

2019 AmeriCorps State Extended Formula Funding Opportunity: Selection Criteria

February 12, 2019

Technical Assistance Webinar Series

- Funding Overview
 - 2/11 @ 11am or 2/25 @ 1pm
- **Selection Criteria**
 - 2/12 @ 11am or 2/26 @ 1pm
- Program Management and Design
 - 2/13 @ 11am or 2/27 @ 1pm
- Performance Measures
 - 2/14 @ 11am or 2/28 @ 1pm
- Budget Development
 - 2/15 @ 11am or 3/1 @ 1pm

Session Objectives

- Knowledge of Application Documents
- Understanding of Selection Criteria



AmeriCorps Application

- Application Checklist
- Program Design Documents
 - Program Summary Form, Program Diagram, Program Narrative, Logic Model, Performance Measurement Worksheets, Budget, Member Training Plan, Data Collection Plan/Evaluation Plan
- Other Required Documents
 - Labor Organization Certification, Organizational Self-Assessment, Assurance and Certification, Financial Management Survey
- Other Conditional Documents
 - New Applicant Certification Form, Evidence Base Supporting Documents, Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, Request for Alternative Match, Requests to Waive Requirements



The AmeriCorps application consists of up to 18 components.

The first item is the Application Checklist. Use this document to ensure that you have a complete application that meets all requirements. Make sure that this is signed by the Legal Applicant representative.

The next 8 documents represent the program's design- the Program Summary Form, Program Diagram, Program Narrative, Logic Model, Performance Measurement Worksheets, Budget, Member Training Plan, and the Data Collection or Evaluation Plan. Other documents that are required of all applicants are the Labor Organization Certification, Organizational Self-Assessment, Assurances and Certifications, and the Financial Management Survey and supporting documents.

The remaining documents are conditional and may not be required of all applicants: the New Applicant Certification Form, Evidence Base Supporting Documents, Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, Request for Alternative Match, and Requests to Waive Requirements.

Program Summary Form

- Submitted as hardcopy and electronic
- Contact information
 - Legal Applicant, Primary, and Secondary
- Legal Applicant Organization Information
- General Program Information
- Partnership Information
- Funding Priorities

The Program Summary Form collects contact information for the legal applicant representative and the primary and secondary contacts, information on the legal applicant organization, general program information, partnership information, and which funding priorities your application meets. Please ensure the information on this form is accurate. All communications regarding the application will be sent to the Legal Applicant contact, the Primary contact, and the Secondary contact. The Partnership Information will be used to determine if your program is in compliance with the Community Partnership Requirement. Any Funding Priority you select must be supported in other Program Design Documents such as the Narrative, Diagram, or Performance Measures.

Logic Model

- Up to 3-page visual representation of Theory of Change that depicts the following:
 - Community Problem
 - Inputs/Resources
 - Core Activities
 - Outputs
 - Short-, Medium-, and Long-Term Outcomes

The logic model is a visual representation of your program's Theory of Change and should give a clear overview of your program's intervention and intended outcomes.

The logic model can be up to 3 pages and must include the following:

- A brief description of the community problem the program will address
- The inputs/resources the program will leverage
- The core activities provided by members
- The outputs of those activities
- And the short, medium, and long-term outcomes that occur as a result.

Program Diagram

- Graphic presentation of the program structure
- Includes:
 - Member supervision and staffing structure
 - All member placement site locations
 - All member slots
 - Estimated number of high-need beneficiaries served per site

The Program Diagram is a graphic presentation of the program's overall structure, including staffing and member placement locations, as well as expected impact of members per site. The diagram should be limited to one page.

Program Narrative

14-page limit, double-spaced and single-sided

- A. Executive Summary
- B. Program Design
 - 1. Need
 - 2. Theory of Change and Logic Model
 - 3. Evidence Base
 - 4. Funding Priority
 - 5. Member Experience
- C. Organizational Capability
 - 1. Organizational Background and Staffing
 - 2. Compliance and Accountability
 - 3. Culture that Values Learning
 - 4. Member Supervision

The Program Narrative cannot exceed 14 pages, double-spaced and single-sided.

The Narrative must include all the headings listed here.

The Executive Summary follows a template that you will need to fill in with information about your program design. The template can be found in the Application Instructions. Program Design includes the Need, Theory of Change and Logic Model, Evidence Base, Funding Priority, and Member Experience sections.

Organizational Capability includes Organizational Background and Staffing, Compliance and Accountability, Culture that Values Learning, and Member Supervision sections.

Performance Measures

- Primary Needs and Service
- Common Member Development
- Common Strengthening Communities
- Other Non-Primary Needs and Service

All applicants must have at least three Performance Measurement Worksheets: Primary Needs and Service, Member Development, and Strengthening Communities. All activities must be covered across all Performance Measures, so any activities that fall outside of your primary intervention, volunteer recruitment, or member development will need to be included in another non-primary needs and service measure with an aligned output and outcome. We will be going into this in a lot more detail in the webinar on Thursday.

Budget Narrative & Budget Form

- Budget Form auto-filled based on Narrative
- Resize rows to ensure descriptions and calculations are clear
- Include at least \$54 per covered position (staff & members) for background checks
- Identify all match sources, amounts, and if match is “secured” or “proposed”

The Budget Narrative and Budget Form are two sheets in a single Excel Workbook. The Budget Form is auto-filled based on the Budget Narrative.

We will go into the specifics of completing the budget on Friday, but we'll cover the criteria that we review the budget against later in this presentation.

Part of that criteria is to include enough information to assess each budget line item; in order for us to do this, it is important that you resize the rows in Excel so that all information is visible. Any information that is cut off will not be reviewed.

All applicants must include \$54 plus the cost of the state check for criminal history checks for all covered positions.

Also, be sure to identify all match sources, the amounts of their contributions, and whether or not the match is “secured” or “proposed” from each source.

Member Training Plan

- Required for New Applicants
- Maximum 3 pages, double-spaced
 - Describe trainings provided
 - Identify who will provide trainings
 - Describe role of partners and placement sites
 - Describe how trainings will be evaluated and updated
- Not scored, but may be clarified
- Living Document

All programs are required to provide trainings for their members. Since currently-funded programs are assessed on their member trainings during regular monitoring activities by their CV Program Officer, only new applicants are required to submit a Member Training Plan as part of the application.

In this 3-page, double-spaced document, you will need to describe the trainings provided throughout the year, identify who will be providing the training and their qualifications, describe the role of partners and placement sites in delivering trainings, and describe how trainings will be evaluated and updated.

The primary purpose of this document is to demonstrate that you have considered the necessary member training to ensure program success and have a plan for its delivery. This document is not scored, but it will be reviewed and clarified if necessary. Finally, this is a living document. If funded, your Program Officer will work with you to update your plan and help prepare you to offer the best possible trainings to your members.

Data Collection Plan


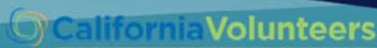
- Required for New Applicants
- 10,000-character narrative including:
 - Description of data collection system and its sufficiency, or a plan for developing such a system
 - Description of how performance data will be used to improve the program

The Data Collection Plan is another requirement for new applicants. It is a maximum of 10,000 characters (including spaces) that covers your data collection system and how that data will be used to improve the program. Like the Member Training Plan, this document will not be scored, but it may be clarified and will inform data collection during implementation.

Evaluation Plan


- Required for Recompeting Applicants
- 10,000-character narrative including:
 - Description of Theory of Change
 - Outcome of interest
 - Research questions
 - Proposed research design
 - Description of data sources, sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures
 - Analysis plan
 - Timeline for the evaluation
 - Qualifications needed for the evaluator
 - The proposed budget

The Evaluation Plan is required for all recompeting applicants. The plan must not exceed 10,000 characters, including spaces, and include a description of the theory of change; information on the outcome of interest; the evaluation's research questions; the proposed research design; a description of data sources, sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures; your plan for analyzing the data collected; the proposed timeline for completing the evaluation; qualifications needed for the evaluator; and the proposed budget. If funded, you will be responsible for following this plan and submitting your completed evaluation report as part of your application for the next funding cycle.



Other Required Documents

- Labor Organization Certification
- Organizational Self-Assessment
- Assurances and Certification
- Financial Management Survey and Supporting Documents




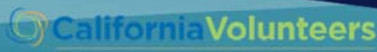
There are four other documents required of all applicants: the Labor Organization Certification, Organizational Self-Assessment, Assurances and Certification, and the Financial Management Survey.

For the Labor Organization Certification Form, include all required documentation and justification for the options selected. Any missing documentation will be deemed non-compliant.

The Organizational Self-Assessment is used to assess risk. Please assess your organization honestly; this form will not impact application scoring.


The Assurances and Certifications are listed in the Application Instructions. Applicants that do not submit these forms signed will not be considered.

You will need to complete the Financial Management Survey hardcopy and submit all supporting documents electronically as part of your application. These documents may be large, so it is acceptable to submit them in a separate email from the rest of the electronic submission.



Other Conditional Documents

- New Applicant Certification
- Evidence Base Supporting Documents
- Federally Approved Indirect Cost Agreement
- Request for Alternative Match Schedule
- Requests to Waive Requirements



The remaining documents are only required of certain applicants.

The New Applicant Certification Form is used to evaluate if an applicant meets the definition of “new” to receive bonus points up to 10% of the total possible score. This is only required for new applicants; an application that does not submit this form will not be considered “new.”

Applicants assessed at the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tier may submit up to two outcome evaluation studies as supporting documents for their Evidence Base.

If you have a federally approved indirect cost rate that you are claiming for use in your budget, you must include a copy of that agreement with your application.

Applicants in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community can request an alternative match schedule that reduces the match requirement at 10 years from 50% to 35%. The requirements for this are very stringent, please see the Application Instructions or email funding@cv.ca.gov for more information.

Finally, applicants can submit requests to waive requirements for minimum program size and minimum number of members per service site. These requests must include strong justification and can be a maximum of one page each. See the Application Instructions for more information.

Selection Criteria

- Program Design (50%)
 - Program Narrative
 - Logic Model
 - Performance Measurement Worksheets
- Organizational Capacity (25%)
 - Program Narrative
 - Past Performance
- Cost Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy (25%)
 - Budget Narrative & Budget Form

Now we'll go over the Selection Criteria provided in the Request for Applications. 50% of the application's score will come from the Program Design. The Program Narrative, Logic Model, and PMWs will be assessed to determine the score for this section.

Organizational Capacity is worth 25% and will be scored based on responses to this section in the Program Narrative. For recompeting applicants, we will also be taking into account past performance.

Cost Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy is also worth 25% and is scored based on the Budget.

Program Design

- Need (4%)
- Theory of Change and Logic Model (24%)
- Evidence Base (16%)
- Funding Priority (0%)
- Member Experience (6%)

Program Design is assessed based on the Need described and supported by evidence, the Theory of Change and Logic Model, the Evidence Base that supports your Theory of Change, the funding priority you are applying to meet, and the positive, impactful member experience you will provide.

Most of these sections are straightforward enough, so for this webinar we are going to focus on the Theory of Change and Logic Model, and the Evidence Base sections.

Theory of Change and Logic Model

- Narrative and Logic Model scored as part of this section
- Narrative must describe program theory of change
- Logic Model must align with theory of change described in Narrative

Every year we encounter some confusion about the Theory of Change and Logic Model section, so hopefully this will help avoid that.

The Narrative and the Logic Model are both scored as part of this section of the criteria. In the Narrative, you should describe your program's theory of change, including all criteria included in the Application Instructions.

The Logic Model is a separate document that will be scored on its completeness and its alignment with the Theory of Change described in this section of the Narrative.

Alignment in this case means that the information in the Logic Model should be reflected in the Narrative; essentially, once reviewers read the Narrative, they should not be surprised by any of the information included in the Logic Model.

Evidence Base Criteria

- Evidence Tier
 - Describe evidence and cite outcome evaluations that support intervention
- Evidence Quality
 - Cite evidence of high quality that supports intervention at high confidence

The Evidence Base section of the Narrative warrants a bit deeper of an explanation. In this competition, the Evidence Base section is scored based on the applicant's Evidence Tier and Evidence Quality. Basically, for the Evidence Tier you will describe the evidence and cite specific outcome evaluations to support your proposed intervention at a given evidence tier, Pre-Preliminary, Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong. The evidence described will be assessed based on its quality and the extent to which it supports the proposed program design.

Evidence Tier

- Summarize the study design and key findings of any evaluation report(s) submitted
- Describe any other evidence that supports the program, including past performance data and/or other research studies that inform program design
- Applicants who submit evaluation reports for consideration must also describe how the intervention described in the supplemental documents is the same as the intervention described in the Narrative

When writing to the Evidence Tier you believe you qualify for, summarize the study design and key findings of any evaluation reports submitted, and describe any other evidence that supports the program, including past performance data and/or other research studies that inform your program's design. If you are submitting evaluation reports for consideration, you must also describe how the intervention described in the reports is the same as the intervention you are proposing.

Evidence Tier: Pre-Preliminary

- Applicant has not submitted an outcome or impact evaluation of the same intervention
- Must describe how the program design is evidence-informed
- Applicants may cite prior performance measure data, if applicable

You would qualify for the pre-preliminary evidence tier if you have not completed an outcome or impact evaluation on your intervention. In this case, you would need to describe the evidence that is informing your program design and guiding its implementation. If you have prior performance measure data, you may cite that to support the effectiveness of your design.

Evidence Tier: Preliminary

- Applicant submitted up to two outcome evaluation reports that evaluated the same intervention and yielded positive results on one or more key outcomes
- Study design must include pre and post-assessments without a comparison group, or a post-assessment comparison between intervention and comparison groups

In order to qualify for the preliminary evidence tier, you must submit up to two outcome evaluation reports that cover the same intervention as is being proposed and that yielded positive results on one or more key outcomes identified in the application. The outcome evaluations may either have been conducted internally by the applicants organization or by an entity external to the applicant. The study design must include pre- and post-assessments without a comparison group or a post-assessment comparison between intervention and comparison groups.

Evidence Tier: Moderate

- Applicant submitted up to two well-designed and well-implemented evaluation reports on the same intervention and yielded positive results on one or more key outcomes
- Must use experimental design evaluations or quasi-experimental design evaluations with statistically match comparison and treatment groups
- Limited generalizability
- Evaluations must be conducted by independent entity external to the organization

An applicant in the Moderate Evidence Tier has submitted up to two well-designed and well-implemented evaluation reports that evaluated the same intervention describe in the application and identified evidence of effectiveness on one or more key desired outcomes of interest. Evidence of effectiveness must be determined using experimental or quasi-experimental design evaluations with statistically matched comparison and treatment groups. The ability to generalize the findings beyond the study context may be limited. The evaluations must be conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

Evidence Tier: Strong

- Applicant submitted up to two evaluation reports demonstrating the same intervention has been tested nationally, regionally, or at the state level using a well-designed and well-implemented experimental design or quasi-experimental design with statistically matched comparison and treatment groups, or evaluations of different locations or with different populations within a local geographic area
- Pattern of findings must be consistently positive
- Findings generalizable beyond study context
- Evaluations must be conducted by independent entity external to the organization

To qualify for the Strong Evidence Tier, you must submit up to two evaluation reports demonstrating that the same intervention described in the application has been tested nationally, regionally, or at the state level using a well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental design evaluation with statistically match comparison and treatment groups. Alternatively, the proposed intervention's evidence may be based on evaluations of the same intervention in different locations or with different populations within a local geographic area. The overall pattern of evaluation findings must be consistently positive in one or more key desired outcomes of interest. Findings from the evaluations may be generalized beyond the study context. The evaluations must have been conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

Citing Evaluation Reports

- Evaluation Reports cited must match the intervention in following areas:
 - Characteristics of beneficiary population
 - Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention
 - Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention
 - The context in which the intervention is delivered
 - Outcomes of the intervention

These are the criteria that will be assessed in determining that the intervention described in the evaluation reports matches the proposed program:

The characteristics of the beneficiary population, the characteristics of the population delivering the intervention, the dosage and design of the intervention, the context in which the intervention is delivered, and the outcomes of the intervention must all be consistent between the evidence presented and the proposed program.

Make sure these are all covered in Narrative and in the studies you cite.

Evidence Quality

- Pre-Preliminary
 - The applicant uses relevant evidence, including past performance measure data and/or cited research studies, to inform their proposed program design
 - The described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years
 - The evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least on key outcome of interest

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier, reviewers will score the narrative provided in the Evidence Base section of the application using the following standards:

The applicant uses relevant evidence, including past performance measure data and/or cited research studies, to inform their proposed program design

The described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years

The evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

Evidence Quality

- Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong
 - The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.)
 - The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years
 - The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest


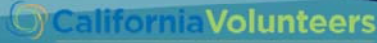
For applicants assessed at the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tiers, reviewers will score the submitted evaluation reports using the following standards:

The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.);

The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years;


The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

Make sure the studies you cite cover these criteria to score highly in evidence quality.



Organizational Capability

- Organizational Background and Staffing (9%)
- Compliance and Accountability (8%)
- Culture that Values Learning (6%)
- Member Supervision (2%)



Organizational Capability is the final section of the Program Narrative.

In the Organizational Background and Staffing section, you will describe your organization's background with administering AmeriCorps or other federal grants and outline the staffing structure for the program. Make sure you cover all staff included in the budget or program diagram.

For Compliance and Accountability, describe what systems and processes you have in place to ensure compliance with the grant and to hold the legal applicant and partners accountable. Do not simply state that you have systems in place; describe the systems and explicitly state how you meet the criteria for this section.

In the Culture that Values Learning section, you will need to demonstrate that your organization is a learning organization.

Finally, in Member Supervision, describe your plan for ensuring members have adequate supervision and support throughout their service.

Cost Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy

Budget assessed on following criteria:

- Budget submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget
- The budgeted match is equal to or more than the required match for the given program year
- The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum
 - Cost per MSY that exceeds maximum will be considered unresponsive to this section

The Cost Effectiveness & Budget Adequacy section of the selection criteria is based on your program's budget.

Criteria for this section include:

- Budget submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget
- The budgeted match is equal to or more than the required match for the given program year
- The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum

If you are proposing a cost per MSY that exceeds the maximum, your application will be considered unresponsive to this section.

Resources

- Request for Applications
- Application Instructions
- Mandatory Supplemental Guidance
- Technical Assistance Resources
 - Available on our website
californiavolunteers.ca.gov/grants/americorps

All of the information presented today is available in the Request for Applications, Application Instructions and Mandatory Supplemental Guidance documents. Hopefully, you have already had the chance to read these documents, but if not, they are available on our website, along with other technical assistance resources.

Application Deadlines

- Optional Notice of Intent due March 5
 - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019FormulaNOI>
- Complete Application due April 2
 - Paper application including one original (items 1-18) & 5 copies (1-9)
 - Electronic submission by email to funding@cv.ca.gov of items 2, 7-10 & 14-17

Questions?

Thank you!

Send questions to funding@cv.ca.gov