

NOTICE OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Federal Agency Name: Corporation for National and Community Service
Funding Opportunity Title: Learn and Serve America Youth Engagement Zones FY 2011
Announcement Type: Initial Announcement
CFDA Number: 94.018

Dates: Applications are due on **March 31, 2011 by 5:00 p.m.** Eastern Time. Successful applicants will be notified by the end of June 2011.

Overview: The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic participation through service and volunteering. As the nation's largest grantmaker for service and volunteering, CNCS plays a critical role in building the capacity of America's nonprofit sector and enabling America's volunteers to improve the places we live. Last fiscal year, CNCS helped an estimated 5.5 million Americans step up to serve, the largest total in its history. CNCS's core programs are AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America and Senior Corps.

Guided by the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, CNCS funds programs that promote service as a solution to educational challenges, working to ensure every child enters school ready to learn and graduates equipped to succeed. On a competitive basis, we fund partnerships that engage youth in collaborative community problem solving that increases academic achievement and civic engagement while improving the odds that they will stay in school and graduate from high school.

For the 2011 Youth Engagement Zones competition, CNCS has described the application review process stage by stage (see section VI of this *Notice*.) The following information pertaining to this competition will be published on the [CNCS website](#) within a period of 90 days after release of this *Notice*:

- Blank external and internal review worksheet templates and rating system.

The following information will be published within a period of 90 days after announcement of successful applicants:

- Names of all legal applicants submitting compliant applications
- Executive summaries prepared by the applicants included in all compliant applications
- Copy of successful applications
- Summary of internal and/or external reviewer comments as applicable
- Names of external peer reviewers

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. What do Learn and Serve America grants fund?

Learn and Serve America grants support organizations that involve youth, particularly from economically disadvantaged circumstances, in service-learning projects that improve academic achievement, and academic and civic engagement.

B. What is service-learning?

Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that connects academic curriculum to community problem-solving.

High-quality service-learning projects are:

- place-based and meet community needs;
- coordinated with a K-12 school, institution of higher education, or community-based organization;
- designed to foster civic responsibility;
- integrated into and enhance the academic curriculum, or meet educational objectives during out-of-school time programming; and
- structured to provide time for the students to reflect on the service experience.

C. What is the goal of the Learn and Serve America Youth Engagement Zones Program?

Youth Engagement Zones are designed to improve academic engagement - including student attendance and behavior - and academic achievement, high school graduation rates, and college-going rates by:

1. Demonstrating the relevance of academic coursework and the value of civic engagement through service-learning;
2. Connecting youth with citizens from diverse communities, backgrounds, and perspectives, providing them with expanded opportunities to serve; and
3. Building enduring capacity within communities to use service as a solution to address pressing challenges, such as improving college enrollment of economically disadvantaged youth.

These grants will provide support for “eligible partnerships” to develop coordinated school- or community-based service-learning opportunities for secondary school students. (See Section III for Eligibility Information)

Service-learning provides students with opportunities to use their knowledge and skills to address important community needs, reducing the chances that they will drop out of school. Engaging young people in solving community problems through service-learning empowers youth as active citizens, rather than simply providing services to them.

Applicants must involve a number of local partners – specifically, local educational agencies, community colleges, and community-based entities—in the design and implementation of the program.

D. What is the purpose for this funding?

The purpose of this initiative is to build upon a community's assets to create a network of individuals, organizations and institutions that support positive youth development and provide those youth with a chance to serve. Service-learning activities encourage collaborative community problem solving that increases students' academic and civic engagement while improving the odds that they will stay in school and graduate from high school.

Applicants are free to determine the geography of the "zone" where their program activities will take place. With the goals of increasing high school graduation, college enrollment, and community engagement by youth, YEZ programs ultimately seek to replicate effective strategies beyond the targets schools to achieve widespread adoption of service-learning practice. During the 3-year grant period, programs must accomplish one or both of the following intermediate outcomes:

- include service-learning as a part of the curriculum in all of the targeted secondary schools, or
- engage not less than 90% of the secondary school students residing in the zone in service-learning activities as part of the program.

Grants will support the establishment and implementation of a Youth Engagement Zone program to provide service-learning opportunities that:

- connect secondary school(s), community colleges, and community and faith-based organizations;
- address specific community challenges; and
- involve an increasing percentage of out-of-school youth and secondary school students served by the participating secondary school(s) in service-learning activities each year. *Out-of-school youth are individuals who have not attained the age of 27, are not enrolled in school, and have not completed college or its equivalent.*

E. What kinds of activities will the grant support?

Through eligible partnerships, grantees will implement service-learning programs within a defined geographic zone that address one or more specific community challenges.

Allowable grantee activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Building sustainable programs that provide youth with meaningful opportunities for academic, civic and personal growth through comprehensive connections among local organizations, institutions and businesses and through financial and training supports;
- Providing training and technical assistance to local partners and secondary schools to scale up high-quality service-learning programs that engage increasing numbers of youth;
- Strengthening mutually beneficial partnerships among community colleges, community-based entities and secondary schools for the purpose of increasing high school graduation rates. For example, providing access to college coaching and financial aid counseling from community college professionals, and mentoring and/or tutoring by community college students;

- Facilitating the creation of learning communities of youth and adults focused on identifying and meeting local needs through service-learning activities;
- Participating in evaluation efforts that measure the impact on the youth and communities in the Zone;
- Developing sustainable service-learning programs, especially through the establishment of district-level policies and inclusion in organization-wide strategic plans;
- Supporting the use of effective, proven, and freely-available technology for youth. This may include use of the most innovative approaches to service and learning through social networks, games and mobile devices.

F. Do any selection priorities apply?

CNCS gives priority to applications proposing to:

- Involve students and community stakeholders in the design and implementation of the service-learning program;
- Implement a service-learning program in low-income or rural communities; and
- Utilize adult volunteers, including tapping the resources of retired and retiring adults, in the planning and implementation of the service-learning program.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. How much funding is available?

Subject to the availability of appropriations for fiscal year 2011, CNCS anticipates the availability of approximately \$5.7 million for new Youth Engagement Zones grants. CNCS anticipates making an estimated 5 to 7 grant awards that will range from approximately \$700,000 to \$1,500,000 to support three years of operations.

B. What is the Project/Award Period?

Grant awards may be up to three years and can range from one to three years.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Who is eligible for this funding?

Eligible partnerships may apply for a Youth Engagement Zones grant. The lead applicant for this YEZ competition must be a public or private non-profit organization – e.g., a faith-based or community-based organization, a local educational agency (or individual public secondary school), an institution of higher education, or an Indian tribe. In addition, the lead applicant of the partnership must be physically located in the designated zone and have the organizational capacity to manage the grant.

Eligible partnerships **must** include the following components; these factors will be used to determine eligibility for funding for this competition. (See Section VI regarding submission requirements. You are not required to submit partnership agreements or memoranda of understanding at the time of application, but you may be asked to provide them as part of the review and selection process.)

1. One or more *community-based entities* with demonstrated records of success in service-learning programs with economically disadvantaged students. (For the purpose of this competition, a *community-based entity* is a public or private nonprofit organization that has experience with meeting unmet educational, environmental or public safety needs.)
2. A *local educational agency (LEA)* serving a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students (a free and reduced-price lunch eligibility rate of 70% or more) and where the graduation rate is less than 70%.
3. a community college with existing connections to the LEA and/or youth serving organizations; and
4. a geographic area where less than 30% of the secondary school students are already engaged in service-learning.

Eligible partnerships may also include, but are not limited to, other entities, such as Indian tribes, U.S. territories, higher education institutions, State Commissions on National and Community Service, faith-based organizations and local government agencies.

All partnerships must include, at a minimum, at least one LEA, one community college, and one community-based entity. CNCS seeks applications from two types of partnerships:

1. Existing partnerships of two or more community entities that have an established track record of working together to address a particular community issue. The YEZ grant will bring expertise in service-learning and experience working with the target youth population to the partnership in order to integrate youth engagement and leadership. For example, a group of community and faith-based organizations work together to address the issue of hunger; they partner with a secondary school to involve young people in service-learning activities that are connected to the health unit at the school. Nutrition students at the community college serve as additional volunteers and tutors for the youth.
2. Existing partnerships of youth-serving organizations/social service providers that have an established track record of collaboration. The YEZ grant will assist those partners as they develop meaningful opportunities for youth to participate in service-learning activities with other community entities. For example, the local department of social services for youth and a coalition of advocates for runaway youth work with the secondary school and community college students to provide opportunities for the youth they serve to participate in service-learning activities that address energy efficiency and inform them about potential career and college options.

B. What are the matching requirements for these grants?

Applicants must propose to provide at least 50% of the total program budget as cash or in-kind matching funds. (For example, if the applicant is requesting \$800,000 from CNCS, the budget should also include \$800,000 in matching resources for a total program budget of \$1,600,000.)

Because expanding volunteer service is the purpose of CNCS programs, the grantee may not include the value of direct community service performed by volunteers. However, the

Grantee may include the value of volunteer services contributed for organizational functions such as accounting, training of staff, etc.

C. What are some of the restrictions regarding the roles of the participants?

Learn and Serve America will not fund organizations or groups to: 1) provide religious instruction, conduct worship services or engage in any form of proselytizing; 2) assist, promote, or deter union organizing; 3) finance, directly or indirectly, any activity designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office; or 4) impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. When are applications due?

Applications are due no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on **March 31, 2011**. Applications must arrive at CNCS by the deadline in order to be considered.

B. Where can I request application information?

This *Notice* may be found on the CNCS website:

http://www.nationalservice.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp or by contacting 808-942-2677 or <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask>

C. Is a Notice of Intent to Apply required?

Although submission of the notice of intent to apply is not mandatory, your email will help CNCS to plan more efficiently for the review. In your email, please include the name of your organization, address, contact person, and phone number. Applicants are strongly encouraged to send an email by March 10 to YEZ@cns.gov, stating intent to apply.

D. What are the DUNS number and the CCR and are they required?

Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and all applicants must be registered with the Central Contractor's Registry (CCR). The DUNS number does not replace an 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: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

The website indicates a 24-hour e-mail turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, we suggest registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date. Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by following instructions found here: <http://smallbusiness.dnb.com/establish-your-business/12334338-1.html>.

CCR is the primary registrant database for the U.S. Federal Government. CCR collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid registration, which must be renewed annually. We urge applicants that are not already registered with the CCR to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must

have a DUNS number in order to register with the CCR. It typically takes 3 to 5 days to finalize CCR registration. To register online go to www.bpn.gov/CCR.

E. What is the content and form of application submission?

1. Submitting in eGrants

CNCS requires that all applicants submit applications electronically via its web-based application system, [eGrants](#). Applications must arrive at CNCS by March 31, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time in order to be considered. CNCS reserves the right to extend the submission deadline. Any notice of such extended deadline will be posted in eGrants.

We recommend that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application at least three weeks before the deadline. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document, then copy and paste the document into eGrants no later than 10 days before the deadline.

Contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask> if a problem arises while creating an account, preparing, or submitting an application. Be prepared to provide the application ID and organization's name. National Service Hotline hours are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET Monday through Friday.

If technical issues will prevent an applicant from submitting an application on time, please contact the National Service Hotline prior to the deadline to explain the technical issue and receive a ticket number. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, the applicant must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit via eGrants.

2. Late Applications

CNCS may consider an application after the deadline, but only if the applicant submits a letter explaining the extenuating circumstance that caused the delay. The letter must be sent to LateApplications@cns.gov within the 24-hour period following the deadline. Late applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

If extenuating circumstances make the use of eGrants impossible, applicants may send a hard copy of the application to the address below in Section VIII Agency Contacts, via overnight carrier. Please use a non-U.S. Postal Service because of security-related delays in receiving mail from the U.S. Postal Service. All deadlines and requirements in this *Notice* apply to hard copy applications. Hard copy applications must include a cover letter detailing the circumstances that make it impossible to submit via eGrants.

Do not submit supplementary materials such as videos, brochures, letters of support, or any other item not requested in this *Notice*. CNCS will not review or return them.

3. Character Limits

In eGrants, applicants will enter text for:

- Narrative Section

1. Executive Summary: 3,000 characters (a brief paragraph, about a quarter-page). *Executive Summaries of all compliant applications will be published on the CNCS website following grant notifications.*
2. Community Needs and Service Activities – 8,000 characters
3. Strengthening Communities – 10,000 characters
4. Participant Development – 7,000 characters
5. Three-Year Plan – 10,000 characters
6. Organizational Capacity – 4,000 characters
7. Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy – 3,000 characters
8. Clarification Summary – N/A

The character count includes spaces and punctuation.

F. What are the funding restrictions?

Grants under this program are subject to the Cost Principles under 2 CFR part 220, 2 CFR part 230, or 2 CFR part 225 and the Uniform Administrative Requirements for grants under 45 CFR part 2541 or 45 CFR 2543.

Construction is not an allowable activity for this funding. In addition, funds may not be used for:

1. Political Activities

Any effort to influence legislation; organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts or strikes; assisting, promoting or deterring union organizing; impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements; engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office; and participating in, or endorsing, events or activities which are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials.

2. Religious Activities

Engaging in religious instruction; conducting worship services; providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship; constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship; maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship; or engaging in any form of religious proselytization.

3. Non-Domestic Service Activities/Beneficiaries

Generally, grant funds may not be used for international travel or projects where the primary beneficiaries of an activity are outside the United States.

G. Equal Opportunity Survey

Applicants are asked to complete the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants. Applicants may complete the survey in eGrants while preparing the application for submission or contact CNCS to obtain a hard copy.

H. Are there any other submission requirements?

CNCS program officers may contact applicants to seek clarification, resolve questions and issues, negotiate performance measures, and request revised budgets as part of the pre-award review process. Failure to respond to requests for information in a timely fashion will result in the removal of applications from consideration. Applicants should be prepared to provide documentation of eligibility criteria (e.g., free and reduced price lunch rates) partnerships and other support described in the narrative such as Memoranda of Understanding, samples of selected curriculum, organization annual reports, and evaluations.

V. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Application Instructions are approved under OMB Control# 3045-0129, Expiration Date 11/30/2011. They are formatted to correspond to fields in eGrants and clarified through this *Notice*.

Applicants need to establish an eGrants account by accessing this link:

<https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp> and selecting “Don’t have an eGrants account? Create an account.” If you need assistance with the eGrants system, contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677.

Your application consists of the following components, described in detail below. Please make sure to complete each section.

- A. Applicant Info
- B. Application Info
- C. Narratives – Program Design
- D. Performance Measures
- E. Documents
- F. Budget
- G. Review, Authorize, and Submit

In eGrants, before Starting Section A, you will need to:

- Start a new Grant Application by selecting “New” from your eGrants Home Page
- Select the Program Area, Learn and Serve America, and click “Go.”
- Select the appropriate eGrants NOFA: Learn and Serve America Youth Engagement Zones FY 2011

Once you create an application, you will be allowed to edit as needed until you are ready to submit. **Note:** When you want to return to a previously created application, it will now appear under *View My Grants/Applicants* in the status *For Grantee Edit or Action*. Clicking on this option will allow you to re-enter your application. Do **not** use the *New* button again.

A. Applicant Info

Please note that the *Authorized Representative* name is blank. You cannot select a name for this field. Instead, the Authorized Representative will need to have his/her own account to click on the Assurances and Certifications at the end of the application.

Under *Project Information* select, “create a new” and choose a title for your project. You can enter another address for the project, which may or not be the same as that of the Legal Applicant.

You do not need to select anything for *Project Initiative*.

To select an individual as the *Project Director*, choose a name from the pull-down menu or add a new contact.

Enter your program *website* if you have one.

B. Application Info

Areas affected by the project. List only the largest political or municipal entities affected (e.g. counties and cities).

Enter the dates for the **proposed project start and end** dates. If awarded, your CNCS Program Officer will work with you to finalize your project start date. Your project period should be three years.

Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs: This program is NOT subject to Executive Order 12372.

Delinquent on any federal debt: Check the appropriate box. This question Applies to the applicant organization, not the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of debt include delinquent audit allowances, loans, and taxes. If Yes, type your explanation in the text box provided.

State Application Identifier: Enter N/A.

C. Narratives

The narrative section of the application is your opportunity to convince reviewers that your project meets the selection criteria.

Please Note: Spaces and punctuation are included in the character count toward the maximum character limit.

1. Executive Summary

Maximum character limit: 3,000 characters or approximately 1 1/2 double-spaced pages, 12-point font

Briefly summarize your proposed program. Include the geographic area of the zone, key partners (the local educational agency, community college and community-based entity, at a minimum) and the community issue that adults and youth will be working together to address. Please indicate whether you will be primarily implementing school-based or community-based service-learning activities and whether the primary outcome for participants will be academic or civic engagement. In your summary, be sure to include: (1) graduation rate(s); and (2) free and reduced price lunch eligibility rate(s) for the LEA. Be sure to cite your sources for the data you include. If this information is not included in this section, your application will be considered out of compliance and will not be reviewed.

Executive Summaries of all compliant applications will be published on the CNCS website following grant notifications.

2. Community Needs and Service Activities

Maximum character limit: 8,000 characters or approximately 4 double-spaced pages, 12-point font

a. Youth Engagement Zone

Please begin by providing a detailed description of the concentrated geographic area, or **zone**, where the program will be implemented.

Where is the zone? What is its size? Describe the geographic location and boundaries using relevant descriptive information such as neighborhood, city, state; blocks, square miles or acres.

How many people live in the zone and what are their demographics? Please provide descriptive data that applies to your zone, for example: percentage of the families living at or below the poverty level, ethnic/racial demographics, religious or civic affiliations, population data by age, overall average educational attainment.

b. Community Need

Now describe a specific community challenge and its impact on the residents of the zone. This community challenge is not the needs of the youth participants themselves; rather, it is an issue that the youth will be addressing through their service-learning activities. *(For example, youth who may be at risk of dropping out of school are connected with community college mentors who work with them to develop public education campaigns about healthy eating and reduction of obesity.)* How was this need identified? What is the extent of the problem? Please provide relevant statistics.

c. Program Activities

Service-learning activities will serve as the strategy for meeting the need identified in the “Community Need” section. Describe how the program will provide opportunities for youth to become community assets in solving problems stemming from the identified need, as opposed to just recipients of services addressing the needs of youth. What types of service-learning activities might the youth undertake?

3. Strengthening Communities

Maximum character limit: 10,000 characters or approximately 5 double-spaced pages, 12-point font

Community Assets: Describe both the community partnerships you have in place and those that you intend to develop or expand (see page 4 and 5 of the *Notice*). These community partners are assets for addressing needs within the zone. Describe how you will generate additional adult volunteers to support or help coordinate your efforts. Estimate the number of volunteers you expect to recruit. What will be the role(s) of adult volunteers, community colleges, the LEA and secondary school(s), and other partners in organizing and implementing service-learning activities? How does the program build community-wide support through these additional volunteers?

Please be sure to address how these efforts will build enduring capacity within the community by connecting and coordinating a range of different organizations and citizens, including youth. How will this network become more effective at working together and using service as a solution to address pressing challenges?

Sustainability: Describe how your program will work to institutionalize service-learning in the zone to ensure that the community can continue to offer youth meaningful opportunities to serve after the grant ends. How will you use existing organizational capacity, community resources, partnerships, and volunteers to implement your approach and ensure its success? What supports (policies, training, resources, etc) will be put in place to encourage the sustainability of service-learning activities beyond the grant period?

4. Participant Development

Maximum character limit: 7,000 characters or approximately 3 ½ double-spaced pages, 12-point font

The goal of this program is to ensure youth are connected to their communities and graduate from high school with opportunities to go on to post-secondary education. High-quality service-learning is a strategy to help make these connections.

Please provide information specifically on the youth in the zone. Include information like the rates and/or prevalence of youth volunteerism, service-learning and civic engagement. Provide data on high school graduation rates and percentage of graduates that go on to post-secondary education.

Who is the target youth population? How many youth do you plan to recruit? How will those youth, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances, be recruited and retained?

What is the measurable impact the program will have on youth participants (e.g., increased civic, academic and leadership skills) and how will it be measured? In other words, how will the intervention change the youth? Research has shown that only high-quality practice leads to measurable impacts. Please refer to the K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice that spell out in detail what it takes to provide students with high quality service-learning experiences:

http://www.nylc.org/pages-resourcecenter-downloads-K_12_Service_Learning_Standards_for_Quality_Practice?emoid=14:803&si=2&null=1262618866533

Describe your plans for involving participants in the program planning (including the development of this proposal) as well as training, supervising, and recognizing participant efforts.

5. Three Year Plan

Maximum character limit: 10,000 characters or approximately 5 double-spaced pages, 12-point font

In the above narrative sections, you described:

- the Zone where the program will be implemented;
- the specific community challenge the Youth Engagement Zone will address;
- the assets the Zone will employ to address the need; and
- how Zone partners will use service-learning to ensure that youth are connected to their communities and graduate from high school with opportunities to go on to post-secondary education.

Program Outcomes

As described in this *Notice*, the desired end outcomes for Youth Engagement Zones are: (1) Improve student achievement, graduation rates and college-going rates; (2) Build capacity within communities for collaborative problem solving, and (3) Become more effective at using service as a solution to address specific community challenges.

Now, set the specific, measurable targets for outputs and intermediate outcomes of the program.

- a. Participant Development Outcomes** – Engaging youth as positive contributors through service-learning to demonstrate the relevance of academic coursework and the value of civic engagement to their educational and personal development.

Specify whether your program will primarily target academic or civic student engagement as intermediate outcomes that lead to greater student connectedness to school and community. *(Please use the following format, customized to your program model. Choose i. if your program will focus on civic engagement or ii. if your program will focus on academic engagement.)*

- i. Over 3 years, (target #) secondary school students will be engaged in service-learning activities. As measured by (instrument), (target %) will demonstrate increased civic engagement skills and behaviors.
- ii. Over 3 years, (target #) secondary school students will be engaged in service-learning activities. As measured by (instrument), (target %) will demonstrate increased academic engagement.

- b. Strengthening Communities Outcomes** – Connect secondary schools, community colleges and community and faith-based organizations to provide more opportunities for young people to serve their communities in partnership with adults.

Specify one or both of the following targets to involve an increasing percentage of out-of-school youth and secondary school students in service-learning activities each year. *(Please use the following format, customized to your program model-choose i. or ii.)*

- i. Currently, (baseline #) secondary schools served by the participating s(s) include service-learning in the curriculum. By the end of Year 3 of the YEZ, all of the (total #) secondary schools served by the participating LEA will include service-learning as a part of the curriculum as evidenced by (evidence) *(For example, approved lesson plans and/or district or school-level policies)*.
- ii. Currently, (baseline #) of secondary school students are engaged in service-learning. By the end of Year 3 of the YEZ, not less than 90% of the (total in zone #) secondary students will be engaged in service-learning activities as part of the program as evidenced by (evidence) *(For example, formally established youth programs that incorporate service-learning and organizational policies that promote youth engagement)*.

- c. **Community Needs and Service Activities Outcomes**– Address a specific community challenge using service-learning activities that will have a demonstrable impact. *REMINDER: This community challenge is not the needs associated with the youth participants themselves; rather, it is an issue that the youth will be addressing through their service-learning activities.*

Please complete the following performance measure(s) in relation to the community need described in Section B. Your narrative may describe a range of service-learning activities addressing a general community need, so in this section you should quantify the number of service-learning activities carried out. (If approved for funding, you will also develop some indicators that demonstrate the impact of those activities.)

By the end of Year 3, (target #) projects that address (specific community need) will be implemented in the Youth Engagement Zone with an increase of (target %) over the baseline year of citizens involved in those service projects.

Training and Technical Assistance

Grantee organizations must ensure that partnering organizations, volunteers and participants have the training, including training in service-learning, and support they need to successfully implement the program. Please describe the type and frequency of training and technical assistance that will allow successful implementation of the program with the desired impacts on participants, partners and the community.

Evaluation Plan

Please describe an evaluation plan that will document program implementation and track progress toward meeting the desired impacts described above. Applicants are strongly encouraged to allocate resources for program evaluation. Grantees may consider an independent evaluation and/or seeking support from higher education or other experts to help design data collection and evaluation. **Note:** CNCS seeks to align outcome data wherever possible. We expect that the grantees selected will work with CNCS and the other YEZ grantees to develop shared performance measures as appropriate.

Timeline

Include a detailed first-year plan that outlines the major program activities and the estimated month/date by which you hope to accomplish them. Please add any significant events that will occur in Year 2 or Year 3 at the end of this timeline.

Consider the following major activities in this timeline:

- Program development activities (e.g. hiring staff, recruiting students)
- Service-learning activities
- Partnership strengthening activities
- Training and technical assistance activities
- Evaluation activities

- Branding and promotion of your Learn and Serve America program
- Sustainably and institutionalization activities
- National Days of Service (MLK Day, 9/11)
- Recognition events

6. Organizational Capacity

Maximum character limit: 4,000 characters or approximately 2 double-spaced pages, 12-point font

This section refers to the capacity of the lead applicant to manage a federal grant effectively and complete the project plan. Applicants should include the following subheadings in this section of their applications: 1) Program Implementation and Oversight, 2) Federal Grant Experience/Fiscal Oversight Track Record, 3) Previous Experience with Learn and Serve America (or CNCS) grants.

- Program Implementation and Oversight.** Applicants must ensure that qualified personnel are responsible for program operations. Describe the demonstrated experience and infrastructure your organization has in managing programs similar to the one proposed in this application. Who are the key staff responsible for program implementation and oversight? Detail the responsibilities and qualifications of each key staff member. Describe your plans and your capacity (current and anticipated) to implement and use self-assessments and continuous improvement systems to provide data and information on the success of this project.
- Federal Grant Experience/Fiscal Oversight Track Record.** Applicants must provide evidence that they have had the experience and/or the capacity to manage federal grants and provide sound fiscal management and oversight. Describe the demonstrated experience and infrastructure your organization has in managing grants. What is your current organizational budget and what percentage of the budget would this grant represent? How will you ensure compliance with Federal requirements?
- Previous Experience with Learn and Serve America (or CNCS) Grants.** If the applicant has received funding from Learn and Serve America and/or other Corporation for National and Community Service programs, please describe what was accomplished with CNCS funding. If your organization has never received Learn and Serve America or CNCS funding, you may indicate N/A.

7. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

Maximum character limit: 3,000 characters or approximately 1 ½ double-spaced pages, 12-point font

Describe your plans to develop a cost-effective program, including the development of diverse sources of resources and funding. How will your proposed program leverage resources to support program implementation and sustainability? Also, explain how your proposed program builds community support for the program at the local, state and/or national levels. Your explanation should include a brief discussion of your planned outreach, promotion, and branding efforts.

Please note: Grant applications will be evaluated to ensure that proposed budgets are clearly aligned with the activities outlined in the project plan. If there are elements of the budget or

budget narrative that do not clearly connect with the project activities, please justify their inclusion in this section. For example, if you have a line item for a personnel member in your budget narrative but do not mention it in your Program Design or Organizational Capacity narrative, please justify the staff member's position here. It is not necessary to copy information that is provided in the Budget Narrative; use this area to provide additional clarifying information about budget items.

8. Clarification Summary

This field is not required. Please enter N/A.

D. Documents

We cannot accept any attachments with this application. Any documents you send will not be reviewed and will not be returned.

E. Budget

The budget section of your application should reflect the full three years of operating costs. This section is separate from the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy section. Your budget narrative must provide a full explanation of associated costs including their purpose, justification, and the basis of your calculations. Where possible, your calculations should be presented in an equation format, identifying the number of persons or items involved, the per-person or unit cost, and/or the annual salary cost.

Summary of budget requirements:

- You must match CNCS funds with dollar for dollar cash or in-kind contributions from public or private sources, including state or local public or private funds. If your matching funds come from another federal program, you must first check with that program to ensure that this use is allowable.
- Equipment costs must not exceed 10% of the total CNCS funds requested.
- Administrative/indirect costs must not exceed 6% of the total CNCS funds requested.

Your proposed budget must directly align with your proposal narrative. Reviewers will consider this information in their assessment of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criterion.

Follow the detailed budget instructions below to prepare your budget. We recommend using the Budget Worksheet in Attachment C to draft your budget because it mirrors the categories and order of budget items in eGrants. This will save time when you then input the budget information into eGrants.

Once you have entered the information in eGrants, you will be asked to validate your budget, and eGrants will check your submission for errors. You will be able to print a copy of your budget as a report for your records or for proof reading – this report is referred to as your budget narrative and is automatically generated by eGrants from the information you entered.

As you prepare your budget:

- All the amounts you request must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.

- Present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.
- Please use whole dollar amounts (no cents).
- Do not include unallowable expenses (e.g., entertainment costs or construction).
- All costs must be reasonable and necessary to accomplish the program objectives.

Please refer to the relevant Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) on allowable costs for further guidance. The CFR is online at:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?selectedYearFrom=2009&page.go=Go.%20>

- 2 CFR 220 - Cost Principles for Educational Institutions (formerly A-21)
- 2 CFR 225 Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments (formerly A-87)
- 2 CFR 230 - Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations (formerly A-122)

Consistency of treatment: To be allowable under this award, costs must adhere to established policies and procedures. These guidelines apply uniformly to activities paid for by both federal grant funds as well as matching funds. Furthermore, activities must be treated consistently regardless of their funding source. In other words, do not list an item in your grant budget at a higher cost than the item would be in budgets submitted to other institutions or grant programs. This requirement applies to both CNCS and matching funds.

Programs must comply with all applicable federal law and regulations for grant management, allowable costs, and audits, including providing audits to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse if they expend over \$500,000 in federal funds, as required in OMB Circular A-133.

Detailed Budget Instructions

Source of Match

To find the “Source of Match” field for each budget section, click on “Enter source of matching funds” in the section heading. In each section for which you will provide matching funds, enter a brief description – the amount, the approximate amount, the match classification (Cash, In-kind) and Match Source (State/Local, Private, Other). Define any acronyms the first time they are used.

Budget Section I. Program Operating Costs (i.e. Direct Costs)

- Project Personnel Expenses** - List all staff who will contribute to the project and are being paid by CNCS funds or whose salary will be counted as match. You may include student workers other than participants in this section. Include the portion of staff time attributed directly to the operation of the Learn and Serve America project. List each program year and staff position as separate line items. Example: Project Director Year 1: 1 person at \$60,100 x 100% usage
- Personnel Fringe Benefits** - Include the proportionate costs of benefit(s) for your project staff. You can identify and calculate each benefit or show costs as a percentage of all salaries. For example, if a staff person is budgeted at 50% of time, the grantee may

charge no more than 50% of total fringe benefits to the grant. Fringe benefit rates totaling greater than 30% of the relevant salary will require additional explanation/justification.

- c. **Travel** - Describe the purposes for travel. Allowable costs include transportation, lodging, subsistence, and other related expenses for local and outside the project area travel. Please specify different types of travel expenses as separate line items (e.g., monitoring visits, conference attendance, etc.). Show detailed breakdown of all costs (e.g. Statewide training conference: 2 people x 3 days @ \$50 per day for lodging = \$300).
- d. **Equipment** - Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year AND an acquisition cost of \$5,000 (five thousand) or more per unit (including accessories, attachments, and modifications). Include items that do not meet this definition in section E (Supplies) below. Purchase of equipment is limited to 10% of the total CNCS funding. Show the unit cost as well as the number of units you request. Do not include equipment used for evaluation. Equipment used for evaluation should be documented in the Evaluation section under Program Operating Costs.
- e. **Supplies** - Include the purchase of consumable supplies and materials, including equipment that does not fit the equipment definition of D above. You must individually list any single item costing \$1,000 (one thousand dollars) or more. Do not include supplies used for evaluation. Supplies used for evaluation should be documented in the Evaluation section under Program Operating Costs.
- f. **Contractual and Consultant Services** - Include costs for consultants related to curriculum development (contracts/mini-grants/release time). Payments to individuals for services under this grant may not exceed \$617 per day (not including expenses such as travel and supplies). Indicate daily rate for consultants where applicable.
- g. **Training** - Include the costs associated with training and technical assistance of faculty and staff, students and community partners associated with the project, especially training that specifically enhances project implementation and professional skills (e.g., project or financial management, or faculty development). Indicate daily rates of consultants, where applicable. Payments to individuals for services under this grant may not exceed \$617 per day (not including expenses such as travel and supplies).
- h. **Evaluation** - Include costs for project evaluation activities and data collection against performance measures, including subcontracts or additional staff time you did not budget under Section IA (Personnel Expenses). Include use of evaluation consultants, purchase of instrumentation and other costs specifically for this activity. Indicate daily rates of consultants, where applicable. Payments to individuals for services under this grant may not exceed \$617 per day (not including expenses such as travel and supplies).
- i. **Other Support Costs** - Allowable costs in this category must include travel to CNCS-sponsored meetings and may include dissemination. In addition, these costs may include Internet expenses that are specifically used for Learn and Serve America and are not part

Required expenses under this category include:

Travel to CNCS-Sponsored Meetings – Include up to \$5,000 per year in this line item to cover the costs for a staff member to attend annual CNCS-sponsored technical assistance meetings.

Additional items you may include under this category:

Criminal history background checks – include costs associated with ensuring volunteers and staff receive background checks as required.

Dissemination – Include costs to publish or disseminate training manuals, evaluation assessment tools, promising practice guides and other successful products of your program.

Budget Section II. Administrative/Indirect Costs

Definitions

Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the funded organization's overall administration of CNCS funds and do not include particular project costs. These costs may include administrative staff positions. Administrative costs also encompass costs that are included in an organization's indirect cost rate agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the organization's overall operation and are further described in Office of Management and Budget Circulars 2 CFR 220, 225, and 230.

The CNCS/federal share of administrative/indirect costs is limited by statute to 6% of total federal funds actually expended under this grant.

Please note: the federal limit on administrative/indirect costs (including the 6% that can be charged to the CNCS share) is cumulative. If your grant program includes subgrantees and they wish to include their own administrative/indirect costs (either CNCS share or Grantee share), they must be included in the Section II totals. In other words, no more than 6% of total federal funds may be allocated to the combined administrative/indirect costs of the grantee plus those of the subgrantees.

Calculations

Applicants can choose to use one of two methods to calculate administrative/indirect costs – a CNCS Fixed Percentage method (Option A) or a Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate method (Option B). Select **only one** of these options.

a. CNCS Fixed Percentage Method—Option A

If you choose Option A, you may charge for administrative costs a fixed 6% of the total of the federal funds expended. In order to charge this fixed 6%, the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10% of all direct cost expenditures. These rates may be

used without supporting documentation and are in lieu of a formally approved indirect cost rate.

To calculate the maximum CNCS Share for administrative costs under Option A, add the subtotals of the CNCS Share column in the Other Supporting Costs portion of Section I and multiply by .0638. This is the maximum amount you can request as the CNCS share. Enter this amount in the CNCS Share column for Section IIA.

b. Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate Method—Option B

Applicants who choose to use their federally approved indirect cost (IDC) rate to calculate indirect costs should select Option B. Specify the Cost Type for which your organization has current documentation on file (i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost rate). You will be asked to supply your approved IDC rate (percentage). Whether or not your entire IDC rate is used to calculate indirect costs for this grant is at your discretion. Please show your calculations and indicate, if different than the approved IDC, the rate you have chosen to use.

1. To calculate the total allowable indirect costs for the project, use the method prescribed by your organization (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other), and calculate all totals. For example, if Organization X has a federally approved indirect cost rate of 25% of direct costs, it would multiply the total direct costs (the subtotal of Section I: CNCS Share + Grantee Share) by 25%.
2. Multiply the subtotal of the CNCS Share column in Section I by .0638. This is the maximum amount you can request as CNCS share of indirect costs. Enter this amount in the CNCS Share column for Section II B.
3. To calculate the Grantee Share, subtract the amount calculated in step 2 from the amount calculated in step 1. This is the maximum amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for indirect costs. Enter this amount in the Grantee Share column for Section II B.
4. Enter the sum of the CNCS and Grantee Shares under the Total Amount column in Section II.B.

F. Funding/Demographics

Please enter the approximate number of youth participants and adult volunteers you expect to engage in service-learning activities during the full, three-year project period.

G. Review, Authorize, and Submit

eGrants requires that you review and verify your entire application before submitting, by completing the following sections in eGrants:

- Review
- Authorize
- Assurances
- Certifications
- Verify
- Submit

Authorization, Assurances and Certifications

Read the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications carefully. The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant’s Authorized Representative or his/her designee and must have an active eGrants account to sign these documents electronically. An Authorized Representative is the person in your organization authorized to accept and commit funds on behalf of the organization. A copy of the governing body’s authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant’s office.

Be sure to check your entire application to ensure that there are no errors before submitting it. eGrants will also generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected prior to submission when you verify the application. If someone else is acting in the role of the applicant’s authorized representative, that person must log into his/her eGrants account and proceed with Authorize and Submit. After signing off on the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications, his/her name will override any previous signatory that may appear and show on the application as the Authorized Representative.

Note: *Anyone within your organization that will be entering information in the application at any point during application preparation and submission in the eGrants system must have their own eGrants account.* Individuals may establish an eGrants account by accessing this link: <https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp> and selecting “Don’t have an eGrants account? Create an account.”

VI. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. What is the selection process and criteria for these grants?

In evaluating applications for funding, reviewers will assess program design, organizational capacity, and cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy. The weights assigned to each category are listed in the chart below. Reviewers will assess application narratives against these criteria and the extent to which the applicant responds to the priorities in this *Notice* the questions in the Application Instructions. Please read both documents carefully to ensure that you are fully and appropriately responding to the information requested in the application.

Selection Criteria: Categories and Respective Weights

Category	Percentage
Program Design (Executive Summary, Three Year Plan, Participant Development, Community Needs and Service Activities, Strengthening Communities)	70%
Organizational Capability	20%
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	10%

Overview of Selection Criteria

1. Program Design (70%)

In assessing Program Design, reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant addresses the funding priorities stated in Section I. (page 2) of this *Notice*. In addition,

reviewers will analyze how well applicants clearly address in detail the following aspects of their program design:

- Detailed descriptive data, demographic and geographic description of the zone where the program will take place, as well as information on the zone's youth volunteerism, service-learning and civic engagement histories
- Detailed identification with relevant statistics of a specific community challenge and its impact on the residents of the zone
- Detailed description of service-learning activities youth will undertake to solve problems stemming from the identified community need – evidence of alignment with K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice
- Identification of all required community partners and their assets for addressing established community needs
- Description of volunteer recruitment, training methods, and roles
- Connection and coordination of participating organizations and citizens, including the youth
- Established supports (policies, training, resources, etc) to encourage the sustainability of service-learning activities beyond the grant period
- Description of measureable impacts of the program on **both** the youth participants **and** the community, and methods of measurement
- Thorough three year plan that includes participant development outcomes, strengthening communities outcomes, community needs and service activities outcomes, training and technical assistance, an evaluation plan and a comprehensive timeline of program activities for the first year

2. Organizational Capacity (20%)

Reviewers will assess the degree to which the applicant demonstrates the following under the Organizational Capacity Section of their applications:

- Program Implementation and Oversight – Demonstration of experience and infrastructure of applicant's organization in managing programs similar to the one proposed in this application; Delineation of key staff and their responsibilities and qualifications; Description of plans and capacity (current and anticipated) to implement and use self-assessments and continuous improvement systems to provide data and information on the success of this project
- Federal Grant Experience/Fiscal Oversight Track Record - evidence that the applicant has had the experience and/or the capacity to manage federal grants and provide sound fiscal management and oversight
- Previous Experience with Learn and Serve America (or CNCS) Grants – included information related to previously funded LSA or other CNCS programs

3. Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (10%)

Reviewers will assess how effectively the applicant proposes to accomplish the following:

- Leverage resources to support program implementation and sustainability
- Develop diverse sources of resources and funding
- Build community support for the program at the local, state and/or national level(s)

Reviewers will also assess the extent to which proposed budgets are clearly aligned with the activities outlined in the project plan.

B. What is the purpose of the review and selection process?

Specifically, the review and selection process is designed to:

- Give every eligible application full and fair consideration
- Select a high-quality, well-balanced portfolio of programs

Additional Considerations: Strategic and Balancing Characteristics

- Involvement of students and community stakeholders in the design and implementation of the service-learning program;
- Implementation of the service-learning program in low-income or rural communities;
- Using adult volunteers, including tapping the resources of retired and retiring adults, in the planning and implementation of the service-learning program.
- Geographic diversity, balancing grantees on a state and/or regional basis, the ratio of new and past/existing grantees.
- For past and existing grantees, past grant performance will be taken into consideration in making funding decisions.

C. What are the stages in the review and selection process?

1. Compliance Review

CNCS staff will review all applications to determine compliance with eligibility, deadline, and completeness requirements. Applications that are submitted by eligible organizations, submitted by the deadline, and that are complete, will advance to External Review.

2. External Review

External reviewers will assess applications based on the Program Design, Organizational Capacity and Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy criteria. Each application will be reviewed by at least three external reviewers. Reviewers will be recruited and selected on the basis of demonstrated expertise in education and service-learning programming. All external reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

3. Post External Review Quality Control (Quality Control)

Quality Control is designed to ensure that every eligible application receives full and fair consideration in the review process. After the external reviewers complete their assessment, staff will review the results to determine whether any applications should receive a Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review may be used for:

- Applications for which there are significant panel anomalies.
- Applications submitted by high-performing current grantees that received a low rating in peer review.

Applications identified for additional assessment will be reviewed by external Quality Control reviewers. The Quality Control reviewers provide assessment of the application's key strengths and weaknesses.

4. Selection of Applications for Internal Review

Upon completing External Review and Quality Control, CNCS staff will determine which applications advance to Internal Review. Applications will advance to Internal Review based on the results of the External Review and Quality Control, as well as the consideration of the priorities, balancing characteristics, additional considerations, and strategic characteristics. In addition to applications that perform well in External Review, staff may advance applications that did not perform well in External Review on the basis of the Quality Control results and the considerations listed above.

5. Internal Review

CNCS staff will assess the overall quality of the application, particularly focusing on the evaluation plan, the capacity of the partnership to carry out the plan and the clarity of the program design, as well as Organizational Capability, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy. Following staff assessment, some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information. CNCS program officers may contact applicants to seek clarification, resolve questions and issues, negotiate performance measures, and request revised budgets as part of the pre-award review process. Failure to respond to requests for information in a timely fashion will result in the removal of applications from consideration. Applicants should be prepared to provide documentation of eligibility criteria (e.g., free and reduced price lunch rates) partnerships and other support described in the narrative such as Memoranda of Understanding, samples of selected curriculum, organization annual reports, and evaluations.

CNCS staff will determine which applications to recommend for selection based on the results of External Review, Quality Control, Internal Review, and Clarifications; and the priorities, balancing characteristics, additional considerations, and strategic characteristics listed above.

6. Selection

The Chief Executive Officer will select the final portfolio based on staff recommendation, and considering overall quality, priorities, balancing characteristics, additional considerations, and strategic characteristics listed above.

D. What feedback will applicants receive?

Following grant awards, each applicant will receive the results of review pertaining to their application.

E. How long will the selection and review process take?

Processing and selecting applications for funding will require approximately three months after the application submission deadline.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. When will grants be awarded?

We anticipate making awards by the end of June 2011.

B. What documents govern the grant?

Grant provisions are incorporated in the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). The NGA also includes the approved application as part of a binding commitment under the grant.

C. Are there any other grant requirements?

Criminal History Checks

A criminal history check is required for all individuals receiving a living allowance, stipend, national service educational award, or salary through a program receiving assistance under the national service laws—regardless of the type of service the individual is performing or the individual’s access to vulnerable populations. (42 U.S.C. 12645g)

Knowledge Network Participation

All YEZ grantees will be expected to participate in a learning community that will:

- Connect grantees and encourage the sharing of ideas and experiences.
- Address the learning needs of its members through proactive and collaborative partnerships.
- Achieve shared learning objectives.
- Have members actively engaged in learning together from each other.
- Develop shared outcomes to document the success of the YEZ model.

D. What are the reporting requirements for these grants?

Grantees are required to supply annual performance and bi-annual financial reports to CNCS via eGrants. The performance report includes implementation level data collection. All grantees provide quarterly expense reports to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services via the Payment Management System.

If you receive an award, you will be required to report at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over \$25,000 and may be required to report on executive compensation for your organization and for your subgrantees. You must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. See 2 C.F.R. Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply.

VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

This *Notice* is available at http://www.nationalservice.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp. The TTY number is 800-833-3722. For further information or for a printed copy of this *Notice*, or for technical questions and problems with the eGrants system, contact the National Service Hotline at 800-942-2677 or <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask>

IX. TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Learn and Serve America will be scheduling training and technical assistance conference calls for interested applicants. Dates, times and conference call access information will be posted on the CNCS website: www.nationalservice.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp

For your convenience, a competition specific Application Checklist is also provided on the website to help you ensure that all required elements have been addressed in your application.