

Responses to Questions for RFP # 2018-19
AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool

The Commission hosted an Informational Meeting/Technical Assistance Session for this RFP on 12/12/2018 1:00 pm Eastern Time.

[Please click here for a recording of this session.](#)

Please Note: OCFS amended RFP **Section 1.2 Calendar of Events** on 12/24/2018. The deadline for submission of proposals has been extended. The amended RFP is available for download at the OCFS Website <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/bcm/rfp.asp>, the NYS Contract Reporter <https://www.nyscr.ny.gov>, and the NYS Grants Gateway at <https://grantsgateway.ny.gov>. Please see the amended RFP for additional information and submission requirements.

Request for Proposal (RFP) General Information	
Q1	Which Notice of Funding Available (NOFA) and Grant Application ID do I apply to in the eGrants system?
A1	<p>An applicant must choose a Cost Reimbursement or Fixed Cost Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) depending on the type of grant that an applicant is applying for in response to this RFP.</p> <p>(1) <u>COST REIMBURSEMENT</u> Grant Application ID: 19AC210923 Grant #: 18ACHNY001 NOFA: FY 2019 AmeriCorps State and Territory Commission (New and Continuations)</p> <p>(2) <u>FIXED COST</u> Grant Application ID: 19ES210924 Grant #: 17ESHNY001 NOFA: FY 2019 AmeriCorps State and Terr Comm Fixed Amount, EAP (New and Continuation)</p> <p>Please note: The deadline date listed in eGrants only applies to State Commissions and does not apply to applicants responding to this RFP. Please see RFP Section 1.2 Calendar of Events for deadlines applicable to applicants submitting proposals in response to this RFP.</p>
Q2	Does the Grant Opportunity RFP # 2018-19 for New York State AmeriCorps 2019 require the applicant of the grant to have a full-time staff person to run the administration, hiring, training, orientation, etc. of its AmeriCorps members, or is that job handled by the grantor?
A2	<p>If the applicant were to receive the award, the following would apply: the applicant must provide members with adequate supervision by qualified supervisors consistent with the award. The applicant must conduct an orientation for members, including training on what activities are prohibited during AmeriCorps service hours, and comply with any pre-service orientation or training required by CNCS. The applicant must ensure that it does not exceed the limitation on member service hours spent in education and training set forth in 45 CFR § 2520.50. The applicant must first obtain the prior written approval of the AmeriCorps Program Office before making any substantial changes in the level of member supervision.</p> <p>IV. Member Recruitment, Selection, and Exit.</p>

Responses to Questions for RFP # 2018-19
AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool

Q3	Is it possible to apply for funding for AmeriCorps member positions through this grant, and have the administration of those positions handled by another entity in the state or by AmeriCorps itself?
A3	No, this is not permissible. Applicants who receive an award under this RFP would be responsible for administration for AmeriCorps member positions to include, but not limited to, supervision and training in accordance with the terms and conditions of the award.
Q4	As a new applicant, I anticipate meeting the 1/4/2019 due date for the Competitive Application may prove very difficult. Will there be a later opportunity to apply for a grant in a New York State pool?
A4	The NYS Commission anticipates releasing the AmeriCorps Formula Pool RFP in late spring 2019 subject to the continued availability of funding.
AmeriCorps Grant Award and Application Types	
Q5	Are there any minimum or maximum requirements for the number of members an organization can apply?
A5	No, there are no minimum or maximum requirements for the number of members. For additional guidance, see RFP Section 4.1 Desired Outcomes and Program Requirements , "... <i>The general practice is to award no more than 50-member positions (slots) to organizations receiving an AmeriCorps grant for the first time.</i> "
Q6	a. Can I apply for an Education Award Only program? b. Is program funding required?
A6	a) Yes, however, please see Section 4.1.A of the RFP to determine if your agency meets all the requirements to submit an Education Award Program (EAP) application. b) No, program funding is not required.
Q7	Can you clarify the definition of "additional projects" and how to determine whether our program is considered "new" or continuing?
A7	<p>Please see Section 2.3 of the RFP. Additional Projects. Current and previous grantees may not operate a new project without the written approval of the Corporation.</p> <p>Same Project: Two projects will be considered the same if they: address the same issue areas, address the same priorities, address the same objectives, serve the same target communities and population, or utilize the same sites.</p> <p>Current and previous grantees need to get approval from their Program Officer to be considered a new project. CNCS will consider a project to be new if there is a meaningful difference between it and previous projects in a comparison of the following characteristics, among others: the objectives and priorities of the projects; the nature of the services provided; the program staff, participants, and volunteers involved; the geographic locations in which the services are provided; the populations served; and the proposed community partnerships. (§ 2522.340).</p> <p>Requests to be considered a new project should include information about how the new project differs from the previous project in the characteristics noted above. The request should also include the proposed name of the new project. CNCS staff will review the request to determine if the proposed project does represent a meaningful difference from the previous</p>

Responses to Questions for RFP # 2018-19
AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool

	<p>project or if the proposed project is an example of natural program evolution over time. If it is determined that the project is new, the Program Officer will create a new project in eGrants. Written requests for permission to apply for more than one project must be emailed to RFP@ocfs.ny.gov with a courtesy copy submitted to americorps.frp@newyorkersvolunteer.ny.gov by the date specified in Section 1.2 Calendar of Events. This request must be approved by the Corporation before the Commission can accept more than one proposal. Please refer to the 2019 AmeriCorps State and National Mandatory Supplemental Guidance, page 10, for further information.</p> <p>Please note: pursuant to section 1.2 of the RFP, the deadline to submit additional projects was December 14, 2018.</p>
Q8	My program is currently in year three of Competitive funding. I am submitting a “new” application in response to the AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Request for Proposal. Is this the same as a “new” project for which I must receive prior approval from Corporation staff?
A8	Please see Section 2.3 of the RFP, Additional Projects, for further information regarding requirements for current and previous AmeriCorps programs. Please note: pursuant to section 1.2 of the RFP, the deadline to submit additional projects was December 14, 2018.
Q9	When will we hear back on the request to apply for new or multiple programs?
A9	The Commission will notify applicants who requested to submit additional projects upon response from the National Corporation.
Q10	Am I a continuation application?
A10	Please see Section 4.1 of the RFP regarding new and continuation applications.
Q11	Our organization is currently a formula grantee in its 3rd year of an AmeriCorps contract with NYS. Can we apply for Competitive funding?
A11	It depends. Please see sections 2.3 and 4.1 of the RFP regarding additional projects and new and continuation applications. Please note: pursuant to section 1.2 of the RFP, the deadline to submit additional projects was December 14, 2018.
Q12	Can a formula subgrantee, mid-way thru the 3 years grant cycle, apply as new to the competitive NOFO?
A12	It depends. Please see sections 2.3 and 4.1 of the RFP regarding additional projects and new and continuation applications. Please note: pursuant to section 1.2 of the RFP, the deadline to submit additional projects was December 14, 2018.
Submission of Proposals – New York State Supporting Documents	
Q13	Would you please indicate the submission requirements of both the federal and state NOFA and RFP for continuation applicants?
A13	Please see Section 1.6 Submission of Proposals of this RFP for New York State Supporting Documents requirement. The requirements apply to all types of applicants in response to this RFP. An applicant might also be subject to evaluation requirements or be required to submit evidence studies as part of its application. Please see Section 5.0 Proposal Content and Submission for requirements that might be applicable to your agency.
Q14	Do Continuation applicants have to submit the New York State supporting documents as listed on Pages 4-5 of the NYS RFP?

Responses to Questions for RFP # 2018-19
AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool

A14	Yes. Continuation applicants must submit all documents required in accordance with the RFP.
Q15	When are the forms listed in Section 1.6 (NYS supporting documents) due?
A15	The forms listed in section 1.6 of the RFP are considered to be part of your proposal and must be submitted by the deadline for submission of proposals as indicated in section 1.2 of the RFP Calendar of Events.
Q16	<p>a. Please confirm the additional documents and supplementary forms required for CONTINUATION applicants. We are a NONPROFIT institute of higher ed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VendRep Questionnaire Certificate of Completion (RFP.15): Which of the following is correct because GGS Help Desk did not know where to find ‘pre-submission uploads’! • GGS advised: ADD TO THE DOCUMENT VAULT Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire upload. They also reached out to OCFS who said... • OCFS said (see attached message from GGS/OCFS) to email Supplementary supporting docs to RFP@ocfs.ny.gov with a courtesy copy submitted to americorps.rfp@newyorkersvolunteer.ny.gov by the dates specified in Section 1.2 Calendar of Events • OCFS-2633 • OCFS-2634 • Attachment A2 • OCFS-2647 • Attachment 1 <p>b. Studies used in evidence base? (we are continuation so not needed, correct?)</p> <p>c. Any proof of our registration on Charities Registry with application? (We are registered)</p> <p>d. Any other docs and forms?</p>
A16	<p>a. Please see section 1.6 for a list of the documents required to be submitted in accordance with the RFP and submission instructions. In accordance with section 1.6 of the RFP, supporting documents must be emailed to RFP@ocfs.ny.gov with a courtesy copy submitted to americorps.rfp@newyorkersvolunteer.ny.gov by the deadline for submission of proposals as specified in section 1.2 of the RFP.</p> <p>b. Evidence Base is not required for “Continuation” applications. Please see section 4.1 of the RFP for program requirements for continuation applications. Evidence is required for “New” and “Recompete” applications as specified in 5.0 of the RFP.</p> <p>c. Please see section 7.5 of the RFP for Charities Registration Requirements.</p> <p>d. Please see section 1.6 for a list of the documents required in accordance with the RFP.</p> <p>Please note: proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be submitted through eGrants, the federally secure web-based system.</p>
Submission of Proposals – eGrants	
Q17	On page 4, it says “applicants should [...] paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline. There’s a possibility that we could still be making edits leading up to the deadline on January 4th. Can you clarify what the rule is?”
A17	It is recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application creation process as soon as possible before the deadline. Applicants should draft the

Responses to Questions for RFP # 2018-19
AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool

	<p>application as a Word document and copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline.</p> <p>Please note: Proposals must be submitted by the deadline for submission of proposals as indicated in section 1.2 of the RFP.</p>
Q18	Do you have suggestions for correctly formatting the application text in eGrants?
A18	The text boxes in eGrants do not accept formatting. Bold, italics, bulleting, accents, and special characters will be lost. Avoid using any special characters. Please refer to section 1.6 for a link to eGrants.
Technical Proposal Content/Work Plan	
Q19	Must education programs have “moderate” or “strong” evidence to be considered an education-focused program?
A19	Yes, please see section 4.1.H. of the RFP.
Q20	Do I need to measure each activity included in our program design?
A20	Please see section 4.1.I. of the RFP for performance measures.
Q21	<p>a. Can a Year 10+ program in a new re-compete cycle modify/increase the Cost per MSY request?</p> <p>b. Is a compelling case/justification required, even though it is a re-compete and not a continuation request?</p>
A21	<p>a) Please see Section 4.1.C. of the RFP for cost per MSY.</p> <p>b) Yes, please see section 5.2 of the RFP where it refers you to the 2019 APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS State and National Competitive New and Continuation to prepare your budget.</p>
Q22	May continuation applicants change or delete performance measures?
A22	Please refer to instructions for Continuation Applications in section 4.1 of the RFP.
Q23	May continuation applicants change the budget to reflect program changes?
A23	Please refer to instructions for Continuation Applications in section 4.1 of the RFP.
Q24	May continuation applicants lower or increase match amounts as proposed in the original budget of the first year of the original proposal?
A24	Please refer to instructions for Continuation Applications in section 4.1 of the RFP.
Q25	Should the narrative changes be listed in the Continuation narrative on e-grants?
A25	Please refer to instructions for Continuation Applications in section 4.1 of the RFP.
Q26	<p>This question refers to the Application Instructions State and National Competitive New and Continuation Document Attachment B "Section 1-I Other Program Operating Costs." The application instructions state that we must include \$54 plus the cost of state check for criminal history checks for all covered positions plus the cost of a state check. Our program has two questions related to this requirement:</p> <p>a. Should we allocate \$54 for every covered position?</p> <p>b. What is the \$54 for?</p>
A26	a. Yes, please refer to section 5.2 of the RFP.

Responses to Questions for RFP # 2018-19
AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool

	b. The \$54 is for criminal history checks. Please see the 2019 APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS State and National Competitive New and Continuation.
Q27	Are Matching funds a percentage of the total project cost?
A27	Yes, please see Section 4.1.E. of the RFP for additional information. For example: If an applicant proposes a new project and requests ten (10) MSYs, then the maximum federal funding that can be requested would be \$150,000. The applicant would need to provide a 24% match of the total program costs (both federal and grantee match) of \$47,368.42 for a total program budget of \$197,368.42.
Other Questions	
Q28	This is to state that we will be submitting a response to the RFP# 2018-19 NYS AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool to re-compete for a new 3-year cycle for our existing program. We provide services to low-income and medically underserved New York State residents by placing AmeriCorps members at Federally Qualified Health Centers. Members provide evidence-informed interventions that are culturally appropriate to the communities they serve and address knowledge barriers that limit access to health care services. In carrying out the proposed initiatives, we will partner with four FQHCs to implement these activities in each of their respective service areas. Our members provide patients and community residents with information on health insurance, access, and benefits; provide health education services to patients and community residents on clinical, health-related topics; and provide care management services such as reminder phone calls, and track and assist in completing referrals for providers. Members serve throughout 5 regions of the State in New York City, Hudson Valley Region, Catskill Region, Long Island Region, and Finger Lakes Region. We are submitting this request as we currently have an ongoing AmeriCorps project, and want to know if the response to this RFP, RFP# 2018-19 NYS AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool, would be considered an additional project; and if so, if we can still submit a re-compete proposal. We would appreciate if you can confirm our eligibility at your earliest convenience and feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.
A28	Section 2.3 of the RFP provides instructions/information for additional project requests. These requests will be addressed separately by the CNCS, as stated in Section 2.3 of the RFP.
Q29	Given that we meet the continuation application requirement for operating an AmeriCorps program within the last five years and our contract term is valid through 12/31/2020, please confirm that we should submit a continuation/renewal application for the 2019 competitive funding cycle.
A29	Please consult with your current program administrator to verify your current NYS contract status. Please see Section 4.1 of the RFP for additional information regarding continuation applications.

Responses to Questions for RFP # 2018-19
AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool

Q30	<p>Based on findings from our 2018 planning grant activities, we would like to refine our AmeriCorps program by implementing the most impactful evidence-based intervention from the Peacemakers service model – our K-12 success intervention to improve students’ academic achievement. The AmeriCorps program will be implemented at our K-12 Promise Academy I and Promise Academy II public charter schools, which are located within the geographic area of our original project (NYC DOE Community School District 5) and serve a population of children with the same demographics and academic needs. We will continue to recruit AmeriCorps members from the Central Harlem community, with an emphasis on college-aged students who are interested in pursuing careers in education. Our K-12 success intervention will focus primarily on in-school academic supports, such as tutoring and small-group instruction, for students in grades K-5. Since the Promise Academy charter schools operate on an extended school day (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.), we intend to slightly modify member roles/responsibilities to support each schools’ daily schedule of activities, classroom structure, and instructional needs. Overall, the key elements of our AmeriCorps program will be consistent with our Peacemakers service model with slight adjustments to incorporate members into these specific schools. Would this be an example of the natural program evolution of our previous AmeriCorps model as defined in the RFP section 2.3?</p>
A30	<p>The Commission cannot address questions specific to the content of individual applications. Please see Section 5.3 of the RFP, AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY2019, 2019 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition Best Practices in Demonstrating Evidence for details.</p>
Q31	<p>As in previous years, AmeriCorps members will serve in two different capacities to support our K-12 Success intervention: Tutors and Classroom Aides. Please note that these titles have been modified to align with traditional AmeriCorps member roles that have been incorporated into other successful AmeriCorps programs. Tutors will support classroom instruction through supplemental instruction to enhance students’ academic achievement. Classroom Aides will provide conflict resolution and mediation services to support students’ social-emotional learning and engage them in classroom learning. Can these two separate roles contribute toward supporting the same K-12 success intervention?</p>
A31	<p>The Commission cannot address questions specific to the content of individual applications. Please be advised that CNCS regulations have very specific requirements for tutoring programs. Please see Section 5.3 of the RFP, table of applicable regulations, for additional information.</p>
Q32	<p>When are the supporting documents required to be emailed to RFP@ocfs.ny.gov and courtesy copied to americorps.rfp@newyorkersvolunteer.ny.gov due by? When I reference Section 1.2 Calendar of Events, I did not see a due date for the New York State Supporting Documents.</p>
A32	<p>The forms listed in section 1.6 of the RFP are considered to be part of your proposal and must be submitted by the deadline for submission of proposals as indicated in section 1.2 of the RFP.</p>
Q33	<p>We are currently under a formula grant but going for a 3 year, would we be new or re-compete?</p>

Responses to Questions for RFP # 2018-19
AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool

A33	Please consult with your current program administrator to verify your current NYS contract status. Please see Section 4.1 of the RFP for additional information regarding new and continuation applications.
Q34	<p>We are in year 3 of 3 of a NYS Commission ‘Formula’ funded program. We did NOT receive ‘competitive’ funding for our first 3-year cycle.</p> <p>I intend to submit for our next 3-year cycle through Competitive Pool opportunity. I will be continuing our basic program ‘as is’ so the concepts, outcomes, etc are not ‘new’.</p> <p>However, in the RFP Instructions (Page 16, 4.1) it states: Continuation Applications: Organizations that have current AmeriCorps competitive contracts that will not end prior to December 31, 2019, must submit a continuation application to be considered for funding for any additional term.</p> <p>So, as a currently Formula funded program, are we a continuation application or a new application?</p>
A34	Please consult with your current program administrator to verify your current NYS contract status. Please see Section 4.1 of the RFP for additional information regarding new and continuation applications.
Q35	<p>This question refers to the 2019 AmeriCorps State & National Mandatory Supplemental Guidance “Education Priority Interventions” section and section "IX. Funding/Demographics" of the Application Instructions State and National Competitive New and Continuation Document. Our AmeriCorps funded program is an Education, K-12 Success, tutoring program that has outcomes related to both reading and math achievement. There is no single intervention that has outcomes related to both reading and math achievement. Instead there are two separate tutoring interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention #4: Tutoring or supplemental instruction for the intended outcome of increased math achievement • Intervention #6: Literacy tutoring for the intended outcome of increased reading achievement and improved social-emotional skills. <p>eGrants only allows one Education Priority intervention number to be entered in the funding and demographic section of the application. Should we indicate on the application that our program aligns with Education Priority Intervention #4 since this intervention is listed as "tutoring or supplemental instruction" and include both math and reading achievement outcomes in our performance measure?</p>
A35	The Commission cannot address questions specific to the content of individual applications. Please see Section 5.3 of the RFP, AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY2019, 2019 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition Best Practices in Demonstrating Evidence for details.
Q36	Should we submit a continuation application in response to RFP#2018-19 to continue funding for the second of our three-year contract?

Responses to Questions for RFP # 2018-19
AmeriCorps 2019 Competitive Pool

A36	Please consult with your current program administrator to verify your current NYS contract status. Please see Section 4.1 of the RFP for additional information regarding new and continuation applications.
Q37	My organization currently runs a program funded by the AmeriCorps Formula Pool. I am wondering if we should be submitting a continuation application, as we are in contract right now, or if we should be submitting a "new" application?
A37	It depends. Please see sections 2.3 and 4.1 of the RFP regarding additional projects and new and continuation applications. <u>Please note:</u> pursuant to section 1.2 of the RFP, the deadline to submit additional projects was December 14, 2018.