

Responses to Questions for RFP# 1066  
AmeriCorps Formula

<p><b>New York State Commission of National and Community Service Resources</b>  <b>Programmatic and Evidence Information Session: <a href="#">Recorded Webinar</a></b>  <b>Technical Requirement Information Session: <a href="#">Recorded Webinar</a></b>  <b>Additional Programmatic/Evidence and Technical Requirement Information Session:</b>  <b><a href="#">Recorded Webinar</a></b></p>	
<p><b>Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation or CNCS) Resources</b>  <b><a href="#">CNCS Resources</a></b>  <b>CNCS Knowledge Network: <a href="#">Evaluation Resources</a> / <a href="#">The Evidence Continuum</a></b></p>	
<b>Q1</b>	<b>What are the Applications IDs for the Prime?</b>
A1	Cost Reimbursement Grant: 21AC236117 Fixed Amount Grant: 21ES236116
<b>Q2</b>	<b>Where can I locate CNCS Resources related to this grant?</b>
A2	<p>CNCS Resources are available on the <a href="#">CNCS AmeriCorps State and National Grants PY2021 webpage link</a>. They provide technical assistance that covers the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Fund 101</li> <li>• AmeriCorps 101</li> <li>• About the Economic Mobility Corps</li> <li>• Best Practice in Developing Performance Measures</li> <li>• Best Practice in Demonstrating Evidence</li> <li>• Best Practice in Budget Development</li> <li>• Best Practice in Writing an Evaluation Plan</li> <li>• Best Practice in Evaluation Reporting</li> </ul> <p>Additional Commission Resources and CNCS Evidence Resources on CNCS Knowledge Network are referenced at the beginning of this document.</p>
<b>Q3</b>	<b>We submitted a new Competitive application to start in September 2021. We are wondering about the timeline for finding out our Competitive application status since we may decide to apply for Formula funding if we are not successful in the Competitive application. Could you advise us on next steps?</b>
A3	AmeriCorps Competitive Pool award decisions are not expected from the Corporation until mid-May of 2021 at the earliest. While NYS AmeriCorps PY2021 Competitive Pool RFP (RFP #1061) and NYS AmeriCorps PY2021 Formula RFP (RFP #1066) share similar program requirements, these

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	are two separate procurements (RFPs) and should be treated as such. A program should submit a separate application in eGrants, for each of the opportunities they wish to be considered for award.
<b>Q4</b>	<b>Hello this opportunity, seems to be only for non-profits? We are a for-profit health and wellness company</b>
A4	As per <b>Section 3.1 Minimum Qualifications</b> , for profits <u>are not</u> eligible to apply for funding under this RFP.
<b>Q5</b>	<b>Our agency submitted an application to the 2021-2022 New York State AmeriCorps Request for Proposals (Competitive Pool) which are due November 24, 2020. CNCS is reviewing the application now. Are we able to also submit an application for the same program model in response to the New York State AmeriCorps 2021 Formula Pool?</b>
A5	Yes. Please see response A3.
<b>Q6</b>	<b>Does the continuation changes section count towards the narrative with the 10-page limit?</b>
A6	N/A-This RFP is ONLY for new and recompeting (in the final year of a competitive funding cycle and applying for a new grant cycle) applicant. Please see Section 4.2 Program Requirements Based on AmeriCorps Grant Award and Application Types – Continuation Requests, and the Bidder’s Notice contained herein. Continuing programs should have received AmeriCorps Formula Continuation Instructions for 2021-2022, under separate cover from the RFP. Please reach out to your Program Officer for questions related to continuation instructions.
<b>Q7</b>	<b>Can we, as a continuation applicant, make changes to our performance measures?</b>
A7	This question is not applicable to this opportunity. Please see response A6.
<b>Q8</b>	<b>For the new Racial Equity and Justice section, does a continuation applicant have to include this in the continuation section? If so, can we be awarded the full 4 points even though the continuation changes are worth 0?</b>
A8	Continuation submissions are reviewed by the Commission staff and do not receive points. They are not governed by the terms of the RFP but rather by the separate continuation instructions sent by the Commission. Please see response A6 and A7.
<b>Q9</b>	<b>I wanted to make sure we were applying for the correct grant in egrants for FY 2021 grant number 218C236117. The grants due date is Jan 6, 2021, is this the once State formula applicants should be applying for? Are grant due date is April 28, 2021</b>
A9	Responses to this RFP are due on the date and time specified in <b>Section 1.2 Calendar of Events under Deadline for Submission of Proposals in eGrants, which is April 28, 2021 by 4:59pm Eastern Time</b> . Please see response A1 for additional information on the NYS Commission primes in eGrants.
<b>Q10</b>	<b>Do we anticipate the match for years 8 and 9 to return to 42% and 46 %?</b>

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A10	At this time, the Commission has no information regarding match beyond the 2021-2022 program year.
Q11	<b>Can a recompeting applicant change its program model at this time? If so, are there any additional steps or requirements necessary to fulfill during this application period? For example, an applicant may want to incorporate a COVID response into its existing model. Or, the recompeting applicant wants to change its model because of lessons learned during its previous experience.</b>
A11	<p>A recompeting applicant can change its program model. It is possible this could be considered a “new, same or additional project.” The Commission cannot assist in determining whether a recompeting application falls within these parameters The Corporation has the sole discretion in reviewing these requests.</p> <p>The Corporation has listed out the criteria an applicant should consider when determining whether a different program model is considered new or a natural program evolution over time. Please see <a href="#">PY2021 Mandatory Supplemental Instructions (PY2021 MSI)</a> page 8 for definition or same / new / additional projects.</p> <p>If an applicant has determined their application contains significant changes such that it would be considered a different model, please follow the instructions on <a href="#">page 12 of the RFP: 2.3 Purpose and Funding Availability – New, Same or Additional Projects</a> for requesting a new project ID in eGrants.</p>
Q12	<b>Can a recompeting applicant apply for a Fixed Amount grant if it was previously awarded a formula grant?</b>
A12	Yes.
Q13	<b>Can an applicant apply for both a planning grant and operating funds for the same project? For example, an applicant may propose a project addressing needs among senior citizens and would utilize the planning grant to perform additional study of the needs. Or is it advisable that such an applicant request the planning grant first and then apply, in a subsequent year, for a project design informed by the planning grant.</b>
A13	The Commission cannot award a planning grant and an operating grant to the same applicant for the same project/same program design as a result of the same procurement.
Q14	<b>We have applied for an Americorp Grant. The award will not be given until May 1, 2021. If we are awarded we would like to operate two simultaneous programs if we apply and are awarded a second Americorps Grant.</b>
A14	A new project request is only required when an applicant intends to submit a second application to the same Request for Proposals (RFP). An applicant can create a new application ID in eGrants if the proposed projects are in response to two different RFPs.
Q15	<b>Alternative Match Request (RFP #1066/pg 24; NOFO/pg 7; Application Instructions/pg 33)</b>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are currently in year 2 of our 3-year contract. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When we submitted our initial proposal in May of 2019, we included an Alternative Match Request at that time, as during the course of this 3-year grant we would exceed the Alternative Match cap of 35%.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Is that Alternative Match Request still current/valid? Or do we need to submit another one with our Continuation into year 3 of 3?</li> </ul>
A15	Continuation programs should refer to the continuation instructions sent by the Commission. Please see responses A6 and A7.
Q16	<p><b>Budget (Application Instructions/pg 13)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In section VI. Budget (Budget Section), first paragraph, it says: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Continuation applicants may apply for expansions – dollars, MSY and/or members.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• In the paragraph titled: Multi-Year Funded Grantees it states: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Multi-year funded grantees may request up to the dollar and MSY amounts they were granted for the continuation year for which they are applying. Multi-year funded grantees may not request funds or MSY in excess of the amounts they were awarded for each year (year two or year three) of their multi-year funded grants.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• These two statements seem contradictory to me, and I do not understand which I should follow.</li> </ul>
A16	Continuation programs should refer to the continuation instructions sent by the Commission. Please see responses A6 and A7.
Q17	<p><b>Cost per MSY (NOFO/pg 12; Mandatory Supplemental Information/pg 7)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our current Cost/MSY is \$15,370</li> <li>• In the NOFO below the Table: Maximum Cost per MSY it states: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>*Cost reimbursement programs operating in rural communities (as defined in the Mandatory Supplemental Information) and cost reimbursement programs that recruit program opportunity youth as AmeriCorps members may request up to \$16,800 cost per MYS for the AmeriCorps members who will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• I am not clear on the definition of ‘opportunity youth’ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Please define.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Per the Mandatory Supplemental Information, page 7, our RUCA code is 4.5, so our program meets the criteria for ‘serving rural communities’. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Can we INCREASE our Cost/MSY and therefore INCREASE our request for overall funding while maintaining our awarded MSY’s?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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A17	<p>If you are an applicant who is submitting a continuation request, please reach out to your Program Officer as you are requesting an expansion to your current program. Please see responses A6 and A7.</p> <p>If you are submitting as a new/recompete program, you fall into the Individual State/Territory Formula Program category and you are allowed a maximum of \$20,000 Cost per MSY. Please see page 12 of the <a href="#">PY2021 AmeriCorps State and National Notice of Funding Opportunity, Table: Maximum Cost per MSY</a>.</p>
Q18	<p><b>The RFP indicates that if you are part of a government organization, the organization does not have to pre-qualify but does need to register. We have already registered, but a little unsure if we need to do it again.</b></p>
A18	<p>Exempted organizations such as municipalities are only required to initialize their vault once in the Grants Gateway. Please check your Vault status, it should show as “Available” after the initialization is complete.</p>
Q19	<p><b>The Vend Rep system enrollment – is that due before applying for the grant or once you are awarded?</b></p>
A19	<p>The Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire must be dated within six (6) months of the proposal due date and confirmation of completion of the vendor responsibility process must be submitted with your proposal.</p>
Q20	<p><b>On page 16, the 15-month contract allows the contractor a covered period to recruit members and remain compliant. I noticed something for the first time that is a note which says only the AmeriCorps costs can be paid in months 13-15, so that would be the final quarter, or fifth quarter. Has this always been consistent or is that new and I’ve never noticed?</b></p>
A20	<p>This system has been in place for many years. The purpose is to provide a member who doesn’t start on day one, to still have 12 months to complete, but also prevents staff salaries from being double dipped during the overlapping period. Expenses during the 13-15<sup>th</sup> months are allowed only if they support the members completing their terms.</p>
Q21	<p><b>Is the Commission aware that there is a Federal effort through the Department of Defense (DOD) to expand COVID-19 testing throughout the country and they want to do it regionally?</b></p>
A21	<p>Yes, the Commission is aware of this effort.</p>
Q22	<p><b>What is the length of time for which an organization would no longer be deemed a “previous” holder of AmeriCorps contracts? Per 45 CFR § 2521.80 – What matching level applies if my program was funded in the past but has not recently received an AmeriCorps grant?</b></p>

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A22	<p>a) If an applicant has not been a direct recipient of an AmeriCorps operational grant from the Corporation or a State Commission for five (5) years or more, as determined by the end date of their most recent grant period, they may begin matching at the year one level, as reflected in the timetable in 45 CFR § 2521.60(a) of this part, upon receiving your new grant award.</p> <p>b) If an applicant has not been a direct recipient of an AmeriCorps operational grant from the Corporation or a State Commission for fewer than five (5) years, they must begin matching at the same level that they were matching at the end of your most recent grant period.</p>
Q23	<p><b>Would you please indicate which of the NOFAs organizations should select below to apply for the New York State AmeriCorps 2021 Formula Pool for the final year of a competitive funding cycle and applying for a new grant cycle? We would like to apply for a cost reimbursable formula grant. We currently have a national competitive grant.</b></p> <p><b>What is the Prime Application ID?</b></p> <p><b>Is it 21AC236117?</b></p>
A23	Please see response A1.
Q24	<p><b>Does the funding priority need to be the main focus of a program or can it be a robust part of extra credit opportunities and team projects for members?</b></p>
A24	The priority must be <u>a</u> main focus in the proposal but doesn't have to be <u>the</u> main focus. Extra credit opportunities and team projects are not, in and of themselves, a main focus of service activities.
Q25	<p><b>Can you apply for Planning and Program grant at same time? Can you receive both if you want to plan around a new initiative, but you also want to receive support for AmeriCorps placements you have lined up?</b></p>
A25	Please see response A13.
Q26	<p><b>I only see one AC program in Central NY in programs listed for 2020-2021 but don't see it as a priority region. Is this accurate?</b></p>
A26	No. Please see the amended RFP in <b>Section 5.2 Bonus Points. P. 41.</b>
Q27	<p><b>Does the topic or area of focus of a program evaluation have to be updated each three-year grant cycle?</b></p>
A27	No, the focus area doesn't need to be updated each cycle.
Q28	<p><b>This is a formula RFP, is the maximum cost per MSY for this procurement \$16,300 or \$20,000?</b></p>

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A28	Please see response A17.
<b>Q29</b>	<b>If a continuation applicant wants to make changes to our logic model, is it okay if we send it as an attachment?</b>
A29	Continuation applicants must request changes within their continuation request in eGrants. Please see responses A6 and A7.
<b>Q30</b>	<b>How many Planning Grants are expected to be funded?</b>
A30	For the purposes of this procurement, there is no set number of planning or “operational” grants expected to be funded.
<b>Q31</b>	<b>Is the Commission planning on covering the cost for the Member Service Plan access for the 2021-22 Program Year?</b>
A31	There is no “Member Service Plan” cost. The Commission has made no determination regarding PY2021-2022 Member Access Plan (MAP) coverage.
<b>Q32</b>	<b>If a competitive applicant is not recommended for competitive funding, are they automatically considered for formula funding when that procurement process occurs?</b>
A32	No. Applicants who wish to be considered for Formula funding are required to submit a separate application in eGrants for each procurement.
<b>Q33</b>	<b>To what extent can an AmeriCorps member recruit volunteers for the organization they are assigned to? Can it be its own position?</b>
A33	<p>For the extent that an AmeriCorps member can recruit volunteers for the organization, please see <a href="#">Capacity Building of the PY2021 Performance Measure Instruction (pg. 10)</a>. Recruitment volunteers are considered capacity building in nature and the activities must be <i>indirect services</i> that enable organizations to provide more, better and sustained <i>direct services</i>.</p> <p>There is insufficient information to provide a direct response. It is possible for AmeriCorps members to recruit volunteers, but it is not allowed if that action results in displacement of staff or duplicates current staff duties. For allowed member activities, please see <a href="#">45 CFR § 2520.65</a> for the list of Prohibited Activities under AmeriCorps provisions and <a href="#">Unallowable Activities of PY2021 Mandatory Supplemental Instruction pg. 9</a>.</p>
<b>Q34</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Can OCFS provide direction regarding submission of MWBE documents? Our grant budget, at this stage, does NOT include any expenses related to services or products purchased on the open market.</b></li> <li><b>2. Applicants are required to submit an OCFS 4361 MWBE Utilization Plan with their applications according to page 58. If our budget does NOT include any MWBE eligible expenses, should that be stated on the OCFS 43561 MWBE Utilization Plan?</b></li> <li><b>3. If an applicant does NOT have any MWBE eligible expenses, should it ALSO submit an OCFS 4442 MWBE Waiver?</b></li> </ol>

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	<p><b>4. Does the MWBE Utilization Plan extend to expenses matched by the Grantee (applicant)?</b></p>
A34	<p>1. The three forms required for this procurement opportunity are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>OCFS 3460 Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement</b></li> <li>• <b>OCFS 4629 Project Staffing Plan</b> <i>(for contracts with a term amount over \$250,000, due annually or with staffing changes)</i></li> <li>• <b>4631 Utilization Plan</b></li> </ul> <p>2. Yes.</p> <p>3. No-if an applicant does not have any discretionary spend expenses a waiver is not required. See response to question 2.</p> <p>4. While OCFS encourages the use of MWBE and SDVOB vendors by all our contractors, the 4631 Utilization plan is only for OCFS Fund Expenditures.</p>
Q35	<p><b>Are programs required to budget funds to provide all granted full-time member positions health insurance; or, can programs budget a specific monetary amount based on historical health insurance utilization rates that had in past program years?</b></p>
A35	<p>A program can budget a specific monetary amount based on historical health insurance utilization rates they had in the past program years, for additional details, please see pg. 21 of the <a href="#">Application Instructions - Health Care</a>.</p>
Q36	<p><b>Would you please provide a complete list of the documents to be sent to the New York State Commission at time of application? What email should we use?</b></p>
A36	<p>Please see <a href="#">Section 1.6 Submission of Proposals – Evidence Studies and Evaluation Reports and New York State Supporting Documents of the RFP (pg. 6 – 7)</a>.</p>
Q37	<p><b>Should evaluation studies and reports be submitted to both NYS Commission as well as CNCS?</b></p>
A37	<p>No, Evaluation Studies and Report should be submitted to the Commission only. Please follow the instruction in <a href="#">Section 1.6 Submission of Proposals – Evidence Studies and Evaluation Reports of the RFP (pg. 6 – 7)</a>. In the event a proposal is being recommended to the Corporation, the Commission will submit the Evaluation Studies and Report on behalf of the applicant.</p>