

# 2010 AmeriCorps Request for Applications



---

**Applications due December 7, 2009**

---



## **CaliforniaVolunteers**

1110 K Street ■ Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 323-7646 phone ■ (916) 323-3227 fax  
[www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org](http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org)

**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO APPLICANTS:** There are three components necessary to complete an application for 2010-11 AmeriCorps funding: (1) the 2010 Request for Applications and accompanying Application Instructions (a Word document), (2) the 2010 AmeriCorps Budget and Budget Narrative and Budget Worksheet for Fixed-Amount Grants (Excel documents available at [www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org](http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org)), and (3) the online Partnership Forms and State Title Pages available through the CaliforniaVolunteers Web site at [www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org](http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org). Please ensure that you have obtained forms from all of the above sources.

Welcome to the 2010 AmeriCorps application process! CaliforniaVolunteers (CV) is excited to present this funding opportunity to support partnerships that will engage individuals in addressing unmet community needs throughout California. If you are a returning applicant, we hope you find this process smooth as we strive to streamline our systems and enhance the resources available to you during this application process. If you are a new applicant, we hope you are just as excited as we are about your participation in this funding opportunity and prospect of joining AmeriCorps in *getting things done* for your community through service. The California AmeriCorps Program Guide (Guide) was developed as a companion resource to this RFA. The Guide provides in-depth detail on state and federal policy, AmeriCorps program components and general information to help broaden your understanding of AmeriCorps in order to develop a comprehensive program model.

The 2010 RFA reflects a number of exciting changes both at the state and national level. Following the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, CV added a new cohort of programs to our statewide portfolio and continues to work with all of our grantees to implement new AmeriCorps regulations. AmeriCorps' parent agency, the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation) recently issued a number of significant changes and improvements to the AmeriCorps program authorized by the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act (SAA) signed into law by President Obama on April 21, 2009. These changes include increased education awards indexed to the value of the Pell Grant award for members who successfully complete their service terms, the transferability of education awards from AmeriCorps members 55 years or older to a child, grandchild, or foster child, and the availability of fixed-amount grants and national performance measures for the five national service priority areas identified by the SAA. The SAA also expands AmeriCorps service opportunities from 75,000 annually to 250,000 by 2017, beginning with 88,000 positions in 2010. The Corporation's 2010 AmeriCorps grantmaking process begins the process of implementing the SAA. The Corporation has shared that the provisions in the Act are wide-reaching and complex with many details to determine, in conjunction with their stakeholders, in the months and years to come.

The CaliforniaVolunteers' grant application and review timeline is impacted by implementation of the SAA. You'll see from the timeline provided on the following page that our process follows a very tight timeline. Generally, CV's grantmaking process spans over a 6 month period and this year's competition will be condensed into a four month timeframe. Your attention to the deadlines and adherence to CV's grant application requirements will be critical to ensuring a smooth grant competition.

Please note the following highlights featured in our 2010 RFA:

- RFA does not include state funding priorities. CV is interested in programs that meet a wide variety of locally identified community needs.
- To meet the Corporation's deadline for its 2010 national competition, CV will be conducting in-person staff interviews in late December and early January. Preliminary funding announcements will be issued in mid January.
- In order to align our grantmaking process more closely with that of the Corporation, we have modified our narrative instructions to mirror the Corporations' instructions, which we believe will streamline the submission process for those applicants nominated to compete in the national competition.



- New applicants and re-competing programs should note the emphasis on sustainability (including an overall match schedule), selection criteria and range of allowable AmeriCorps member activities.

CV is committed to providing the most current information available to all applicants. We will rely primarily upon our Web site, [www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org](http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org), to keep applicants abreast of changes. Please check our Web site frequently. Additionally, our Web site will also provide information on technical assistance opportunities, including training sessions to be conducted in mid November. This RFA provides CV with the opportunity to support organizations throughout California that are using service and volunteering as strategies to address pressing community needs. If you have questions, please contact us via email at [funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov](mailto:funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov).



## Application Timeline

This timeline is tentative and is subject to change due to Corporation announcements and other events.

October 26, 2009	Request for Proposals (RFA) available
October 26 – December 7	Technical Assistance Period
November - TBD	RFA Overview Sessions
November 18, 2009	Notice of Intent to Apply due to CaliforniaVolunteers
December 7, 2009	Applications Due – CaliforniaVolunteers must <b><u>receive</u></b> applications by 5:00 p.m.
December 14-17, 2009	Peer/Staff Review Process
December 28-30, 2009 January 4-6, 2010	CV Staff Interviews – Competitive Candidates
January 12, 2010	Competitive Package Announced
January 20, 2010	Competitive Applications in eGrants
January 26, 2010	CNCS Competitive Deadline
April 5-16, 2010	CV Staff Interviews – Formula Candidates
Early June, 2010	Corporation Competitive Funding Announcements
Early June, 2010	CaliforniaVolunteers Formula Funding Announcements
Late June, 2010	Formula Applications in eGrants
Mid-August, 2010	Projected Program Start Date



## FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

---

### A. Funding Program Description

#### ***Corporation for National and Community Service***

In 1994, the Corporation was formed to engage Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to meet community needs. For the past decade, the Corporation—through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve programs—has mobilized a new generation of engaged citizens. This year, more than 1.8 million individuals will serve through the Corporation's programs with thousands of national and community nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools and local agencies to help meet local needs in education, the environment, health, veterans, economic opportunity, and other critical areas. National and community service programs work closely with traditional volunteer organizations to broaden, deepen and strengthen the ability of America's volunteers to contribute not only to their communities, but also to our nation.

#### ***CaliforniaVolunteers***

CaliforniaVolunteers is the state entity responsible for increasing the number and impact of Californians engaged in service and volunteering. CaliforniaVolunteers serves as the national service commission for the State of California. Karen Baker, the nation's first state cabinet level Secretary for Service and Volunteering, leads the organization in consultation with a 25-member Commission appointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. First Lady Maria Shriver serves as the honorary chairperson of the Commission.

The AmeriCorps Department manages a \$23.5 million portfolio of 48 programs and more than 4,000 AmeriCorps members placed at service sites throughout the state. The department also administers an additional \$9.3 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, which provides supplemental or expansion support to 22 programs in CV's existing portfolio.

The Volunteer Action Department oversees programs and projects that strengthen the recruitment, management and recognition of volunteers, particularly by nonprofit organizations. Significant programs include the California Volunteer Matching Network, through which individuals and families can search more than 50,000 volunteer opportunities for activities that match their interests, as well as the Business Partners Program that provides tools, resources and recognition for business to build high-quality volunteer programs that support their communities. The Disaster Volunteering and Preparedness Department builds the state's ability to utilize volunteers to respond to disasters and emergencies.

#### ***AmeriCorps***

AmeriCorps, a federal program, awards member positions and program operating funds to organizations to further the goals of AmeriCorps and to provide service to address local unmet needs. Grants support organizations that use volunteer service as a strategy for addressing national and community needs while fostering an ethic of civic responsibility. In return for their service, AmeriCorps participants, known as members, may receive a modest living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members receive an education award that can be used towards existing college loans or to pay continuing education costs. AmeriCorps programs recruit, select, train and manage their own AmeriCorps



members, design and operate their program and are responsible for providing funds and other resources to match the federal funds they receive through their AmeriCorps grant.

## **B. Available Funding**

Grants are awarded to organizations that will operate solely in California. Successful applicants will receive grants to support AmeriCorps member positions that will engage members in service to meet critical needs in California.

AmeriCorps funding comes to California through two separate funding streams: formula and competitive funds. CaliforniaVolunteers receives formula funds from the Corporation through a population-based allocation. Subject to the availability of federal appropriations for fiscal year 2010, CV anticipates the availability of approximately \$14.5 million in state formula funds to award new, recompeting, and continuation AmeriCorps state grants. Competitive funds are awarded through a national competition to programs that have competed successfully at both the state and federal levels. The Corporation estimates that \$363 million in competitive funding will be available for the national competition to support new and recompeting programs and continuation requests.

CaliforniaVolunteers' review and selection process will be used to determine applications that will be considered for funding. Some finalists will be nominated for the national competition. These applications will be sent to the Corporation to be reviewed and scored in the national competition. The Corporation will make final funding decisions for programs that will be funded with competitive funds. If selected for competitive funds, these applications are considered grantees of CaliforniaVolunteers. Applications submitted to the national competition are not guaranteed funding. Unsuccessful applicants will return to a rank-order list for consideration of formula funds following competitive announcements. Final funding decisions will be announced in mid-June.

## **C. Type of Grants**

### ***Operating Grants***

An operating grant provides funding to pay for program costs such as member support, operational costs and administrative costs associated with the implementation of an AmeriCorps program. An applicant that applies for an operational program must provide a cash and/or in-kind match to support its members and operate the program. An operating grant is like most standard Federal grants which are cost-reimbursement grants. Under cost reimbursement grants, grantees have an approved budget as part of their grant award. The grant funds can only be spent on costs in the approved budget and grantees can draw funds based on expenditures under the grant through a reimbursement process by submitting invoices to CV.

### ***Education Award Programs (EAP)***

An EAP program is an AmeriCorps program that receives minimal financial support from the Corporation and has fewer fiscal reporting requirements. An EAP program is a fixed-award grant in which the grantee receives an award for a specific amount per the number of member service years (MSYs) enrolled. A MSY is equivalent to one full-time AmeriCorps position. An EAP program may request up to \$800 per MSY to implement an AmeriCorps program. A grantee must use its own or other resources to cover the remaining program costs such as member support, operational costs and administrative costs associated with the implementation of an AmeriCorps program. Because of the minimal financial support, EAP grants are best suited for pre-existing service programs or for organizations with other sources of funding, for



whom becoming part of AmeriCorps will add value to their program. Matching requirements do not apply to EAP applicants. Unlike the fixed-amount pilot noted below, EAP programs may utilize any configuration of service opportunities and is not limited to full-time positions.

### ***Fixed-Amount Pilot***

The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act (SAA) reauthorizes and expands national service programs administered by the Corporation by amending the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (NCSA) and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (DVSA). SAA authorizes the Corporation to award fixed-amount grants in 2010. In 2010, these fixed-amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members only. Fixed-amount grants allow programs to apply for a fixed dollar amount per member. The fixed-amount awarded per member is significantly less than the cost of running an AmeriCorps program and the applicant must raise the additional revenue necessary to operate the program. The final amounts that fixed-amount grantees may retain under their awards are tied to the number of hours members serve. If a member completed the term of service and earned the education award, the program is entitled to the full amount approved per MSY. If a member did not complete the term of service, 1700 hours, the program is entitled to the pro-rated approved amount per MSY based on percentage of hours served divided by 1700 hours of service.

An AmeriCorps program that receives a fixed-amount grant is like any other AmeriCorps program and is still responsible for adhering to all AmeriCorps Regulations and Provisions such as the administrative and programmatic requirements related to the recruitment, placement, training, and management of members and the required documentation. The exception is that, unlike the more typical cost-reimbursement grant, the fixed-amount grant does not require:

- Compliance with OMB cost principles;
- Federal Financial Reports (FFR); or,
- Match or documentation of match.

Approved applicants must agree to participate in evaluations the Corporation conducts to measure success of this pilot. The maximum cost per MSY for the full-time fixed-amount pilot is currently being determined by the Corporation and will be released later this fall. The amount per full-time member requested will be a competitive factor in the Corporation's selection process. Priority will be given in the selection process to organizations that have demonstrated capacity to track and report on performance measures.

**The fixed-amount pilot is only available for new and recompeting applicants.** Second- and third-year continuation applications must submit a new application if they are interested in participating in the fixed-amount pilot. Current programs that are interested in submitting an application for the fixed-amount pilot should submit an e-mail indicating interest to [Funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov](mailto:Funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov).

### ***Professional Corps***

These grants are awarded to organizations that propose to operate a Professional Corps program. The Professional Corps program model places AmeriCorps members as teachers, health care providers, police officers, engineers, or other professionals in communities where there is an inadequate number of such professions. Applicants can apply for up to \$2,500 per MSY. Applicants are eligible to apply for funding for a portion of program costs, and use their own or other resources to pay the members' living allowance and additional member costs.



## D. Type of Applicants

For the 2010-11 grantmaking cycle, there will be several types of applicants seeking AmeriCorps grant funding through this RFA. Details regarding these applicant types are provided below. *Continuation programs (i.e., current recipients of AmeriCorps operating grants that are not entering the final year of their current grant period) should **NOT** use this RFA.*

### ***New Applicants***

A new applicant is one in which neither the legal applicant, nor primary partnering organizations, nor individuals involved in developing the current AmeriCorps application have developed an AmeriCorps application that has been awarded an AmeriCorps operating grant, or were previously employed as core program staff of a funded program, state commission staff, or Corporation staff in the last five years.

*CV strongly encourages all new applicants to review technical assistance materials as they become available on the CV Web site – [www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org](http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org).*

### ***Recompeting Programs***

AmeriCorps programs entering the final year of their grant period are required to submit a new application if they wish to be considered for future AmeriCorps funding. This process is known as recompetition. Programs entering the final year of their grant period are eligible for recompetition. Recompeting programs may request expansion funding through a combination of increased full-time member slots and a reconfigured budget that more accurately reflects the program's expenses. Recompeting programs are reminded that submitting an application does not guarantee success in securing future funding. Recompeting applicants are advised that previous site visit reports, program progress reports, financial reports, and member enrollment and retention rates, will be reviewed as part of the selection process.

### ***Experienced Applicants***

Applicants who propose an AmeriCorps program that has not previously operated, but do not meet the definition of a new applicant, will be deemed experienced applicants.

### ***Previously Funded Programs***

The previously funded program designation applies to any program who has previously received an AmeriCorps operating grant from CV or the Corporation in any of the past five completed program years (2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08 or 2008-09). Applications will receive this designation if the proposed program is similar in scope and purpose to the program previously operated. This definition holds true even if the legal applicant for the program has changed.

## E. How to Apply

Organizations that work solely in California must apply to CaliforniaVolunteers. Organizations that operate in more than one state are eligible to apply for national grants directly from the Corporation. Indian tribes may apply through CaliforniaVolunteers or directly to the Corporation. Indian Tribe is defined as a federally recognized Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Native village, regional Corporation, or Village Corporation, as defined under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1602), that the United States Government determines is eligible for special programs and service provided under



federal law to Indians because of their status as Indians. Indian Tribes also include tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by one of the entities described above.

**F. Potential Change to RFA Guidelines and Supplemental Guidance**

This Request for Applications (RFA) was created in good faith and based on the most recent guidance provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation). The amount of funds available for AmeriCorps, as well as new grant limits and requirements, are dependent on the congressional appropriations process yet to be concluded. These factors may require changes to the Corporation’s guidance and to this RFA. In addition, the Corporation anticipates releasing additional guidance on the Fixed-amount Pilot and national performance measures in November. CaliforniaVolunteers (CV) will issue all supplemental materials at the earliest possible date. All supplemental materials and updates will be available on the CV Web site – [www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org](http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org). **Applicants are advised to check the Web site on a weekly basis.**

This RFA provides a broad overview of AmeriCorps guidance, highlighting many basic components and rules to provide a general understanding of the complexities and intricacies of AmeriCorps programming and requirements. A companion document, the California AmeriCorps Program Guide (Guide), provides more detail on AmeriCorps program elements and further clarification of federal and state requirements. The full AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR § 2520-2550, are available online at [www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr). Successful applicants will be required to comply with these regulations, AmeriCorps provisions, and federal and state policies. Federal funds provided under this grant are identified by the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 94.006.

The AmeriCorps regulations include the criteria used to select applicants for funding and other pertinent information (see table below).

**Program Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations**

Requirements and Selection	Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations
Member Service Activities	§2520.20 - §2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§2520.65
Tutoring Programs	§2522.900-2522.950
Matching Funds	§2521.35-2521.90
Member Benefits	§2522.240-2522.250
Calculating Cost Per Member Service Year (MSY)	§2522.485
Performance Measures	§2522.500-2522.650
Evaluation	§2522.500-2522.540 and §2522.700-2522.740
Selection Criteria and Selection Process	§2522.400-2522.475

**G. Authority**

These funds will be available under authority of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.§12571-12595).



## AWARD INFORMATION

---

### A. Grant Period

Grants awarded through this selection process will support programming beginning in the fall of 2010. The Corporation and CV generally approve funding for a three-year grant period, assuming demonstrated success toward achieving program performance measures and the completion of an annual continuation request. Applications for 2010 must include proposed activities and a detailed proposed budget for the first year of operation. CV expects that programmatic activities for the second and third years of operation will build upon, and be similar in scope to, those of the first year.

### B. Match Requirements

#### ***Education Award Program and Fixed-Amount Pilot***

There is no match requirement for fixed-amount grants.

#### ***Operational Programs***

A successful applicant is required to provide a single overall match of 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with the second three-year cycle, match gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to 45 CFR § 2521.60 summarized in the following table:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
<b>Minimum Overall Share</b>	24%	24%	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

Programs may provide their share of operating costs and overall match through cash or in-kind resources, and may use non-Corporation federal funds if specifically allowed by the other federal agency. Matching funds must be verifiable; not be included as match for other federal programs; be necessary and reasonable for the purpose of your program; and, be allowable under Office of Management and Budget (OMB) cost principles. Matching funds must be secured on an annual basis. CV strongly recommends that applicants planning to use federal funds from another federal agency as match secure authorization to do so.

*The legal applicant is the entity responsible for meeting matching funds requirements.* The legal applicant may request that partnering organizations provide a share of the match necessary to meet matching funds requirements. Applicants must demonstrate sufficient match to meet the minimum requirements, but are advised not to include match in excess of the minimum if sources are uncertain. Failure to secure matching funds identified in the budget may result in adverse audit findings in addition to negatively affecting future grant applications to the Corporation.

Both CV and the Corporation encourage programs to exceed the minimum match levels and to secure greater support from state and local funding sources, including private sources such as corporations, foundations, individuals, local businesses, and nonprofit organizations. In particular, the Corporation places greater value on non-federal matching funds due to direction



received from Congress that the Corporation should increase the level of matching funds provided by the private sector.

**C. Grant Size and Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)**

The size of AmeriCorps grants is directly tied to the number of AmeriCorps members that a program will recruit, enroll and support. A full-time AmeriCorps member is equivalent to one Member Service Year (MSY). AmeriCorps grants are calculated by multiplying the number of Member Service Years (MSYs) by the cost per MSY. For example, an applicant requesting 25 MSYs at a cost per MSY of \$14,000 would request \$350,000 (25 x \$14,000). CV guidelines for 2010 limit the cost per MSY for new and experienced applicants to \$16,000.

Grant Cycle	Grant Years	Maximum Cost Per MSY
1	1, 2, 3	\$16,000
2	4, 5, 6	\$15,000
3	7, 8, 9	\$14,000
4	10, 11, 12	\$13,000
5	13, 14, 15	\$12,000
6	16, 17, 18	\$11,000
7+	19+	\$10,000

To ensure that the cost per member Policy is applied consistently across the portfolio, an eligible applicant may apply for a fixed-amount grant, provided that the applicant maintains the cost per MSY appropriate to the level established for its associated funding grant cycle number and that its cost per MSY does not exceed the maximum costs per MSY for fixed-amount grants set by the Corporation. Successful applicants receiving fixed-amount grants must also comply to any other federal requirements determined by the Corporation.

**D. Living Allowance**

The proposed budget must include a living allowance for full-time members that is between \$11,800 (minimum) and \$23,600 (maximum). In most instances, the grant received by an applicant will not cover the full amount of the living allowance provided to members. Programs choosing to provide part-time members with living allowances must comply with the maximum limits in the chart below and should follow the guidelines below for minimum limits. Education Award Program applicants are not required to provide a living allowance. However, if a program choose to, it should comply with the maximum living allowance requirement. Fixed-Amount Pilot applicants are required to provide a living allowance to members following these guidelines.

Term of Service	Minimum Number of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Living Allowance	MSY
Full-time	1700	\$11,800	\$23,600	1.000
Half-Time	900	\$6,247	\$12,500	0.500
Reduced Half-Time	675	\$4,685	\$9,370	0.381
Quarter-Time	450	\$3,123	\$6,250	0.2646
Minimum-Time	300	\$2,082	\$4,160	0.2117



Because the minimum living allowance may not fully cover the actual living expenses of members, programs may wish to offer living allowances in excess of the minimum requirements. Programs are prohibited from comparing member living allowance to an “hourly wage” in any recruitment materials, member handbooks, etc.

**E. Enrollment**

CaliforniaVolunteers and the Corporation expect grantees to enroll the full number of members included in the grant award. Enrollment rates have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and recomplete processes.

**F. Retention**

CaliforniaVolunteers and the Corporation recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model. We expect grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible. Retention rates will have a direct bearing on the number of slots and the size of awards approved in the continuation and recomplete processes. Applicants that do not retain members are likely to receive a decrease in funding.

**G. Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards**

AmeriCorps members serving in program funded with 2010 dollars who successfully complete a term of service will receive an education award as defined in the chart below. The amount of the Education Award is indexed to the value of the Pell Grant award, as required by the Serve America Act and as such, will increase on an annual basis. The member may use the award to pay for current educational expenses at qualified institutions of higher education, or to repay qualified student loans. A member has up to seven years after the term of service has ended to use the award. AmeriCorps members who commence service on or after October 1, 2009, who are age 55 or older at the time they commence service, may, upon successful completion of a term of service, transfer the education award to a child, grandchild, or foster child.

<b>Term of Service</b>	<b>Number of Hours</b>	<b>2010-11 Education Award</b>
Full-time	at least 1,700	\$5,350
Half-time	at least 900	\$2,675
Reduced half-time	at least 675	\$2,038
Quarter-time	at least 450	\$1,415
Minimum-time	at least 300	\$1,132

**ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

---

**A. Eligible Applicants**

***Community Partnerships***

To ensure that AmeriCorps programs are reflective of the communities in which they serve, are supported by the community, and assist the program in instituting long-term change and sustainable solutions to community needs, all applicants are required to develop a program partnership. Partnerships must include *a minimum of three independent organizations* that include *at least one public and one private partner* (nonprofit or for-profit entity).



CaliforniaVolunteers considers 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations to be private entities. The primary members of the partnership must include at least three independent organizations, each of which must have a significant role in planning, operating, and sustaining the program. Other members of the partnership should have ongoing roles and/or provide other contributions such as training resources, to ensure the success of the program. The partnership must be formalized (e.g; by a letter of agreement that includes at a minimum, match requirements, roles and responsibilities, expectations, and other commitments). All partners should be identified on the Partnership Form submitted on-line as part of the application package.

Partners may include, but are not limited to: community-based organizations; senior and youth organizations; disability organizations; K-12 schools, colleges and universities; churches and faith-based organizations; local, state, and federal government agencies; businesses and foundations; health care organizations; and, other national service programs.

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, any organization described in Section 501 (c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501 (c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply, serve as a host site for member placements, or act in any type of supervisory role in the program.

**B. Maximum Grant Size**

Annual limits on grant request are based on applicant types as follows:

<b>Applicant Type</b>	<b>Formula Funding Limit</b>	<b>Competitive Funding</b>
New Applicant	\$400,000	No limit
Experienced Applicant	\$400,000	No limit
Previously Funded Program	\$850,000	No limit
Recompeting Program	\$850,000	No limit

**C. Minimum Program Size**

While the Corporation *encourages* a minimum program size of 20 MSYs, CV *requires* a minimum program size of 20 MSYs. CaliforniaVolunteers believes this MSY requirement is necessary in order to provide member positions in quantities that make an impact on identified community needs. CaliforniaVolunteers will review requests for exemptions submitted by specialized programs that require reduced-hour positions or programs focused on a need that inherently requires a relatively small number of members. CaliforniaVolunteers will not accept proposals requesting fewer than 10 MSYs. Program designs in CV’s 2009-10 portfolio range from 20 MSY up to 435 MSY, with an average program size of 48 MSY.



## FUNDING PRIORITIES

---

### A. Federal Priorities

In 2010, the Corporation's funding priorities are projects that address compelling, unmet needs in one or a combination of the following five national service priorities:

**Education**--Unmet educational needs that help children and youth achieve success in school and prevent them from dropping out before high school graduation.

**Healthy Futures**--Unmet health needs including access to health care, disease prevention and health promotion initiatives, and health literacy.

**Clean Energy/Environment**--Unmet energy-efficiency and environmental needs.

**Veterans**--Unmet needs of veterans, members of the Armed Forces who are on active duty, and family members of deployed military personnel and engage veterans in service.

**Opportunity**--Unmet needs relating to economic opportunity for economically disadvantaged individuals within communities including financial literacy, housing assistance, job training, and nutritional assistance.

The SAA requires that the Corporation design and use national performance measures to collect meaningful data on the critical impact of AmeriCorps across the country. The development of national measures will allow for aggregated reporting of impact across the portfolio and contribute to the growth of AmeriCorps envisioned in the SAA. The Corporation is currently developing national performance measures in the five national service priority areas and will release them in November. These national measures are optional in the 2010 application. All applicants responding to this RFA are required to complete and submit their performance measures using CV Performance Measurement Worksheets included in the Application Instructions document as part of their application for funding. CaliforniaVolunteers staff will work with successful applicants who opt to use national performance measures at a later time.

### B. CaliforniaVolunteers Values

#### ***Targeted at solving a critical challenge facing California***

California is a large state with problems that need our attention. CaliforniaVolunteers values program models that clearly address an identified critical community issue, not merely the expansion of a single organization's mission. AmeriCorps programs are required to perform activities that are designed, implemented and evaluated with extensive and broad-based local input. This input is provided in consultation with representatives from the community served and agencies with a demonstrated record of experience in providing services.

#### ***Focus on measurable outcomes***

CaliforniaVolunteers values strong program designs built to address the community need by logically connecting all components back to that need. The program design is built to deliver the services that achieve the desired end result and can quantifiably measure and report the impact annually.

#### ***National service is an appropriate strategy***



CaliforniaVolunteers is committed to demonstrating that service is a powerful strategy to address community challenges. Successful program designs clearly identify direct beneficiaries of the stated community need, identify a research based intervention proven to address the need and clearly articulate why the efforts of an AmeriCorps member is an appropriate strategy to deliver the intervention.

### ***Dedication to quality***

CaliforniaVolunteers seeks to invest in programs that are committed to making a difference and incorporate quality management practices to oversee the program and protect precious taxpayer dollars. CaliforniaVolunteers values programs which can successfully implement the program design by assuring that the systems and processes necessary for managing and assessing the effectiveness of the program model are in place prior to operation. This includes adequate oversight in the management of each component to assure that the program design and systems are implemented and assessed, and that stakeholder feedback leads to continuous improvement.

### **C. CaliforniaVolunteers Governor's Initiatives**

At the request of the Governor, the CV may create partnerships to implement projects designed to address specific unmet needs in the state. Governor's Initiatives must be approved by the CV Commission and may be exempt from the peer or staff review stages of the grantmaking process at the discretion of CV staff. Additionally, Governor's Initiatives will not be subjected to the following policies: Grantmaking policy number B.5 Grant Types; B.7 Minimum and Maximum Grant Size; B.8 Minimum Program Size; C.3 Minimum Threshold Score. Please refer to the Guide for more information on these CV policies. All other applicable policies apply to Governor's Initiatives.

Two Governor's Initiatives have been identified and approved for 2010 funding:

- Up to \$1 million in planning grants to support health distressed communities identified by the California Endowment Healthy Communities Initiative.
- Up to \$1 million to support an operating grant with the California Department of Veterans Affairs in establishing a Veterans Corps to engage veterans as AmeriCorps members to better serve the needs of new veterans.



## SELECTION CRITERIA

---

In evaluating applications for funding, reviewers at both the state and national level will assess program design, organizational capability, and cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy. The weights assigned to each category and sub-category are listed in the chart below. Reviewers will assess application narratives against these criteria and weight them accordingly. Please see the AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2522.420–2522.448, for additional detail regarding these criteria and what reviewers will assess in each category.

### Basic Selection Criteria: Categories, Sub-Categories, and Respective Weights

Category	Sub-Categories and Weights
Program Design – 50%	Rationale and Approach (10%)
	Member Outputs and Outcomes (20%)
	Community Outputs and Outcomes (20%)
Organizational Capability – 25%	No sub-categories
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy - 25%	Cost-Effectiveness (15%)
	Budget Adequacy (10%)

Section 2522.450 of the AmeriCorps regulations addresses types of programs or program models that may receive special consideration in the selection process. Section 2522.455 addresses how you can find out about additional priorities governing the selection process. Section 2522.470 addresses other factors or information the Corporation may consider in making final decisions.



## APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

---

Both CV and the Corporation typically receive far more in funding requests than can be awarded. Applications are selected using an intensive, multi-stage process that includes the CV peer review process, CV staff interviews of partnerships, CV Commission approval, Corporation peer review panels, and review by Corporation staff with approval by the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer.

Following the initial compliance screening, CV's selection process occurs in two phases. First, during the peer/staff review process, teams of peer reviewers from throughout the state and CV staff evaluate the basic program concept against a selection matrix. Those applications that score well in the peer/staff review process will be invited to participate in an interview with CV staff. The interview process evaluates the commitment of the applicant's proposed partnership and the ability of the partnership to implement the proposed program design. All applicants, whether applying for competitive or formula funds, must meet a minimum score threshold in order to be considered for funding. Applicants that apply for competitive funds, and do not meet the minimum threshold, will not be forwarded to the national competition.

Given the condensed timeline for competitive submission, CV will schedule December/January interviews for only those applicants under consideration to compete at the national level. Competitive selection criteria includes grant request size, cost per MSY, issue area focus, and past performance. Interviews for the remaining applicants will be conducted in April, 2010. It is highly critical to the scoring process that key representatives of the applicant's community partnerships be available for the interview during these two timeframes. A weighted score is created by weighting the scores from the peer/staff review and interview processes 40 percent and 60 percent, respectively. In addition, 10 percent of the weighted score will be added to the score of a new applicant (verified by CV staff) to establish its final score. See Guide for more details.

Following the completion of the interview process, a rank-order list will be created. The Corporation will make competitive funding decisions following the completion of their review process. Applicants that are not successful in the national competition will be returned to California, receive a budget adjustment to meet formula funding guidelines, and be placed on the formula list in rank order per the final score from the grantmaking process. CV maintains no obligation to provide formula funding to competitive applicants that are not funded through the national competition. Formula funding decisions will be made following the Corporation's funding announcements in early June. In creating the formula portfolio, CV considers two primary factors – high quality (as determined by score) and geographic distribution (see Guide for policy).

CaliforniaVolunteers provides all applicants the opportunity to request a summary of reviewer comments (both peer reviewer and staff) in order to support their continuous improvement efforts. Notification letters sent in November, 2009 will include instructions for requesting reviewer comments.

Commission funding decisions are final—there is no appeal process.



## APPLICATION SUBMISSION

---

### Submission to CaliforniaVolunteers

Applicants responding to the 2010 AmeriCorps Request for Applications (RFA) must complete a paper application and submit several forms electronically. The electronic and paper portions of the application are both required. To complete your application, you should:

1. Download the RFA, Application Instructions and Budget and Budget Narrative Forms (available on the CV Web site at [www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org](http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org)). Read and follow the Application Instructions.

Please note that the Application Instructions document also contains directions for completing the required online forms.

2. Visit the online forms page (accessible at [www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org](http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org)), create a login name and password, and complete your State Title Pages and your Partnership Forms.
  - Once you have completed and submitted your State Title Pages, you will be sent to a printer-friendly version of your forms. Print these forms and include the hard copies with your paper application. If you would like to edit your State Title Pages after submitting them, you may log in again, make any necessary changes and print another copy.
  - Once you have completed and submitted your Partnership Form(s), you will be sent to a printer-friendly version of your form(s) for submission with your application. If you would like to edit your Partnership Form(s), you may log in again, make any necessary changes and print another copy.
3. Before you submit your completed application, please review the Application Checklist included with the Application Instructions document.

If you have difficulties or cannot access the online forms, please contact us via e-mail at [funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov](mailto:funding@CaliforniaVolunteers.ca.gov).

### Submission to the Corporation for National and Community Service

After the CV selection process, the Corporation for National and Community Service requires that all applicants submit their applications electronically utilizing the Corporation's web-based application system, eGrants. Applicants selected to represent California in the national competition will submit their applications into eGrants by January 20, 2010. Successful formula programs will submit following funding announcements in June, 2010.

Applicants must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to enter eGrants. The DUNS number does not replace your Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com). The website indicates a 24-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, we suggest allowing up to 30 days for processing. Given the tight AmeriCorps grantmaking timeline, we strongly suggest that applicants register for a DUNS number immediately. Further instructions regarding the eGrants system will be posted to the CaliforniaVolunteers website.

