For more information contact Judy Stein at [judy@volunteermississippi.org](mailto:judy@volunteermississippi.org) or 601.842.6700.