

Homeland Security Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Additional Guidance

General Information

How many volunteers does the Corporation intend to mobilize through the Homeland Security grants?

- The Corporation's objective is to mobilize 20,000 additional volunteers to support homeland security through this notice and other activities. This is an aggregate number for one year.

Is there a specific geographic distribution to which Homeland Security grants will be awarded?

- There is no pre-determined geographic distribution.

What is the duration of the grant period?

- The grant period is for three years.

What should our relationship with Citizen Corps include?

- Programs should connect with Citizen Corps Councils if they are available in your community; however, if one is not established, applicants must demonstrate that they are part of a community-wide or statewide effort.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** This funding is not designed to establish Citizen Corps Councils unless a related activity of the council is to mobilize additional volunteers.

Can I use these funds to propose a research project?

- While program evaluation is a required component of your application, these funds are not for research projects.

Can I use these funds to train other programs across the country?

- This grant opportunity is not used for training programs in other communities. You can, however, propose to start a program mobilizing volunteers in five communities in year one and then add three or four more in the following year.

What is the limit on the number of categories in which my program may apply?

- Programs may apply in more than one category as long as they meet the requirements in each and are proposing different activities in each. Proposed relationships between programs should be noted if applying in more than one category.
- Contact your state commission or Corporation state office to find out about other organizations in your state that are interested in applying.

What age is considered a senior?

- The definition of senior is 55 years old and older.

Will there be training and technical assistance available from the Corporation?

- A training and technical assistance notice of funding availability will be published at the end of April. We expect a provider to be in place by the end of the summer.

Category A – AmeriCorps*State and National

Are state commissions required to participate in this NOFA?

- No. States need to make a judgement whether participating in this NOFA fits with their strategic plan and vision for service in their state.

If states choose to participate, are state commissions required to conduct an outreach and Request for Proposal (RFP) process?

- States must select programs on a competitive basis and must comply with all applicable state laws.

Do state commissions need to conduct a peer review for Category A (AmeriCorps) applications?

- If state law permits the commission to submit grant applications without a state peer review, then the state does not need to conduct one. The Corporation will conduct its own peer review. State commissions will still need to review and vote on their applications.

Is there a limit on the number of applications a state commission can submit?

- No. A state commission may submit as many applications as it wishes. States should be mindful, however, that the resources dedicated to this NOFA are limited.

Can state commissions submit in Category A a “plan” type of application where the subgrantees have not yet been determined?

- Yes, but such applications may be competing against others that contain more specificity. The “plan” approach has worked well in many states but may also result in delays in the actual implementation of programs.

Can state commissions apply for Category B (Special Volunteer Program)?

- Yes, they are an eligible applicant. State commissions, however, cannot directly operate programs so will still need to subgrant.

If a Special Volunteer Program (SVP) is funded in a state, what will be the state commission’s responsibility for monitoring it?

- The expectation is that all national and community service activities in a state are well coordinated. The NOFA does not mandate any formal State Commission responsibility for monitoring an SVP.

Can states submit applications under both AmeriCorps and SVP?

- Yes as long as each indicates how it relates to the other.

If a current AmeriCorps program wishes to apply, must it complete a new full application?

- Yes. All applications received under this NOFA will be subject to a peer review. Therefore, peer reviewers need to analyze comparable information from each applicant as they will not have any knowledge of existing AmeriCorps program activities.

Can AmeriCorps members be engaged in administrative tasks?

- While generally the Corporation will want to ensure that a member's activities meet the program's objectives and promote a direct benefit to the community, we are open to considering a wide range of activities that would, in appropriate circumstances, include administrative tasks.

Is there a preference for current grantees?

- No. While it may be easier for current grantees to add or expand a homeland security component, the Corporation will not necessarily give preference to a current grantee.

*How much of the \$5 million available supports AmeriCorps*State programs and how much supports AmeriCorps*National programs?*

- Approximately \$3 million will support AmeriCorps*State proposals and \$2 million will support AmeriCorps*National proposals.

If I am an existing grantee and am successful in this competition, will I get a new grant number for these funds?

- In general, an approved expansion to an existing program will have resources added to its existing grant, rather than receiving a new grant. If a formula program is approved under this competition, it will receive a separate competitive grant. However, the grant period will be the same as the underlying formula program.

Is it necessary to identify operating sites in my application?

- National Direct programs are required in the application to identify local operating sites, how they are selected, and proposed activities.

Can we submit a planning grant?

- We are not funding planning grants through this notice.

Do I have to write new objectives for this proposal?

- In general, your objectives should reflect what you propose to do with these funds. Formula applicants must write new objectives for this funding. Competitive applicants can expand on existing objectives.

Category B – Special Volunteer Projects

What costs are allowable under the Homeland Security guidelines? Unallowable?

- Examples of allowable costs **are those** things used to mobilize volunteers, including:
 - Recruitment
 - Training
 - Supervision—volunteer coordinator (full or part-time)
 - Out-of-pocket expenses for volunteers
 - Reimbursement for mileage/gas
 - Insurance for volunteers
 - A computer and/or software to organize a volunteer effort
 - Publicity materials
 - Equipment as it relates to mobilizing volunteers
 - Rent space for volunteers to meet and get trained
- Examples of unallowable costs are:
 - Emergency vehicles
 - Equipment (walkie talkies, pagers, 911 phone systems)

What is the minimum match amount that grantees must provide to meet requirements?

- There is no minimum match required. Grantees are required to provide a non-federal contribution (cash or in-kind) and must identify the source(s) and amount(s) of the contribution.

Does the match source have to be non-federal?

- Federal money can be used as match in addition to a non-federal contribution. However, a portion of the match must be non-federal.

What is the minimum grant award for each year?

- The minimum grant amount for special volunteer programs is estimated at \$100,000 for one year.

Must the budget plan be for the entire duration of the grant period? (all three years)

- Applicants are asked to submit a detailed first year budget and include an estimate for a second and third year (will year two and three be level-funded or are you requesting an increase?)

When should our program be operating?

- We expect to see programs operating in the fall of 2002.

What is the CFDA Number for Special Volunteers Projects?

- The CFDA # for the Face Sheet and Budget Form is 94.002

How much detail will you need regarding the demographics of our volunteers?

- Under Part B, applicants should provide an estimate of the number of volunteers they expect to mobilize and some idea of the number of senior volunteers.

Can a Corporation State Office apply for Category B funds?

- A Corporation state office cannot be a partner in any application because of the potential conflict. Organizationally, a state office is part of the Corporation and therefore cannot support any particular proposal.

Is there a restriction on immigrant status for volunteers participating in Category B?

- There are no immigration restrictions for Category B volunteers. AmeriCorps programs do have specific requirements for members as described in the application guidelines.

Additional Information:

- Consortia is defined by the applicant. A Memorandum of Agreement is not required as long as some commitment of partnership is evident and roles and responsibilities are delineated in the application.
- A lead member of the consortia will provide fiscal responsibility.
- We are looking to fund programs that integrate with larger community-wide or statewide efforts already connected to homeland security. Individual or isolated organizations applying will not be competitive in this environment.
- There is no preference for statewide or community-wide programs Quality is of more importance.
- A 501(c)(4) can apply as long as it does not engage in lobbying activities or other prohibited activities.
- [Organizations do not have to have 501\(c\)\(3\) status to be considered a nonprofit.](#)
- Category B is not for AmeriCorps programs.
- Category B is not for a training grant, but a training component related to volunteer mobilization can be included.
- This funding is for new and existing programs. Existing programs should demonstrate how this money would expand the current efforts.
- Universities are eligible to apply as long as they fit into one of the eligibility categories described in the notice of funding availability.
- A state commission can apply to Category B without identifying specific sites; however, we encourage applicants to include as much detail as possible regarding how the sites will be selected.

Category C -- RSVP

Can I apply for Category C funds if there is an existing RSVP program in my community?

- No, these funds are for new RSVP programs. If you are unsure of existing RSVP programs in your community, contact your Corporation State Office. Their contact information is located on our website.