

## 2016-2017 AmeriCorps\*State Application Peer Review Form

<b>Legal Applicant:</b>		<b>Reviewer Number:</b>	
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### Executive Summary (Required – 0 points)

Criteria	Satisfactory Answer: Y/N
Please review the required CNCS template for Executive Summaries in Attachment A. Did the applicant follow the CNCS template for the Executive Summary?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

### Problem/Need (20 points)

Please briefly describe the problem(s) and/or need(s) identified in this proposal.

Criteria	Satisfactory Answer: Y/N	Comments including both strengths and weaknesses
The community problem/need is clearly defined and aligns with the proposed intervention.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
The community problem/need is prevalent and severe in communities where members will serve and has been well documented with relevant data.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Out of 20 maximum points, my score for this section is:</b>		

### Theory of Change and Logic Model (30 points)

Theory of Change (Narrative)	Satisfactory Answer: Y/N	Comments including both strengths and weaknesses
The applicant’s proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) the roles of leveraged volunteers.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
The applicant’s intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant’s theory of change. [The theory of change should be either evidence-informed or evidence-based, meaning that the proposed intervention is guided by the best available research evidence that supports its effectiveness in the evidence section.]	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
The proposed outcomes represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem/need identified by the applicant.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
The applicant’s AmeriCorps members will produce significant and unique contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem/need.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	

The Logic Model depicts . . .	Satisfactory Answer: Y/N	Comments including both strengths and weaknesses
A summary of the community problem/need outlined in the narrative	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of locations or sites where members will provide services</li> <li>• # of AmeriCorps members that will deliver the intervention</li> </ul>	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• duration of intervention (e.g., total # of weeks, sessions)</li> <li>• dosage of intervention (e.g., number of hours per sessions)</li> <li>• target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level)</li> </ul>	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served) and, if applicable, included National Performance Measures to be used as outcome indicators	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill (short-term), attitude/behavior (medium-term), or condition (long-term) as a result of the intervention.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Out of 30 maximum points, my score for these sections is:</b>		

### Evidence-Base (20 points)

The goal of this section is to determine the relevance and strength of the evidence provided as it relates to the proposed intervention. Please see Attachment A to help you answer the questions below.

Criteria	Evidence Base	Comments including both strengths and weaknesses
From a scale of no evidence to strong evidence, applicant has provided enough evidence to support the proposed intervention on what level? Please provide rationale for selecting this evidence level in the comments.		
The applicant provided a description of up to two research studies or evaluations that provide evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the target population and community problem.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
The description of each research study or evaluation includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Date research or evaluation was completed &amp; time period for which the intervention was examined</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Description of the target population studied</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Methodology used in the study (e.g., outcome study, random assignment, propensity score matching, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Description of data, data source, data collection methods</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes or Impacts examined and study findings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Strength of the findings (e.g., confidence level, statistical power of study design, statistical significance of findings)</li> </ul>	Study #1 YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>  Study #2 YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
Based on the evidence level you selected above, please score this section from 0 to 20. 0 – No evidence                      12-17 – Moderate evidence 1-5 – Pre-preliminary evidence    18-20 – Strong evidence 6-11 – Preliminary evidence		

**Notice Priority (6 points)** Please see Attachment A to answer the questions below.

Please identify which (if any) of the CNCS Priority Funding Areas the applicant is addressing.

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Criteria	Satisfactory Answer: Y/N	Comments including both strengths and weaknesses
The applicant's proposed program fits within one or more of the 2016 AmeriCorps funding priorities described in Attachment A.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
The proposed program meets all of the requirements detailed in Attachment A.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Out of 6 maximum points, my score for this section is:</b>		

**Member Training (6 points)**

Criteria	Satisfactory Answer: Y/N	Comments including both strengths and weaknesses
AmeriCorps members will receive high quality training to provide effective service.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
AmeriCorps members <u>and</u> volunteers will be aware of, and will adhere to AmeriCorps requirements including the rules regarding prohibited activities.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Out of 6 maximum points, my score for this section is:</b>		

**Member Supervision (6 points)**

Criteria	Satisfactory Answer: Y/N	Comments including both strengths and weaknesses
AmeriCorps members will receive high quality guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Out of 6 maximum points, my score for this section is:</b>		

**Member Experience (8 points)**

Criteria	Satisfactory Answer: Y/N	Comments including both strengths and weaknesses
AmeriCorps members will gain skills and experience as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
AmeriCorps members will have access to meaningful service experiences, including opportunities for reflection and connection to the broader National Service network.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the communities in which the programs operate.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Out of 8 maximum points, my score for this section is:</b>		

### Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification (4 points)

Criteria	Satisfactory Answer: Y/N	Comments including both strengths and weaknesses
Members will know they are AmeriCorps members.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Staff and community members where the members are serving will know they are AmeriCorps members.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Members will be provided with and will wear service gear daily that prominently displays the AmeriCorps logo.	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Out of 4 maximum points, my score for this section is:</b>		

**Additional Comments and Overall Appraisal of Proposal** – Please add any additional comments that were not captured above and evaluate the quality of the proposal in its entirety. Aside from your comments in the individual sections, consider how well the whole proposal flows. Do all of the sections support each other? Provide your assessment of the proposal as a whole by highlighting the principal strengths and/or weaknesses.

**Summary of Points Awarded** – Transfer the points given to each section above to this grid.

Narrative Item	Possible Points	Points Awarded	Reasons for deduction of points / suggestions for improvements (optional)
Problem / Need	20		
Theory of Change and Logic Model	30		
Evidence Base	20		
Notice Priority	6		
Member Training	6		
Member Supervision	6		
Member Experience	8		
Commitment to AC Identification	4		
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>100</b>		<i>Please ensure that your points awarded add up correctly.</i>

Use the standards below to select the category you feel best describes the proposal. Reconsider your overall rating, and ensure it is supported by your analysis and comments in the preceding sections. Please select only one.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Exceptional Proposal – Recommend for Funding</b>	A comprehensive and thorough program design of exceptional merit with very significant strengths and no significant weaknesses. Total score should be between 91-100 points.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Satisfactory Proposal – Recommended for Funding</b>	Program design demonstrates overall competence and is worthy of support where the value of the strengths outweigh the identified weaknesses. Total score should be between 80-90 points.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Weak/Non-responsive Proposal – Do Not Recommend for Funding</b>	A program design with very significant weaknesses and minimal significant strengths that have been identified. This option may also include a program design that is non-responsive to the published criteria. Proposal total score should be below 80 points.

## **Attachment A – Supplemental Information for Scoring AmeriCorps Applications for State Peer Reviewers**

### **Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)**

Applicants must fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary and may not deviate from this template.

[Name of the organization] proposes to have [Number of] AmeriCorps members who will [what the members will be doing] in [the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional [number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable] who will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing].

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)]. The CNCS investment of \$[amount of request] will be matched with \$[amount of projected match], \$[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and \$[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding.

*\*If the program is not operating in a CNCS focus area, applicant will omit this sentence. Fixed amount grant applicants will list Other Revenue rather than match amount(s).*

### **Notice Priority (6 points)**

In order to carry out Congress' intent and to maximize the impact of investment in national service, CNCS has the following six (6) focus areas: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and Veterans and Military Families.

#### **Additionally, CNCS has Funding Priorities for the 2015 AmeriCorps Competition:**

- Disaster Services – improving community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation
- Economic Opportunity – increasing economic opportunities for communities, specifically opportunity youth, both as the population served and as AmeriCorps members
- Education – improving student academic performance in Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Mathematics (STEM) or addressing student and school needs through School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming
- Environment – 21st Century Service Corps
- Veterans and Military Families – positively impacting the quality of life of veterans and improving military family strength
- Governor and Mayor Initiatives
- Programming that supports My Brother's Keeper
- Multi-focused intermediaries that demonstrate measurable impact and primarily serve communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure—i.e., rural and other underserved communities.
- Safer Communities – activities that focus on public safety and preventing and mitigating civil unrest e.g., summer programming or engaging communities that are part of The National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention

In order to receive priority consideration, applicants must demonstrate that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes and must include a high quality program design. Responses that propose programs for the purpose of receiving priority consideration are not guaranteed funding.

## Evidence Tier Checklist

Evidence Provided	Evidence Tier
<p><i>Note: In order to receive full points for the assessed evidence tier, all data and studies described in the narrative must contain sufficient detail to assess the quality indicators described below. Applicants that do not provide sufficient information to assess these indicators may not receive full points for their evidence tier or may be assessed in a lower evidence tier.</i></p>	
<p>Applicant has not systematically collected any qualitative or quantitative data on their program model or intervention.</p>	<p>No Evidence 0 points</p>
<p>Applicant's proposed program is evidence-informed<sup>1</sup>, but the applicant has not systematically collected any qualitative or quantitative data on their program model or intervention.</p>	<p>No Evidence 0 points</p>
<p>The applicant has collected systematic and accurate data to test or track one or more of the following components of its logic model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community need</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Activities and services delivered (outputs)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Participation in the intervention by the target population (outputs)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Participant outcomes, including performance measurement data</li> </ul> <p>All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The data collection process and results are described fully</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The applicant explains the link between data collection and the relevant component(s) of their logic model</li> </ul>	<p>Pre-Preliminary 1-5 points</p>
<p>The applicant has conducted a process evaluation assessing implementation of one or more interventions depicted in the logic model.</p> <p>All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The data collection process and results are described fully</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The applicant explains the link between data collection and the relevant component(s) of their logic model</li> </ul>	<p>Pre-Preliminary 1-5 points</p>
<p>The applicant describes at least one outcome study of their own intervention. The outcome study has one of the following designs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pre and post-test without a comparison group</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Post-test only with a comparison group</li> </ul> <p>All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The outcome study includes data beyond that which is collected as part of routine performance measurement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The applicant provides a detailed description of the outcome study data</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The description explains whether the outcome study was conducted by the applicant organization or by an entity external to the applicant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The outcome study yielded promising results for the proposed intervention</li> </ul>	<p>Preliminary 6-11 points</p>

<sup>1</sup> An evidence-informed program uses the best available knowledge, research, and evaluation to guide program design and implementation, but does not have scientific research or rigorous evaluation of the program itself and is not replicating an evidence-based program.

<p>The applicant is proposing to replicate<sup>2</sup> an evidence-based program with fidelity. All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Applicant describes at least one randomized control study (RCT) or quasi-experimental evaluation of the intervention the applicant will replicate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The evaluation found positive results for the intervention the applicant will replicate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The evaluation was conducted by an entity external to the organization whose program was studied</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Applicant describes how the intervention studied and the applicant’s proposed approach are the same</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Applicant describes how they will replicate intervention with fidelity to the program model</li> </ul> <p>The following may be true, but is not required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The applicant has submitted a process evaluation demonstrating how it is currently replicating the intervention with fidelity to the program model</li> </ul>	<p>Preliminary 6-11 points</p>
<p>The applicant has submitted evidence from both of the previous sections. All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The applicant provides data from an outcome study of an intervention it has previously implemented</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The applicant proposes to modify their program by replicating another random control trial study or quasi-experimental evaluation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The applicant describes their previous outcome study and the study(ies) of the proposed evidence-based intervention.</li> </ul>	<p>Preliminary 6-11 points</p>
<p>The applicant describes up to two quasi-experimental study(ies) (QED) or randomized control trial(s) (RCT) of their intervention. All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The studies are well-designed and well-implemented</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The studies evaluate the same intervention described in the application</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The studies demonstrate evidence of effectiveness (positive findings) on one or more key desired outcomes of interest depicted in the applicant’s logic model</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The studies were conducted by an independent entity external to the applicant organization</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The ability to generalize the findings from the RCT or QED beyond the study context may be limited (e.g., single site)</li> </ul>	<p>Moderate 12-17 points</p>
<p>The applicant describes up to two quasi-experimental study(ies) (QED) or randomized control trial(s) (RCT) of their intervention. All of the following are true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The studies are well-designed and well-implemented</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The studies evaluate the same intervention described in the application</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The studies were conducted by an independent entity external to the applicant org.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The overall pattern of study findings is consistently positive</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Findings from the studies may be generalized beyond the study context</li> </ul> <p>At least one of the following is true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The intervention has been tested nationally, regionally, or at the state level (e.g., multi-site) using a well-designed and well-implemented QED or RCT</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The applicant has conducted multiple QEDs or RCTs in different location or with different populations within a local geographical area</li> </ul>	<p>Strong 18-20 points</p>

<sup>2</sup> Replicate means that the key elements of the applicant’s intervention are implemented as the evidence-based program model describes (e.g., in terms of content or curriculum, delivery process, and target population), and the applicant’s adaptations are relatively minor. Example: an applicant implementing an intervention using certified teachers to administer the curriculum would not be considered replicating that program with fidelity if it replaces teachers with AmeriCorps members who are not certified teachers because the documented success of the intervention relied on the specialization of certified teachers.