# Prepare your Organization to Compete for Grants

Carlos E. Gómez-Montes, MPA, Ed. D. Candidate

State Program Director CNCS

Puerto Rico & USVI

www.nationalservice.gov

# Do you know them?

# Learning Objectives

During this session will cover:

- How to access valuable information about CNCS grants, what are the requirements for competition and what type of support you will receive from the agency.

- Time tables to submit Concept Papers and/or Letters of Intention.

- Role and Responsibilities of the sponsor.

➢ Main Points:

- ❖ Program Administration

- ❖ Transparency

- ❖ Collaborative Model/Work

# Corp for National and Community Service

- CNCS is the federal agency that since 1993 engages more than 5 million Americans in service through its core programs, and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, *United We Serve*.

- As the nation's largest grantmaker for service and volunteering, CNCS plays a critical role in strengthening America's nonprofit sector and addressing our nation's challenges through service.

- CNCS harnesses America's most powerful resource – the energy and talents of our citizens – we believe that everyone can make a difference; CNCS empowers Americans and fosters a lifetime of service.

# How to access information…

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NOFO – Notice of Funding Opportunities   /   NOFA – Notice of Funding Availability

# How to access information…

You **must** have an account with eGrants

# How to access information…

*Q. How do I ensure that I'm aware of any changes or new information?*
The best way to ensure you get emails to inform you of changes or new information is to sign up for updates by using the email link on the blue bar at the top of our website ([www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov)) and check the box for "Funding Opportunities." Also, check the  FAQs every week for additions to the NOFO/NOFA.

*Q. Applicants should have their IRS designation 501(c) 3 to participate in the different programs from CNCS?*  Yes! *

*Q. If an organization has applied for 501(c) 3 status and is waiting for it to be approved, can they find an organization to act as fiscal agent to apply for the grant? Would both organizations' names be on the grant application?*
CNCS requires one legal applicant organization. An organization can find a fiscal agent to serve as the legal applicant and if/when the 501(c) 3 status is complete, CNCS can change the legal applicant for the grant application, should it be selected for funding.

**AmeriCorps | Senior Corps | Social Innovation Fund | Volunteer Generation Fund**

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# How to access information…

- **Q. What documents do I need to read in order to apply for funding?**
- You must read the Notice of Funding Opportunity,
- NOFO Glossary and the Application Instructions for the competition you are interested in.
- Federal Regulations, C.F.R. is also an important reference.
- Strategic Plan and National Performance Measures.

- **Q. What are AmeriCorps' performance measurement requirements?**
- AmeriCorps programs must have an aligned output and outcome that reflects the program's primary intervention and aligns with the program's theory of change.

- **Q What are National Performance Measures?**
- CNCS has established six Focus Areas (see CNCS's Strategic Plan): **Economic Opportunity**, **Education, Healthy Futures, Disaster Services, Environmental Stewardship, and Veterans and Military Families** based on the priorities included in the Serve America Act. Within these Focus Areas, as well as for Capacity Building, CNCS has created National Performance Measures in order to aggregate the results of similar programs and demonstrate the impact across our agency programs and initiatives.

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**Q. *What is a theory of change?***

A theory of change is a theory for how an intervention can address or solve a stated problem. A theory of change articulates a problem, a proposed intervention, and the change (outcomes) that is expected to result from delivering the intervention.

Underlying the theory is a set of assumptions, supported by evidence, about why the intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes. A Logic Model means a well-specified conceptual framework that identifies key components of the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice (i.e., the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the relationships among the key components and outcomes, theoretically and operationally

# Timetable VISTA Program

- VISTA Programs (managed by the CNCS State Office) are available twice a year, around 6 months before February and July (depending on volunteer space available).

- Concept Papers are always welcome. A Concept paper is the first steps towards a potential evaluation for a VISTA Grant.

  - http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/upload/VISTA_Concept%20Paper_2014.pdf

- Number of volunteers, scope and reach of the program depends on several administrative factors such as personnel, previous CNCS experience and time vested in managing the program.

# Timetable VISTA Program

- VISTA members or volunteers receive a monthly living stipend of $973, health insurance, training and child care expenses (if applicable).

- At the end of a successful service year they can opt for The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award of **$5,730** or a cash stipend of **$1,500**.

- Plus the benefits of fully serving their community, learning new skills or building the experience needed for a new carrier.

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# Timetable Senior Corps

Senior Corps connects today's 55+ with the people and organizations that need them most. We help them become mentors, coaches or companions to people in need, or contribute their job skills and expertise to community projects and organizations. Volunteers receive guidance and training so they can make a contribution that suits their talents, interests, and availability.

- ❖ Foster Grandparents Program
- ❖ Senior Companion Program
- ❖ RSVP – Retired Service Volunteer Program
- ✓ See NOFO page for future opportunities

# Timetable AmeriCorps (State and National)

The PR State Commission for Voluntarism is responsible to manage the AmeriCorps program in Puerto Rico. Opportunities to submit proposals are available once a year:

1. November    Orientation
2. January      Letter of Intention
3. March        Present the Proposal
4. Aug-Sept   Notice of Approval

# Role and Responsibilities

- Program Sponsors are responsible for managing the program and comply with the law(s).

- Program Supervisors are responsible for communicating with CNCS and helping members complete a full year of service.

- CNCS will provide guidance and T/TA.

- Annual audits

- Site visits

- Programs are expected to participate of CNCS Special Initiatives - www.nationalservice.gov/special-initiatives

# Role and Responsibilities

Main Points:

❖ Program Administration

❖ Transparency

❖ Collaborative Model/Work

# Resources

- CNCS - www.nationalservice.gov
- VISTA Campus – www.vistacampus.gov
- CNCS' Performance Measurement framework - www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement
- Knowledge Networks - www.nationalservice.gov/resources
- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) - www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR
- Puerto Rico State Office 787-766-5314, PR@cns.gov
- PR Commission on Voluntarism 787-721-7000, x6055  http://comisionvoluntariado.pr.gov/

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