

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Revision of the AmeriCorps*VISTA Project Pre-Application Inquiry, Project Application and Project Progress Report Forms

AGENCY: Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

ACTION: Notice of 30-day OMB Review of Project Application and Project Progress Report Forms.

SUMMARY: On June 14, 1996, AmeriCorps*VISTA announced a 60-day review and comment ending on August 13, 1996, during which project sponsors and the public were encouraged to submit comments suggesting revisions to the AmeriCorps*VISTA Pre-Application Inquiry, CNCS 3045-0042 (formerly form A-1421), Project Application and Grant Application CNCS 3045-0038 (formerly forms 1421 and 1421-B), Project Progress Report forms (CNCS 3045-0042, and Project Progress Report, CNCS-3045-0033 (formerly form 1433).

The Pre-Application Inquiry and Project Application were submitted by prospective grantees to apply for, or renew sponsorship of projects under the AmeriCorps*VISTA Program. Completion of the application is required to obtain or retain sponsorship and to refund the continuation of projects. The Project Progress Report is submitted by project sponsors to periodically report on activities listed in an approved application.

In the June 14 announcements, comments were invited on (1) whether the forms collect information sufficient to meet operational management, planning and reporting needs of the AmeriCorps*VISTA program; (2) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collected (3) accuracy of Corporation estimates of reporting burden; and (4) ways to further reduce the reporting burden.

No comments were received.

AmeriCorps*VISTA is requesting extension of the authorization to use the revised Project Application Part A and Part B (new title of the combined Pre-Application Inquiry and Project Application) and the Project Progress Report.

DATES: AmeriCorps*VISTA and the Office of Management and Budget will consider written comments on the Project Application and Project Progress Report and record keeping requirements which are received within 30 days from the date of publication.

ADDRESSES: David Gurr, Corporation for National Service, 1201 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20525.

Estimated Annual Reporting Burden: 13,500 hours (900 annual respondents at an average of 15 hours per respondent) for the Project Application. 10,800 hours (900 respondents at an average of 3 hours, submitted 4 times each year).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE

CONTACT: David Gurr (202) 606-5000, extension 212.

*This document will be made available in alternate format upon request. TDD (202) 606-5256.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY: National Service Trust Act of 1993.

Dated: August 29, 1996.

Larry Bevan,

Program and Field Support Manager,
AmeriCorps*VISTA.

[FR Doc. 96-22519 Filed 9-3-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6050-28-M

Availability of Education Awards under the AmeriCorps Education Awards Program

AGENCY: Corporation for National and Community Service.

ACTION: Notice of availability of education awards.

SUMMARY: The Corporation for National Service (The Corporation) seeks to expand opportunities for individuals to serve as AmeriCorps Members and earn educational benefits, broaden the network of national service programs and strategies, and increase the number of communities joining with AmeriCorps to better meet their education, public safety, environmental, and other human needs.

Accordingly, the Corporation announces the availability of up to 5,000 education awards from the National Service Trust (the Trust) through a simplified application process for community service programs that (1) Can support most or all of the AmeriCorps Member and program costs from sources other than the Corporation; (2) meet certain AmeriCorps program requirements; and (3) are judged to be high quality according to Corporation criteria, as highlighted below and set forth in the application materials. The education awards being made available may be earned by AmeriCorps Members successfully completing Full-time or Part-time terms in a community service program approved through this application process.

While programs supported under this Notice should be similar to other AmeriCorps*State and *National

programs to maintain the integrity of the AmeriCorps national service network, the Corporation is modifying certain AmeriCorps requirements and permitting programs greater management and operating flexibility. In addition, the Corporation will consider requests for up to \$1,000 per full-time Member (pro-rated for a part-time Member) to manage these programs.

Potential program sponsors eligible to apply under this Notice include national nonprofit organizations, multi-state collaborations, state commissions for national and community service, institutions for higher education, and state education agencies. Other applicants may apply through state commissions, provided they meet criteria established by the state commission.

DATES: Applications may be obtained on or after September 4, 1996. For applications received by October 31, 1996, we anticipate making decisions by November 30, 1996. For applications received by February 28, 1997, we anticipate making decisions by March 31, 1997. For applications received by June 30, 1997, we anticipate making decisions by July 31, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Application materials may be obtained from, and must be submitted to, the following address: AmeriCorps Education Awards Program, Corporation for National Service, 1201 New York Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20525. They may also be requested by telephone, at 202/606-5000, ext. 260, or (TDD) 202/565-2700. This notice may be requested in an alternative format for the visually impaired.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: For further information about this program, contact the Corporation for National Service, Hank Oltmann at 202/606-5000, ext. 417, or (TDD) 202/565-2700.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Corporation is a federal government corporation that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in community-based service. This service addresses the nation's education, public safety, environmental, or other human needs to achieve direct and demonstrable results. In doing so, the Corporation fosters civic responsibility, strengthens the ties that bind us together as a people, and provides educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service.

Pursuant to the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as

amended, 42 U.S.C. 12501, *et seq.* (the Act), the Corporation may "support innovative and model programs." 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12653(b). In addition, an individual can receive an education award from the National Service Trust if, among other things, the individual "successfully completes the required term of service . . . in an approved national service position." 42 U.S.C. 12602. The Act defines an approved national service position to include six specific service positions and "such other national service positions as the Corporation considers to be appropriate." 42 U.S.C. 12573.

Although AmeriCorps Education Award programs should be similar to existing AmeriCorps programs to maintain the integrity of the AmeriCorps national service network, the Corporation recognizes that some modifications to program and administrative requirements are appropriate. Program, grant, and administrative requirements are set forth in the application guidelines.

Program Eligibility and Design

The Corporation will accept applications from eligible applicants proposing to sponsor a national service program that addresses the unmet education, public safety, environmental, and other human needs in the community served, and provides a direct and demonstrable benefit that is valued by the community. The Corporation is looking for high-quality programs that (1) "get things done" to meet local needs, (2) strengthen communities, and (3) develop Members. Programs must establish specific objectives for the program, which are subject to the Corporation's approval.

For this initiative, the Corporation seeks programs that will support most or all program and participant costs (other than education awards) through sources other than the Corporation. The Corporation will consider requests for up to \$1,000 per new full-time Member (pro-rated for a part-time Member) to manage the program. A request for funds in addition to the education awards should reflect the minimum support necessary to manage the program; should, in the case of existing service programs, reflect only the management costs related to adding new Members; may affect approval of the proposal due to lack of available funding; and will be the subject of negotiation between the applicant and the Corporation.

By "getting things done," programs will help their communities meet education, public safety, environmental, or other human needs through direct

and demonstrable service. Programs must be large enough to achieve a demonstrable impact on the community served. Accordingly, the Corporation expects programs to enroll a sufficient number of either full-time or part-time Members, regardless of whether they are placed individually or in teams, to produce a demonstrable impact. If the program uses part-time Members, the program must demonstrate that the service provided by individual Members will be sustained and ongoing, not merely episodic.

To strengthen communities, programs should engage a full range of local partners to build a self-sustaining commitment to service. Service projects should be designed, implemented, and evaluated with appropriate local input and consultation with representatives of the community served, including community-based agencies, foundations, businesses, local labor organizations representing employees of service sponsors, and local government.

To develop Members, programs should provide appropriate training, education, supervision, and support, and emphasize the ethic and skills needed for productive, active citizenship.

Programs must keep time and attendance records on all AmeriCorps Members to document their eligibility for the education award. Programs will be required to cooperate with the Corporation and its evaluators in all its monitoring and evaluation efforts. Semi-annual program progress reports will be required. Member enrollment, end-of-term, and other National Service Trust forms must be submitted in compliance with existing requirements.

Program Models

The Corporation intends to support a variety of models under this initiative. The following is a list of models for both part-time (including summer) and full-time programs the Corporation intends to support. Applicants are encouraged to propose additional models.

(1) School-based and community-based service programs, including youth corps. Potential projects include tutoring and mentoring younger children and leading them in service projects after school, on weekends, and during summer.

(2) College-based programs in which student AmeriCorps Members eligible for education awards act as part-time service-learning coordinators in local schools, or perform other service.

(3) Programs run by colleges in which institutions agree to provide (a) future scholarships to middle and secondary level students if they qualify for

admission, and (b) provide younger students with college student mentors, who are part-time AmeriCorps Members.

(4) Summer programs in which AmeriCorps Members organize service and other activities for children and youth.

(5) Joint initiatives between community organizations and private sector organizations in which full-time employees perform service in the community on their own time as AmeriCorps Members and receive a part-time education award.

(6) Before and after-school child care programs led by AmeriCorps Members funded by local communities.

(7) Full-time service programs run by religious organizations, youth corps, or other entities where expansion will be achieved by offering additional education awards.

(8) Fellowship programs in which individuals such as recent college or professional school graduates serve in public interest positions in their field of service for a year before seeking more permanent employment.

(9) Programs initiated by mayors and other local officials to integrate locally funded AmeriCorps Members into community-wide strategies to solve local problems; for example, a city or town with a shortage of supervised activities for middle-school students during summer months might design and fund a program for AmeriCorps Members to lead teams of youth in service activities.

Matching Funds Requirements

There is no matching funds requirement under the AmeriCorps Education Award Program.

Member Recruitment and Development

Programs must enroll Members to complete full-time (at least 1700 hours in a nine to twelve month period) or part-time (at least 900 hours over not more than two years or approved reduced part-time) terms of service.

Programs must select their Members in a non-partisan, non-political, and non-discriminatory manner. Members must be U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, or lawful permanent resident aliens. Members must be at least 17 years old, except that out-of-school 16 year olds may participate in youth corps programs and programs for disadvantaged youth that address the need for housing and other community facilities in low-income areas.

Programs are encouraged to recruit Members who possess leadership potential and a commitment to the goals of national service, regardless of the

Member's educational level, work experience, or economic background. In recruiting and placing their Members, programs must not displace any employee or position, or otherwise violate the non-displacement provisions of the Corporation's regulations, which are published at 45 CFR Sec. 2540.100(f).

In addition, programs should strive to build strong communities by engaging diverse Members, community volunteers and staff in service activities and by encouraging mutual understanding and cooperation. Programs should actively seek to include Members and staff from the communities in which projects are conducted, as well as individuals of different races and ethnicities, ages, education levels, socioeconomic backgrounds, both men and women, and individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities.

Programs must provide Members with the training, skills, and knowledge necessary to perform the tasks required in their respective projects. In addition, programs are encouraged to help participants who have not completed their secondary education to earn the equivalent of a high school diploma.

Member Benefits

The Corporation will not set a minimum living allowance for full-time Members (which, for current AmeriCorps programs, is \$7,945 per year) under the AmeriCorps Education Award Program. The maximum living allowance for full-time AmeriCorps Members under this program is \$10,000 per year. Any living allowance for a part-time Member may not exceed a prorated share of a maximum of \$10,000 per year on a full-time basis. This maximum may be waived by the Corporation, upon request, for certain professional corps and similar programs.

Health care and child care are not required under the AmeriCorps Education Award Program, but may be offered by the local program which is responsible for all Member benefits.

Programs must provide reasonable accommodation, including auxiliary aids and services, based on the individualized need of a Member who is a qualified individual with a disability. Programs must also establish and maintain a procedure for receiving and resolving grievances from participants and other interested individuals concerning the program.

Eligibility for the Education Award

Members who successfully complete full-time or part-time terms of service

are eligible for education awards for each of up to two terms of service. Full-time Members must serve at least 1700 hours during a period of not less than nine months and not more than a year. Part-time Members must generally serve at least 900 hours during a period of not more than two years. Members may also serve in approved reduced part-time programs (such as summer programs or other programs requiring less than 900 hours), with education awards prorated to the number of hours served.

Under the AmeriCorps Education Awards Program, the Corporation will not accept proposals for part-time service of more than two years. Full-time education awards are \$4,725 and part-time education awards are \$2,362.50.

Use of Education Award

The education award may be used only for specific educational purposes: (1) To repay a Member's qualified loans; or (2) towards the cost of a Member's attendance at a qualified institution of higher education or approved School-to-Work program. The education award is not transferable to anyone other than the Member. The award must be paid directly to the loan holder or the educational institution. Regulations governing AmeriCorps education awards are published at 45 CFR Sec. 2525-2529.

Prohibited Service

Prohibited activities may not be performed by Members in the course of their duties, at the request of program staff, or in a manner that would associate the activities with the national service program or the Corporation. However, Members are free to engage in such activities on their own initiative, on their own time, and at their own expense. These activities include:

- (1) any effort to influence legislation, as defined under Sec. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. Sec. 501);
- (2) organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- (3) assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- (4) impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- (5) engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- (6) 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;

(7) engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious education or worship, constructing or operating facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization; and providing a direct benefit to (a) A business organized for profit, (b) a labor union, (c) a partisan political organization, (d) a nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in Sec. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or (e) an organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph (6) above, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities.

Eligible Applicants

State Commissions, national non-profit organizations proposing to operate in more than one state, multi-state collaborations, institutions of higher education, and state education agencies may apply directly to the Corporation.

Local non-profit organizations, State and local units of government (other than state education agencies), other state-wide programs, and programs operating only within the state must apply through respective State Commissions on National and Community Service. Interested applicants should first contact their respective Commissions.

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(4), which engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply, serve as a host site for Member placements, or act in any type of supervisory role in the program.

This Notice does not apply to organizations interested in applying to become AmeriCorps*VISTA cost-share projects. Such organizations should contact their respective State Office of the Corporation for National Service.

Criteria for the Selection of Programs

The Corporation will employ the following criteria in the review of proposals under this initiative:

1. Program Quality. A proposal must demonstrate the applicant's capacity to establish clear and specific objectives to meet compelling community needs, design meaningful service activities based on these needs, and recruit, select, train and manage AmeriCorps Members to carry out these needs. The proposal should demonstrate the applicant's organizational and staff

capacity to manage a high quality program. The proposal should evidence strong community support, and have a demonstrable impact on the community being served, together with the capacity to document that impact.

2. Program Growth. If the applicant currently sponsors an AmeriCorps project or another service project, there must be evidence that the availability of education awards will increase the size and scope of the service program and/or enhance its quality.

3. Preference for Children and Youth Programs. The Corporation will give preference to those programs addressing the needs of our Nation's children and youth, such as tutoring, mentoring, after-school and summer programs, and immunization. Especially important are efforts designed to involve children and youth being served in performing service themselves, not simply the implementation of programs designed to serve them.

4. Preference for identified models. Although the Corporation will consider all model program proposals, the Corporation will give preference to the models identified in this announcement.

Selection Process

The Corporation will judge proposals with a process that includes review by outside experts, staff review and recommendations, and final decisions by the Corporation Board. The Corporation will enter into negotiations with potentially successful applicants in a manner that may require significant modifications to original proposals. Awards are contingent on successful completion of negotiations. The number of applications approved, the number of education awards provided to approved programs, and the duration of approved programs are subject to the availability of funds and education awards.

Dated: August 28, 1996.

Shirley Sagawa,

Managing Director for Planning, Corporation for National Service.

[FR Doc. 96-22449 Filed 9-3-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6050-28-P

Availability of Funds for Technical and Administrative Support for the National Service Scholarship Program

AGENCY: Corporation for National and Community Service.

ACTION: Notice of availability of funds.

SUMMARY: The Corporation for National Service (the Corporation) announces the availability of up to \$250,000 to provide technical and administrative support for

a new National Service Scholarship Program to recognize high school juniors and seniors engaged in outstanding community service. Students selected for recognition will receive locally-funded scholarships, matched or supplemented with federal funds provided by the Corporation. Of the National Service Scholars, a small number selected at the State level will receive special recognition and larger scholarships, and an even smaller number selected at the national level will receive special recognition and still larger scholarships. The Corporation's goal in this effort is to highlight the outstanding community service performed by high school students across the country, to recognize the particularly noteworthy service accomplishments of outstanding young individuals, and to assist those individuals in pursuing higher education.

As part of this effort, the Corporation is interested in selecting an organization to provide administrative and technical support related to this program. The successful applicant will assist in the design of the program, conduct outreach and promote the program, solicit input from interested nonprofit organizations with relevant expertise, work with local nonprofits and other organizations to carry out the program, and provide the administrative and technical support necessary to accomplish the objectives described above.

DATES: The deadline for submission of applications is October 15, 1996. Applications must be received by the Corporation no later than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on that date.

ADDRESSES: Applications must be addressed to: Corporation for National Service, 1201 New York Avenue NW, Ninth Floor, Washington, DC 20525. Attention: Simon G. Woodard. Applications may not be submitted by facsimile.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information, contact Simon G. Woodard at (202) 606-5000, ext. 114. This notice may be requested in an alternative format for the visually impaired by calling (202) 606-5000, ext. 260. The Corporation's T.D.D. number is (202) 565-2799.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Corporation is a federal government corporation that encourages Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in community-based service. This service addresses the nation's educational, public safety, environmental and other human needs

to achieve direct and demonstrable results. In doing so, the Corporation fosters civic responsibility, strengthens the ties that bind us together as a people, and provides educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service.

Pursuant to the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12501, et seq. (the Act), the Corporation may "support innovative and model programs." Under this authority, the Corporation intends to conduct a National Service Scholarship Program that will recognize high school juniors/seniors for outstanding service in their communities and provide modest scholarship support in recognition of such service.

Through this notice, the Corporation invites proposals from interested applicants to design and implement the program. An outline of the program, and the expectations of performance are provided below.

Purpose and Potential Design of the National Service Scholarship Program

The purpose of this program is to highlight the outstanding community service performed by high school students across the country, to recognize the particularly noteworthy service accomplishments of outstanding young individuals, and to assist those individuals in pursuing higher education.

The Corporation anticipates that the final design of this program will come from a collaboration involving the organization selected under this notice, an independent panel of experts in the field, and State and local stakeholders. The Corporation expects that the national service scholarship program will be implemented by local schools and communities across the country according to guidelines and procedures they will establish, consistent with the following general guidelines:

(1) The volunteer activities of the high school junior/senior should demonstrate effort over a sustained period of no less than one year, and should have a significant impact in meeting the needs of the local community.

(2) The awarding of the scholarship should be made by a local organization in recognition of the individual's community service and in accordance with procedures that are equitable and provide the opportunity for consideration of all eligible candidates.

(3) It may be connected with service learning programs of the school district.

(4) The selection process should be strictly non-partisan and non-political.