

## Notice of Funds Opportunity for New Program Awards for Fiscal Year 2006

### OVERVIEW

**Federal Agency Name:** Corporation for National and Community Service  
**Learn and Serve America**

**Funding Opportunity Title:** **FY 2006 Learn and Serve America School-Based Grant Competition**

**Announcement Type:** **Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

**CFDA No.:** **94.004**

**Key Dates:** **See Table 1, below**

### Overview Information

**Background:** Learn and Serve America provides grants to State Education Agencies (SEAs), State Commissions on National and Community Service, Grantmaking Entities (faith-based and other nonprofits serving two or more states), Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories, and Institutions of Higher Education to support programs that combine learning and community service. This approach to education and youth development, called service-learning, engages youth in meeting pressing community needs while they develop leadership, civic competencies, and other skills.

**Available Grants:** The Corporation for National and Community Service (hereinafter the "Corporation") announces the anticipated availability of approximately \$40 million--subject to Congressional appropriation--of Learn and Serve America funds to implement and support School-Based, Community-Based, and Higher Education service-learning programs in FY 2006. The Grant competitions **in bold font** in Table 1 below are described in this NOFO. See the Community-Based and Higher Education NOFOs for information about those competitions.

**Table 1: Learn and Serve America Key Dates and Funds Available**

<b>Name of Grant Program</b>	<b>Approximate Funds Available</b>	<b>Corporation Deadline</b>	<b>Applicant Notification</b>
<b>School-Based Formula</b>	<b>\$19 million</b>	<b>February 2, 2006</b>	<b>June 12, 2006</b>
<b>School-Based Competitive</b>	<b>\$6.5 million</b>	<b>March 7, 2006</b>	<b>June 12, 2006</b>
<b>School-Based Indian Tribe and U.S. Territory Set-Aside</b>	<b>\$765,000</b>	<b>March 7, 2006</b>	<b>June 12, 2006</b>
Community-Based	\$4.5 million	March 7, 2006	June 12, 2006
Higher Education Individual	\$2 million	February 28, 2006	June 12, 2006
Higher Education Consortia	\$8 million	February 28, 2006	June 12, 2006

All potential applicants should read this entire document well in advance of completing an application as some application requirements may necessitate action or planning prior to the application due date.

Funds for this grant competition are available under authority provided by Pub.L 108-447. All funding estimates are projections. Publication of this announcement does not obligate the Corporation to award any specific number of grants or to obligate the entire amount of funds available, or any part thereof, for grants under Learn and Serve America.

In order to apply for a grant, applicants must read this NOFO and the general application and budget instructions. These documents, as well as the application itself, are available at [www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp). The documents can also be obtained by contacting Learn and Serve America at (202) 606-7510 or [LSASchool@cns.gov](mailto:LSASchool@cns.gov).

**Purpose of Grants.** This competition is devoted to expanding high-quality service-learning in K-12 schools with the purpose of helping the Corporation reach its goal of fostering service-learning in at least fifty percent of all public schools by the year 2010. This competition is also intended to increase the proportion of Learn and Serve participants who come from disadvantaged backgrounds from forty percent to sixty percent.

Learn and Serve School-Based grants provide funds to State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Grant Making Entities (GMEs), which must make subgrants to state-defined Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that are in partnership with at least one additional organization. LEA partners may include private schools, for-profit businesses, faith-based organizations, other nonprofits, and institutions of higher education. LEA partnerships are responsible for implementation, replication, and expansion of service-learning activities in local communities.

**Eligible Applicants:** Applicants eligible for Learn and Serve America funds under this initiative are SEAs, GMEs (faith-based and other nonprofit organizations), and Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories. GMEs are defined as public or private nonprofit organizations in existence at least one year before the time of application that are experienced in service-learning and proposing to make subgrants in two or more states. Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories are not required to make subgrants.

Previous grantees of Learn and Serve America may apply for funding.

All applicants are required to propose performance measures as a part of their applications. See Section II for additional information. A toolkit that explains how to construct performance measures is available at [http://www.projectstar.org/star/Learn%20and%20Serve/ls\\_pmtoolkit.htm](http://www.projectstar.org/star/Learn%20and%20Serve/ls_pmtoolkit.htm).

All applicants are required to use the Corporation's web-based application system, eGrants, to submit applications electronically. Go to [www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/index.asp](http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/index.asp) and establish an eGrants account to begin the process of submitting an application online.

## **Full Text of Announcement**

### **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

#### **Background**

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that encourages Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in community-based service. Through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs, the Corporation has engaged citizens of all ages and backgrounds in helping to meet pressing local needs for more than a decade. The Corporation's programs provide human and other resources to community- and faith-based groups to empower them to meet local needs in education, the environment, public safety, disaster preparedness and homeland security, and other critical areas. This year, more than two million individuals of all ages and backgrounds will serve through Corporation supported programs, and those individuals will recruit, train, and manage an additional one million community volunteers. National and community service programs also work closely with America's volunteer-connector

organizations to increase the number and impact of our nation's volunteers, and with schools and nonprofit groups to foster the ethic of good citizenship.

Learn and Serve America funds service-learning programs through State Education Agencies, state commissions on national and community service, institutions of higher education, Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories, and faith-based and other nonprofit organizations. School-Based funding is intended to support implementation of service-learning projects and create long-lasting support structures for service-learning that may include: development of state and regional service-learning coordinator positions, service-learning policies at the state and/or local level, district-wide service-learning centers, youth school board members, and inclusion of service-learning in K-12 core curriculum.

All School-Based Learn and Serve America applicants must propose to make subgrants (except Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories, which may run programs directly) to Local Education Agencies (LEAs), which in turn implement service-learning programs that meet the statutory definition of service-learning.

### **What is Service-Learning?**

The Corporation uses the interpretation provided in the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, which defines service-learning as an educational method that:

- is conducted in and meets the needs of a community;
- is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program, and with the community; and
- helps foster civic responsibility; and that--
- is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students, or the educational components of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled; and
- provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience.

Service-learning is a teaching strategy in which students address community problems. Like any effective teaching strategy, service-learning is designed to help students acquire core course content and skills. Unlike other teaching strategies, service-learning places as much emphasis on community improvement as on student growth. Service-learning students make use of course material to do important work on pressing community needs. As a result of high-quality service-learning, students benefit by seeing practical uses for their studies and communities benefit by having needs addressed. Through service-learning students develop civic competencies, knowledge, and dispositions that lead to a lifetime of civic engagement and service to community.

## Corporation Strategic Goals

The nation's critical needs have driven the Corporation to focus on four goals across all its programs over the next five years. Applicants are expected to address one or more of these goals. Learn and Serve America and its programs have particular responsibility to support goal one, "Ensuring a Brighter Future for All of America's Youth," and goal four, "Engaging Students in Their Communities." While these two goals are consistent with the mission of Learn and Serve America, applicants may design programs to have an impact on the other two Corporation goals: "Harnessing Experience to Meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges," and "Providing More Opportunities for Citizens to Serve and Volunteer." A brief overview of the strategic goals and Learn and Serve America's role in each one is below. Applicants are strongly encouraged to learn more about the Corporation's Strategic Plan for 2005-2010. For more information, including the full text of the document, visit [http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role\\_impact/strategic\\_plan.asp](http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/strategic_plan.asp).

**1. Ensuring a Brighter Future for All of America's Youth:** Youth who grow up in severely distressed communities, characterized by high poverty rates and a variety of social problems, are more likely to be at risk of school failure, unemployment, criminal behavior, and persistent poverty. By both engaging these youth in meaningful service and providing services to youth in difficult circumstances, the Corporation and its partners can improve the lives of our younger citizens.

All Learn and Serve America School- and Community-based applicants are expected to design programs that will engage a significant number of youth living in poverty in service-learning to meet the pressing needs of their community. By engaging more schools and youth in impoverished communities in service-learning, programs will have a dual benefit: helping to improve the lives of youth participants as well as serving and strengthening their communities.

**2. Harnessing Experience to Meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges:** Beginning in 2010, the share of the population that is age 65 and over will begin to climb substantially, bringing profound implications throughout our society. The aging of the Baby Boomers will increase their need for services, particularly independent living support and long-term care. For example, Americans ages 85+, the group most in need of long term care services, is projected to more than triple by 2040, from today's 4 million individuals to about 14 million Boomers.

At the same time, the Baby Boomers can help provide solutions to some of our most intractable social problems, including the expanding need for independent living support. Research tells us that Baby Boomers, as a whole, will not withdraw completely from the work place in "traditional retirement." Instead, they will seek a balance of work, leisure, civic engagement, and other interests. Offering opportunities to capture their talents and experience and engaging them in helping to solve critical social issues through service must become a high-priority goal for the nation in the coming years.

Learn and Serve America applicants may address this strategic priority in a variety of ways. Service-learning programs that provide service to older Americans can also prepare youth for careers in gerontology-related professions as well as building personal and organizational relationships that strengthen community ties. In addition, Learn and Serve programs may take advantage of Boomers' expertise by recruiting them as volunteers to support or coordinate service-learning activities. Learn and Serve also encourages programs in which youth and their elders serve side-by-side, significantly enriching the experience for participants and the recipients of service.

**3. Providing More Opportunities for Citizens to Serve and Volunteer:** President Bush issued a call to service in his 2002 State of the Union Address, appealing to all Americans to dedicate at least two years (or the equivalent of 4,000 hours) to service. According to Gallup's instant reaction poll following the address, 80% of Americans who watched the address felt willing and able to heed the call. Service opportunities now need to be available to enable volunteers to become involved.

Learn and Serve America programs should not only provide immediate opportunities for service, they should also strengthen the service infrastructure in the United States. Through the development and implementation of service-learning policies, educator professional development, and publicizing the impact of programs on youth and communities, Learn and Serve builds lasting frameworks and support for youth service, service-learning and civic engagement in schools and communities. These sustainable programs will continue to engage youth in service-learning long after Learn and Serve funds have been redirected to support other programs.

In addition, Learn and Serve programs should intentionally introduce youth to a lifetime of service and civic responsibility. Research indicates that individuals who serve as youth are more likely to serve when they reach adulthood. By providing high quality service-learning opportunities for youth, Learn and Serve programs can introduce youth to service and develop a lifelong ethic of service and civic engagement. Yet, research also indicates the importance of highlighting for youth the lessons they are learning, whether those lessons are academic, civic, service-related or all three. Participants in Learn and Serve programs must be made aware that they are part of a national service program, and should be introduced to other opportunities for service and civic engagement in their community and over their life span.

**4. Engaging Students in Their Communities:** Educational institutions (elementary, secondary, and higher education) have the responsibility of educating students to become responsible citizens and leaders who use their education and life experiences to support the common good. Service-learning is an effective strategy for the development of civic skills, leadership competencies, and academic success. The Corporation is committed to significantly expanding the use of service-learning in schools and communities.

All Learn and Serve America programs are expected to contribute to the expansion of service-learning to new schools, higher education institutions, and youth-serving community organizations. In 1984, only 9% of schools offered service-learning opportunities. By 1999, nine years after the start of Learn and Serve America programs, nearly a third of all schools offered service-learning. While this is excellent progress, it will take more to reach half of all schools by 2010, as the Corporation proposes, and far more to reach the goal set by the National Commission on Service-Learning: service-learning for every student, every year.

### **Disaster Response**

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that some ten million people lived in the region hit by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. It will take years to for residents to re-establish their homes, resume economic activity, and rebuild communities. Similarly, hundreds of thousands are likely to relocate outside of the region on a long-term basis. Learn and Serve welcomes applications that propose innovative uses of service-learning to provide support to the individuals and communities affected by the Hurricanes of August 2005. Any region of the United States must face the possibility of a natural or man-made disaster. The hurricane disaster exposed many of the everyday difficulties that

individuals living in poverty or limited by infirmity must confront. Learn and Serve applicants may also choose to address the dual challenge of helping those in disadvantaged circumstances to prepare to survive a disaster while helping to improve the conditions in impoverished communities.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of Learn and Serve America School-Based grants is to involve young people between the ages five and seventeen in service-learning projects that simultaneously support student development and meet community needs in areas such as the environment, education, public safety, and other human needs (see application instructions for a complete list of Service Categories).

This year's School-Based competition is intended to promote significant growth in high-quality service-learning in support of the Corporation's commitment to helping 50 percent of all schools make use of service-learning by 2010. The grantees in this competition must play a critical role in the rapid expansion of high-quality service-learning into new districts and schools. Research consistently shows that students and communities benefit from service-learning only when projects meet standards of high quality practice. Therefore, growth and quality must advance together.

The Corporation is equally committed to increasing the percentage of Learn and Serve America participants who come from disadvantaged backgrounds from 40 percent to 60 percent. Applicants may address this issue by focusing service-learning outreach strategies on schools in which more than half the students receive free or reduced price lunch.

In previous School-Based grant competitions, Learn and Serve America required applicants to submit proposals that: 1) linked history and civics to service; 2) supported three-way partnerships between community organizations, higher education institutions, and schools (CHESP); or 3) created projects to address homeland security needs. This year applicants are not required to address these themes, though proposals that do so are welcome.

A successful Learn and Serve America application will increase the adoption of high-quality service-learning in new venues and will provide opportunities for youth from disadvantaged situations to serve. Successful proposals must also determine the critical community needs that will be the focus of students' and schools' efforts. Applicants may choose program models, activities and community partnerships that best meet these defined needs. Applicants should also align their programs with significant community initiatives, statewide priorities or with the pressing needs determined by their national or regional networks in order to demonstrate substantial results.

Learn and Serve America is committed to documenting the effects of service-learning on participants. Toward this end, all applicants must adopt one or more of the Learn and Serve-developed performance measures and corresponding evaluation instruments in the areas of civic engagement, academic engagement, and reduction of risky behavior. Section II provides additional information on these performance measures. Performance measures tool kits are available at [http://www.projectstar.org/star/Learn%20and%20Serve/ls\\_pmtoolkit.htm](http://www.projectstar.org/star/Learn%20and%20Serve/ls_pmtoolkit.htm).

## **Consortia Grantee Responsibilities**

In addition to designing and implementing programs that meet the Corporation and Learn and Serve America strategic goals outlined above, all Learn and Serve America Consortia grantees are responsible for overall quality and compliance in the operation of their program and its constituent parts. Learn and Serve America School-Based grantees are required to make subgrants to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that partner with one or more community organizations in order to

implement service-learning programs in local communities. The LEAs must be in partnership with other community organizations. The only exception to the requirement to subgrant is for Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories, which may choose to implement School-based service-learning programs directly without making subgrants.

School-Based consortia grantees are responsible both for the overall achievements of their program and for the success of the service-learning programs they support at the subgrantee level. Consortia applications will be reviewed based on their ability to ensure high-quality service-learning at the subgrantee level as reflected in plans for identifying, funding, and supporting the LEA partnerships that will be responsible for implementing service-learning programs in local communities.

The key to managing a high-quality consortia grant lies in developing adequate systems and management controls to, among other things, conduct a quality subgrantee selection process; provide monitoring, technical assistance, and training to subgrantees; and develop program evaluation strategies to ensure that high-quality activities take place at the subgrantee level.

Consortia applicants must ensure that the following program guidance and program elements and/or activities are features of their programs.

- Consortia applicants should ideally select their subgrantees prior to submission of the application. Alternatively, applicants may provide a plan describing how the subgrantees and their partners will be identified and selected.
- Subgrants must be made to LEAs (i.e., schools or school districts) that are in *partnership* with one or more other local organizations. LEA partners may include private schools, for-profit businesses, faith-based organizations, other nonprofits, and institutions of higher education.
- A consortia subgranting strategy should include supporting LEA partnerships with varying levels of experience. A “tiered” portfolio of subgrants would allow newer subgrantees to receive assistance from those with greater experience.
- Subgrantees must implement local programs, but can include support for: 1) training staff, faculty, adult volunteers, and students in service-learning; 2) conducting site-level evaluations or data collection; 3) strengthening local partnerships; 4) developing service-learning curricula; and 5) supporting or mentoring other service-learning programs.
- Grantees are expected to build networks of teachers and school administrators, parents, and community agency partners who are knowledgeable about service-learning and who work to ensure that any school can start or expand service-learning. SEA Formula grantees are also expected to provide professional development to public and private school personnel, work with others to develop policies in support of service-learning, and evaluate the Learn and Serve America programs in their state.

At the subgrantee level, consortia applicants must demonstrate the capacity to ensure that:

- Partnerships between LEAs and their community partners are collaborative and formalized with a written memorandum of understanding that outlines roles and responsibilities for each party, a shared vision, and programmatic goals.

- All service activities are designed to make use of and deepen student understanding of core course material—the curriculum side of service-learning. Key concepts are usually described in national, state, district, and school standards of learning documents.
- LEAs use service-learning in at least one course within the core, or required, curriculum.
- Youth participate in all aspects of the service-learning project, from planning and execution to reflection and assessment.
- Participant reflection includes a variety of approaches (e.g., writing, artwork, and discussion) and purposes (e.g., examining new information and assessing the project to date) and incorporates effective learning strategies.
- Adult volunteers (especially Baby Boomers) and other community partners participate actively, bringing expertise, career information, community support, and role models to the program.
- Local project timelines include ample time (e.g., twenty hours for a semester-long project) for the action or service component of the project.

A more extensive list of program elements created by Learn and Serve America and titled “Hallmarks of High-Quality Service-Learning Programs” can be found at: [http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp).

## **II. Funding Information**

Learn and Serve America will hold three School-Based competitions for FY 2006: 1) School-Based Formula, 2) School-Based Competitive, and 3) School-Based Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories. All below funding estimates are subject to appropriation.

### **Funding Amounts**

School-Based Formula: Approximately \$19 million is available for SEAs; individual amounts are determined by statutory formula.

School-Based Competitive: Approximately \$4.5 million is available for ten to fifteen program grants ranging from \$350,000 to \$500,000 for each of three successive years.

Approximately \$1.9 million is available for up to fifteen Small State Capacity Grants ranging in size from \$20,000 to \$185,000 annually.

School-Based Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories: Approximately \$765,000 is available for six to ten program grants ranging in size from \$75,000 to \$150,000.

All funding estimates are projections for the guidance of potential applicants. The Corporation is not bound by any estimate in this notice. Publication of this announcement does not obligate the Corporation to award any specific number of grants or to obligate the entire amount of funds available, or any part thereof, for grants under Learn and Serve America.



Learn and Serve America anticipates making funding announcements by June 2006 and making grant awards by the end of August 2006. Requests from successful applicants for pre-award spending authority will be considered after the funding announcements are made.

### **School-Based Formula Grants to State Education Agencies (SEAs)**

School-Based Formula programs are non-competitive, annual allocations awarded only to State Education Agencies (SEAs). Each SEA is responsible for creating a statewide program to support and implement service-learning in its K-12 schools and districts. SEAs are Learn and Serve America's principal partners in working to meet the goals of involving 50 percent of all public schools in service-learning by 2010, expanding high-quality practices, and reaching increasing numbers of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The majority of funds allocated to SEAs are redistributed via subgrants to schools and school districts that work in partnership with community organizations to implement service-learning projects. Programs supported by these funds *must align* service activities with the state's standards of learning. The service projects should be a vehicle for using and deepening the knowledge and skills outlined in the curriculum, ensuring that course content and service activities are aligned. Programs must also ensure that student service activities are conducted in collaboration with the community and meet a pressing, genuine community need.

SEAs are required to create a three-year plan that details how they will address both the service priorities of their state and the Corporation's strategic initiatives. Three-year plans should provide major milestones and detailed strategies and plans in year one for:

- 1) subgranting funds to local education agency partnerships;
- 2) providing training and technical assistance in program quality and management;
- 3) helping subgrantees evaluate program impact;
- 4) helping subgrantees bring service-learning to increasing numbers of disadvantaged youth; and
- 5) championing service-learning at the state and local levels.

A detailed plan should be provided for year one of the proposal. The three-year plan's description of years two and three should include only major milestones. Grantees making continuation (renewal) requests for funding in years two and three of the grant cycle will be asked to update and fill in the remainder of the plan and to provide a corresponding budget.

SEA strategies for subgranting should include a professional development network or support structure that may include developing a network of service-learning coordinators, providing planning grants to districts, and/or establishing peer-to-peer systems of training and support.

Training provided by SEAs may be in-person or remote and may include state service-learning conferences, institutes, and meetings. SEAs must provide training opportunities to private school teachers based on the percentage of the state's students enrolled in private schools (e.g., if fifteen percent of a state's youth are enrolled in private schools, at least fifteen percent of teachers invited to trainings must work in private schools).

While each state's training plans may vary, the overall goals of all School-Based Formula programs should be to increase the number of schools and districts that offer high-quality service-learning across grade levels and disciplines, significantly raising the number of students, particularly those

in disadvantaged circumstances, who are afforded service-learning opportunities throughout their school experience.

### **Small State Capacity Grants**

The purpose of the Small State Capacity Grants is to increase significantly the ability of SEAs who receive funding at the low end of the formula scale to implement an increased number of high-quality service-learning programs, and to expand the capacity of the SEAs to support those programs and service-learning more broadly in their state.

The twenty-one SEAs that received less than \$200,000 in Formula funds in FY2005 are eligible to apply for a Small State Capacity Grant between the amounts of \$20,000 and \$180,000, such that the applicant's total Learn and Serve America support (Formula + Competitive School-Based grants) does not exceed \$225,000. Learn and Serve America will allocate approximately \$1.9 million for this competition and expects to make approximately fifteen awards in this category.

Small state SEAs must choose to either submit an application for a Small State Capacity Grant or compete in the general competition for School-Based Competitive funds described below. This decision must be made prior to the application deadline and cannot be changed once the application deadline has passed.

To be considered for the Small State Capacity grant, SEAs must:

1. Draft a state Formula application that is responsive to both the Formula and Competitive School-Based funding guidelines.
2. Submit a high-quality three-year plan under the Formula competition that directs the state's portfolio of subgrants (both Competitive and Formula) toward meeting one or more of the Corporation's strategic initiatives described in Section I.
3. Adopt at least one of Learn and Serve America's performance measures that focus on civic engagement, academic engagement, and reduction of risky behavior; and conduct a statewide evaluation of Learn and Serve-sponsored subgrantees using the standardized evaluation instruments that correspond to the performance measure.
4. Agree to partner with the Corporation in piloting the Learn and Serve America Core Competencies Initiative, which provides self-assessment tools in the areas of program and federal grants management. For more information about the Core Competencies Initiative see:  
[http://www.servicelearning.org/resources/online\\_documents/core\\_competencies/](http://www.servicelearning.org/resources/online_documents/core_competencies/).

Applicants for Small State Capacity Grants must submit a full Formula application *AND* an abbreviated Competitive application. The narrative portion of the Competitive application must be responsive to the standard School-Based application guidance and instructions, but may be only up to six pages in length.

Applicants must:

- 1) explicitly address how the additional Competitive funds will enhance their ability to carry out their three-year statewide Formula plans;

- 2) specify the additional number of operating grants that will be made with the Competitive funds;
- 3) and explain how state-wide evaluation and training and technical assistance plans for the entire portfolio (Competitive and Formula) will be enhanced with the additional Competitive funds.

The budget for the Competitive application should follow the School-Based budget instructions and must include funds for:

- 1) a fulltime service-learning coordinator (staff or contract employee);
- 2) statewide data collection and evaluation of activities using a Corporation supplied evaluation instrument; and
- 3) additional service-learning subgrantee programs. Applicants must match all requested funds at the standard one-to-one match.

### **School-Based Competitive Grants to Grantmaking Entities, State Education Agencies, and Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories**

The purpose of this competition is to:

- 1) replicate high-quality service-learning models;
- 2) promote expansion of service-learning to new schools and communities;
- 3) launch new and innovative program models; and
- 4) engage and serve significant numbers of youth from disadvantaged circumstances (i.e., projects in which a majority of the Learn and Serve America participants are eligible for free or reduced price lunch).

Applicants must submit a three-year plan that provides major milestones and strategies for implementing their program. Year one of the plan should include details on:

- 1) subgranting strategies;
- 2) training and technical assistance in program and quality management;
- 3) planning and supporting subgrantee evaluation efforts; and
- 4) championing service-learning at the state and local levels.

Years two and three of the plan should include only major milestones. Grantees making continuation (renewal) requests for funding in years two and three of the grant cycle will be asked to update and fill-in the remainder of the plan and to provide a corresponding budget.

Applicants should propose a plan for training, to both subgrantees and others in their network, which reflects established best practices in adult education and service-learning. Topics should include linking service to the curriculum, designing effective service projects, promoting student reflection, creating effective community partnerships, assessing student project work, publicizing and celebrating projects, and increasing student voice.

### **School-Based Competitive Set-Aside Funds for Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories**

In addition to being responsive to the School-Based Competitive guidance above, Indian Tribe and U.S. Territory (ITT) applicants should address the following guidance when completing an application.

An ITT applicant may apply as consortium applicant that subgrants to tribal schools and/or local public schools with significant American Indian populations, or as a direct grantee that proposes to implement a program without making subgrants. ITT applicants must also address the following guidance when completing an application:

1. Demonstrate that the Tribal Nation or the U.S. Territory supports the implementation of a service-learning program by describing the roles and responsibilities of key Tribal or U.S. Territory officials, as well as detailing plans for keeping these officials informed and involved in the project as it unfolds and after federal funding ends. Key officials may include the Tribal Chief, Tribal Council, or U.S. Territory Secretary of Education.
2. Provide a statement that the Tribal Nation or the U.S. Territory is not banned from receiving federal funds or in receivership by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
3. Describe how tribal communities and U.S. Territories will be impacted by the service-learning program, including meeting compelling community needs and gaps in services.
4. Provide a statement pledging to participate in the Annual Conference on Service in Indian Country and include up to \$1,000 to attend this training event in the budget.

## **Program Examples**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the program examples at [http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp), which are illustrative of the partnerships, activities, and program features that characterize high-quality Learn and Serve America grantees.

## **Performance Measures**

High-quality performance measures are a core element of all successful applications. Learn and Serve America will review and consider performance measures as they relate to the overall program design of the application. All applicants must provide a complete performance measure for each of the three program categories: 1) Needs and Service Activities, 2) Strengthening Communities to Support Service-Learning, and 3) Participant Development. A complete performance measure includes at least one output, one intermediate outcome, and one end outcome.

Using a logic model is an effective way to connect performance measures to program design and evaluation instruments. Applicants are strongly encouraged to develop logic models for their programs, though the actual logic model is *not* a required part of the submission.

*For more information about performance measures, including a toolkit to assist in the development and implementation of performance measures, visit the Corporation's technical assistance provider's website at [http://www.projectstar.org/star/Learn%20and%20Serve/ls\\_pmtoolkit.htm](http://www.projectstar.org/star/Learn%20and%20Serve/ls_pmtoolkit.htm).*

## **Previous Grantees**

Previous grantees of Learn and Serve America may apply for funding. Proposals should clearly present the primary lessons learned from the previous grant(s), how this learning influences the current proposal, and how the current proposal builds upon the work of the previously funded activities. Applicants are expected to describe sustainability efforts and institutional change in support of service-learning accomplished in the previous round(s) of funding. The applicant must describe how a new grant will further the institutionalization process for service-learning at the local/regional/state/national level.

## **Grant Period**

Learn and Serve America grants have a three year programmatic approval with funding for the first year. Applicants must include proposed activities and a detailed proposed budget for the first year of operation as well as estimated funds for the second and third years of operation.

Funded applicants will enter into a multi-year award agreement with the Corporation and receive funding from the Corporation initially for the first year of the program. The Corporation has no obligation to provide additional funding in connection with the award in subsequent years. Funding for the second and third years of an approved program is contingent upon satisfactory progress towards meeting the performance measure targets, timely and accurate reporting, the availability of funds, and any other criteria established in the award agreement.

## **Program Authority**

The Learn and Serve America School-Based programs are authorized by Title I subtitle B of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, 42U.S.C. 12521, et seq. Funds for this grant competition are available under authority provided by Pub.L 108-447.

## **Applicable Regulations**

Applicable regulations include the Learn and Serve America School-Based program regulations, 45CFR Part 2516 and the uniform administrative requirements for grants and agreements with institutions of higher education, hospitals, and other nonprofit organizations, 45 CFR Part 2543 or the uniform administrative requirements for grants and cooperative agreements to state and local governments, 45 CFR Part 2541.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### **1. Eligible Applicants**

Learn and Serve America School-Based grants provide funds to State Education Agencies (SEAs), Grantmaking Entities (GMEs), and Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories. GMEs are defined by statute for the purposes of this competition as public or private nonprofit- and faith-based-organizations, which have existed at least one year before applying, are experienced with service-learning, and are proposing to make subgrants in two or more states. All grantees, except Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories, must make subgrants to Local Education Agencies (LEAs), which are in partnership with one or more additional local organizations, to implement, replicate, or expand service-learning activities in local communities. LEA partners may include private schools, for-profit businesses, faith-based organizations, other nonprofits, and institutions of higher education.

All potential applicants should read this entire NOFO well in advance of completing an application as some application requirements may necessitate action or planning prior to the application due date. In addition, in order to successfully complete an application for Learn and Serve America funding, applicants must also read and follow the application instructions available on our website: [http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp). Application instructions can also be obtained by contacting Learn and Serve America at 202-606-7510 or [LSASchool@cns.gov](mailto:LSASchool@cns.gov).

See OMB Circulars A-21, A-122, A-87, and/or FAR 31.2, as well as Section IV of this NOFO, for additional funding restrictions that could affect the eligibility of an applicant or project.

## **2. Matching Fund Requirements**

The grantee share of the *total cost* (grantee + Corporation share) of carrying out a program must be at least:

- 10 percent for the first year
- 20 percent for the second year
- 30 percent for the third year
- 50 percent for the fourth and any subsequent year

For example, if an applicant new to Learn and Serve America applies for \$450,000 in each of three years, the minimum match required would be: \$50,000 in Year One (10 percent of \$500,000), \$112,500 in Year Two, and \$192,858 in Year Three. Previous grantees requesting a \$450,000 grant must match at least \$450,000, or 50 percent of the total budget amount for each year. Applicants who have been only a sub-recipient of Learn and Serve America funds in the past will be considered a new grantee in this competition.

The grantee's share of the program cost can be in cash or in kind, which may include facilities, equipment, or services. The grantee's share may come from private, state, or federal sources. In the case of federal sources, the funds of another agency may only be used as match if the other agency permits such use.

## **IV. Application and Submission Information**

### **1. Address to Request Application**

Applications must be submitted using eGrants, the Corporation's integrated, secure, web-based system for application and management. To both obtain application instructions and submit an application via eGrants, please visit [http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp). Application instructions can also be obtained by contacting Learn and Serve America at (202)-606-7510 or at [LSASchool@cns.gov](mailto:LSASchool@cns.gov).

### **2. Content and Form of the Application**

To be considered for funding, applications must meet all of the criteria and requirements contained in this NOFO. Applicants must also follow the general application and budget instructions

### **3. Submission Date and Time**

**The deadline for School-Based Formula applications is 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on February 2, 2006.**

**The deadline for School-Based Competitive grants, including Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories, is 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on March 7, 2006.**

**All Applicants must attempt to submit applications via eGrants.** In the event of any prolonged unavailability of the eGrants system on the date of submission, the Corporation reserves the right to extend the eGrants submission deadline. A notice will be placed in eGrants and on

[http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp) notifying all users of the extended deadline.

**Please note: Applications submitted by fax or email will not be accepted.**

### **Notice of Intent to Submit**

To help Learn and Serve America gauge the number of applications that are likely to be received, applicants should send an email with the subject header “Notification: SB” to [LSASchool@cns.gov](mailto:LSASchool@cns.gov), at least sixty days prior to the application deadline. This notification is optional, but will help Learn and Serve America plan more efficiently for the review of the applications. Include the name of the applicant organization, contact person, phone number, and appropriate email address in the email.

### **Training and Technical Assistance Calls**

Teleconference calls to clarify program guidance and assist with eGrants application procedures for applicants will be posted at [http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp). Participation on these calls is NOT mandatory. Please register for a scheduled call by sending an email with the applicant contact information to [LSAinfo@cns.gov](mailto:LSAinfo@cns.gov).

## **4. Funding Restrictions**

Grants under this program are subject to the applicable Cost Principles under OMB Circulars A-21, A-122, A-87, and/or FAR 31.2. Applicants should consult the appropriate OMB Cost Principles and/or FAR in preparing their applications. Links to these documents can be found at [www.omb.gov](http://www.omb.gov).

## **5. Additional Submission Information**

### **Tips for the eGrants application process:**

- Prepare and save the application as a word processing document prior to putting it into eGrants, then copy and paste the document into the appropriate narrative sections in eGrants.
- **Applicants should create an eGrants account and begin their applications at least three weeks prior to the final submission deadline.** Applicants must allow time for the appropriate official to complete all certifications and assurances in eGrants prior to submission. Beginning early in eGrants will also allow applicants time to address technical issues prior to the deadline.
- Applicants who encounter difficulties using eGrants should contact the eGrants Help Desk at 888-677-7849 or 202-606-7506, or by email at [egrantshelp@cns.gov](mailto:egrantshelp@cns.gov). The eGrants Help Desk will provide a ticket number to track the eGrants application process/submission issue.
- Use only UPPERCASE letters for all section headings and other information that should be highlighted in the narrative. Bold face, bullets, underlines, or other types of formatting, charts, diagrams, and tables will not copy into eGrants. Do not use any of these in an application.
- Adhere to all the character limits indicated in the application instructions. Characters include all the letters, punctuation, and spaces in an application. Word processing software can provide a character count.

## **Paper Applications**

Applicants unable to submit applications using eGrants may submit a paper application following these instructions:

- Type and double-space the application in Times New Roman, twelve-point font size with one-inch margins.
- Adhere to the character limits listed in the application instructions and number the pages.
- Submit one unbound, single-sided original paper application. Also, submit an electronic version of your application on diskette or CD-ROM in order to expedite processing. The diskette version must be an exact duplicate of the paper original and will be used to copy and paste the application information into eGrants. If there are any differences between the paper application and the diskette or CD-ROM, we will use the diskette or CD-ROM version. Faxed or emailed versions of your application will not be accepted.
- Include in hard copy a brief paragraph describing the technical issue that prevented an eGrants submission.

For Competitive grants, paper applications and explanations for why the application could not be submitted in eGrants must arrive at the Corporation by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 7, 2006. Formula grant paper applications and explanations for why the application could not be submitted in eGrants must arrive at the Corporation by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on February 2, 2006.

Applicants should use a courier service because items submitted through the U.S. Postal Service to government agencies are often delayed and sometimes damaged due to security measures. Submit paper applications to the following address:

The Corporation for National and Community Service  
Box LSA  
1201 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20525

In the event of any prolonged unavailability of eGrants on the date of submission, the Corporation reserves the right to extend the eGrants submissions deadline. A notice will be placed in eGrants notifying all users of the extended deadline. In this case, applicants would need to submit applications via eGrants by the new deadline. The Corporation reserves the right to permit the filing of late applications upon a finding of good cause.

## **V. Application Review Information**

### **1. Selection Criteria**

#### **PROGRAM DESIGN-- 60%**

##### **Needs and Service Activities (20%)**

- Documented and compelling community need(s)
- Extent to which proposed activities are likely to have an impact on community needs
- Performance measures link activities to community needs
- Outcomes/impact of activities are demonstrable
- Innovation and replicability of program model/activities

##### **Strengthening Communities to Support Service-Learning (20%)**

###### *Internal Communities:*

- Sustainability plans for grantee and subgrantees



- Strategies for assessing grantee/subgrantee sustainability needs and directing resources appropriately
- Planned activities associated with building institutional support for service-learning

*External Communities:*

- Community partnerships at grantee and subgrantee levels
- Mobilization of adult volunteers and other community participants
- Collaboration with community partners on development, management and implementation of project and activities

**Participant Development (20%)**

- Plans for recruiting, training, supervising, and recognizing participants
- Activities that promote lifelong service, civic knowledge, and skill development of participants
- Plans to track and evaluate student academic success, reduction of risky behavior, and civic engagement
- Plans for active student participation and reflection in service-learning activities
- Roles for participants that lead to measurable outputs and outcomes

**ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY--25%**

- Programmatic and fiscal oversight/monitoring experience
- Three-year plan with milestones to implement proposed program
- Plans and systems for self-assessments, evaluations, and continuous improvement
- Plans to provide effective technical assistance to program sites and subgrantees
- Appropriate and clearly delineated roles for staff and administrators
- Applicant or key personnel track record in service-learning

**BUDGET/COST EFFECTIVENESS--15%**

- Budget supports program design and proposed activities
- Potential for replicability of project model/activities
- Costs are reasonable and necessary
- Type and amount of matching support for program
- Institutional support for key staff positions

**2. Review and Selection Process**

Learn and Serve America receives far more high-quality applications than can be awarded. The multi-stage review process to determine which proposals should be funded includes reviews and recommendations by peer review panels and Corporation staff. Grant approvals are made by the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors.

Peer reviewers will evaluate all proposals using the selection criteria in Section V. The peer review process uses outside experts, including representatives from educational and youth service organizations, community service practitioners, administrators, and former national service participants, to evaluate the quality of applications.

Corporation staff members review the most highly rated peer-reviewed proposals according to selection criteria in Section V and statutory priorities. After evaluating the overall quality of each proposal, and its responsiveness to the Corporation's priority areas, Learn and Serve America staff will take into consideration whether applicants are: 1) geographically diverse, including projects in

both urban and rural areas, and 2) in areas of high concentration of low-income residents. The staff may conduct interviews in person or through conference calls prior to recommending a program for approval. This process determines which applications Learn and Serve America staff will recommend for funding to the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors.

### **3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates**

Please see announcement dates in Table 1, above. Selected applicants are approved to negotiate with the Corporation for a grant award. During the negotiation period, any issues or questions identified during the review of the application must be satisfactorily resolved before a grant can be awarded. The grant negotiation period may range from three to six weeks. Upon successful conclusion of grant negotiations, a Notice of Grant Award (NGA) will be issued.

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

### **1. Funding Notices**

The Corporation will notify the U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators of successful applicants. A Learn and Serve America program officer will also contact successful applicants via telephone or email.

If an application is not evaluated because it did not meet basic eligibility requirements or was not selected for funding after careful review, the Corporation will notify the applicant.

### **2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Additional administrative and national policy requirements are noted under Section I of this notice and are otherwise identified in the OMB-approved application and budget instructions. The applicable regulations and other specific conditions are incorporated in the Notice of Grant Award (NGA). The NGA also incorporates the approved application as part of the binding commitments under this grant.

**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 an application for submission or contact the Corporation (Section VII below) to obtain a copy.

**Universal Identifier:** Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. The DUNS number is an identifier that helps the federal government improve statistical reports on federal grants and cooperative agreements. The DUNS number does not replace the Employer Identification Number.

DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at 866-705-5711 or online at <http://www.dnb.com>. The website indicates a 24-hour email turnaround time on requests for DUNS numbers; however, **applicants should register at least thirty days in advance of the application due date**. Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by telephone at a cost of ninety-nine dollars (as of April 2005) by calling the DUNS number request line. Applications without DUNS numbers or with invalid DUNS numbers may be subject to rejection.

**Administrative Costs.** For any fiscal year, grantees and subgrantees collectively may spend no more than 5 percent of the total grant funds on *administrative* costs (see definition of administrative costs in the budget instructions).

**Statutory Budget Caps.** School-Based programs *must* spend at least 10 percent and not more than 15 percent of the total grant on *planning and capacity-building* through training, technical assistance, curriculum development, evaluation, and other coordination activities. State Education Agencies and Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories may request a waiver to use up to 20 percent of the grant for this purpose. However, *implementation* funds (Section II of the budget—see budget instructions for details) can be used by grantees to train service-learning coordinators, who may be teachers, supervisors, administrators, adult volunteers, and national service members.

**Payments to Participants.** Minor expenses for identification of Learn and Serve America participants or recognition of outstanding service are allowable. However, grantees may not provide stipends, allowances, or other financial support to any program participant (excluding teachers) except as reimbursement for transportation, meals, and other reasonable out-of-pocket expenses directly related to program participation.

**Annual Grantee Meeting.** Grantees must attend the annual Learn and Serve America Grantee training meeting. The program budget must cover costs associated with attendance (the budget form provides a fixed amount for meeting attendance).

**MLK Day of Service.** The Corporation is charged by Congress to promote service on Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, the third Monday in January, helping to make it “A Day on, Not a Day Off.” All Learn and Serve America grantees/subgrantees are expected to lead or take part in an MLK Day of Service project. MLK Day provides a great opportunity to reach out and engage different populations and potential new partners and introduce them to service. Grantees and/or subgrantees should email [mlkday@cns.gov](mailto:mlkday@cns.gov) with their plans for their events and to share results and media coverage. A toolkit and other resources are available at [www.mlkday.gov](http://www.mlkday.gov).

**Program Information for Participants.** Grantees must provide information to all Learn and Serve America participants concerning: (1) their participation in Learn and Serve America and its purposes, (2) other Corporation programs, (3) local volunteer centers, and (4) Presidential Freedom Scholarships and Presidential volunteer Service Awards.

### **Federal Financial Management and Grant Administration Requirements.**

As with all federal grant programs, it is the responsibility of all programs funded by Learn and Serve America to ensure appropriate stewardship of federal funds entrusted to them. Under our regulations, all programs must maintain financial management systems that provide accurate, complete, and current disclosure of financial information. To meet this requirement, programs must have adequate accounting practices and procedures, internal controls, audit trails, and cost allocation procedures.

A grantee organization that expends \$500,000 or more of total federal awards in a fiscal year is required to obtain a single audit for that year conducted by an independent auditor in accordance with the Single Audit Act, as amended, 31 U.S.C. sec. 7501, et seq., and OMB Circular A-133. If the grantee expends federal awards under only one federal program, it may elect to have a program specific audit, if it is otherwise eligible. A grantee that does not expend \$500,000 in federal awards is exempt from the single audit requirements of OMB Circular A-133 for that year. However, it must continue to conduct financial management reviews of its programs, and records must be available for review and audit.

A recipient of a federal grant award (pass-through entity) is required in accordance with paragraph 400(d) of OMB Circular A-133 to do the following with regard to its subrecipients: 1) identify the federal award and funding source; 2) advise subrecipients of all requirements imposed on them; 3) monitor subrecipient activities and compliance; 4) ensure that subrecipients have A-133 audits when required; 5) issue decisions and ensure follow-up on audit findings in a timely way; 6) where necessary, adjust its own records and financial statements based on audits; and 7) require subrecipients to permit access by the pass-through entity and auditors to records and financial statements as necessary for the pass-through entity to comply with A-133.

Learn and Serve America grantees must assure that their programs or activities, including those of any subgrantees, will be conducted, and facilities operated, in compliance with the applicable civil rights statutes and their implementing regulations. Grantees must assure that they will obtain assurances of such compliance prior to extending federal financial assistance to subgrantees. For civil rights purposes, all programs and projects funded or receiving service members under the National and Community Service Act, as amended, are programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.

By federal statute and regulation, a person, including participants, service recipients, or program staff, may not, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, disability (for otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities), or in most cases religion, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination, directly or through contractual arrangements, under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. By Corporation policy, participation in the Corporation's programs and projects will be based on merit and equal opportunity for all, without regard to factors such as sexual orientation, marital or parental status, military service, or religious, community, or social affiliations, in addition to the statutory grounds.

**Monitoring Responsibilities.** Grantees are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the grant and subgrant-supported activities to ensure compliance with applicable federal requirements and achievement of performance goals.

**Other Restrictions.** In addition, Learn and Serve America will not fund organizations or groups to:

- provide religious instruction, conduct worship services or engage in any form of proselytizing
- assist, promote, or deter union organizing
- finance, directly or indirectly, any activity designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office
- impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements

### 3. Reporting

**Progress and Performance Reports.** Grantees must submit financial and programmatic progress reports twice during each program year. A final report is required at the end of the three-year program cycle. All grantees must also complete, or ensure that their subgrantees complete, the annual Learn and Serve America Program and Performance Report (LASSIE), which captures site-level performance data.

## VII. Agency Contacts

For additional information contact Learn and Serve America at (202) 606-7510, or by e-mail at [LSASchool@cns.gov](mailto:LSASchool@cns.gov). The TDD number is (202) 606-3471. Upon request, this information will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities.

This Notice, with the complete application instructions, is available on the Corporation's website at: [http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp). For a printed copy of this announcement and the application instructions, contact [LSASchool@cns.gov](mailto:LSASchool@cns.gov).

Teleconference calls to clarify program guidance and assist with eGrants application procedures for applicants will be posted at [http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp). Participation on these calls is NOT required. Please register for a scheduled call by emailing [LSAinfo@cns.gov](mailto:LSAinfo@cns.gov).

## **VIII. Other Information**

### **Application Narrative Guidance**

In addition to the information in Section I above, please use this program guidance to complete the narrative questions found on the Learn and Serve America application instructions (OMB Control #: 3045-0045) (available at [http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp)).

## **A. Three-Year Plan**

Provide a three-year workplan outlining major milestones, key tasks, and corresponding dates for the development and management of the proposed program. Include dates related to the subgranting process (if applicable), training and technical assistance, program monitoring, conferences, etc. The plan should be detailed for the first year and provide only major milestones for years two and three.

## **B. Needs and Activities**

The *Needs and Service Activities* narrative section of the application narrative must answer questions in the application instructions and be responsive to the guidance below. Please include the following subheadings in this narrative section of the eGrants application: 1) Needs Statement and 2) Activities.

**Needs Statement.** The needs statement in the proposal should reflect the compelling needs of the community(ies) and be supported by evidence, such as census data, crime statistics, or community needs assessments. Community assets are also important and should be noted as they relate to the area of need. In addition, the proposal should describe how students and teachers will work together with the community to identify and develop plans to address those needs.

The needs statement may identify issues within the student population in addition to, but not instead of, community needs, such as academic performance, dropout prevention, or civic knowledge/participation, which will be affected by student participation in service-learning. The absence of service-learning should not be cited as a need, since it is the method by which to address the needs.

**Service Activities.** The activities undertaken by service-learning participants should correspond directly to the identified community needs. The needs articulated in this section should be used to develop performance measures in the Needs and Activities category and directly influence the service activities of the subgrantees.

Performance Measure Note: The eGrants online application system includes dropdown boxes to help construct quality performance measures. Applicants must develop a complete performance measure for at least one Needs and Service Activity goal identified in the application narrative. A complete performance measure includes at least one output, intermediate outcome, and end outcome.

## **C. Strengthening Communities to Support Service-Learning**

The *Strengthening Communities* section of the application narrative must answer questions in the application instructions and be responsive to the guidance below. Please use the following subheadings in this section of the narrative: 1) Community Partnerships, 2) Sustainability, and 3) Volunteer Generation.

**Community Partnerships.** High-quality service-learning programs feature reciprocal partnerships between the school and the community. Applicants should identify local, state, or national partnerships in place and describe how they will help subgrantees strengthen partnerships at the local level. Applicants should include community partners in training activities and events as experts and/or participants.

Applicants may propose the development of partnerships at both the grantee and subgrantee levels between the schools and the communities. Subgrantees should be required to include well-defined roles for both school and community partners, and detail the ways the partnerships will add value to both the community organizations and the schools with which they work.

**Sustainability.** Building support for service-learning at the state, national, or regional level is an important and proven strategy for increasing program sustainability. In order to make service-learning an integral part of the education system, applicants should include how they will work with superintendents and others to influence policy decisions around support for service-learning at the local and state levels.

A broad goal of Learn and Serve America is to institutionalize service-learning. Evidence of successful institutionalization that applicants could propose to support and/or implement includes:

1. Support for service-learning in policy documents at the school, district, and state levels;
2. School, district, or state staff funded and dedicated to carrying out these service-learning policies;
3. Infusion of service-learning into core curriculum;
4. Community partnerships that grow in scope every year;
5. Outside funding sources in place and under development;
6. Projects that feature public displays or community education elements, with media coverage for such events;
7. Training and professional development programs for educators that involve orientation and routine follow-up sessions, and that use service-learning practices where appropriate (e.g., experiential learning, reflection, community resource people);
8. Evaluation plans that involve a strategy for providing evidence of impact on students, schools and teachers, and community partners;
9. Efforts to collect and publicize compelling project stories from programs.

**Adult Volunteers.** Applicants are encouraged to support subgrantee programs that involve adult volunteers in service or coordination of service-learning to help foster an ethic of service in agencies, in communities, and at home. Adults may be drawn from corporate, government, agency or school partners, as well as from families of program participants. Particular attention should be paid to the potential roles of Baby Boomers who may have broad skill sets and abilities to serve in direct and indirect service roles.

Performance Measure Note: The eGrants online application system includes dropdown boxes to help construct quality performance measures. Applicants must develop a complete performance measure for at least one Strengthening Community goal identified in the application narrative. A complete performance measure includes at least one output, intermediate outcome, and end outcome.

#### **D. Participant Development**

The *Developing Participants* section of the narrative must answer questions in the application instructions and be responsive to the guidance below.

All applicants are expected to create participant development performance measures that clearly spell out how taking part in service-learning leads to benefits for participants. Learn and Serve America expects all grantees to achieve a positive impact on participants in at least one of three

areas: 1) civic engagement, 2) academic engagement, and 3) avoidance of risky behaviors. The Corporation is providing evaluation instruments to measure progress in these three areas. All Competitive applicants must propose to use at least one of the instruments (or components of the instrument) in their evaluation strategy. Ultimately, the instruments will allow grantees and subgrantees to improve service-learning and document positive program impacts.

Performance Measure Note: The eGrants online application system includes dropdown boxes to help construct quality performance measures. Applicants must develop a complete performance measure for at least *one* of the key participant development areas of civic engagement, prevention of risky behaviors, and academic engagement. A complete performance measure includes at least one output, intermediate outcome, and end outcome.

Applicants should indicate that they will support subgrantees in developing service-learning opportunities that positively affect students. Service activities must be of sufficient duration (at least twenty hours a semester), engage students in effective reflection, and be available throughout a student's education in order to have significant impact.

Applicants should address who will coordinate service activities, whether they are teachers, students, adult volunteers, or community agency representatives, and how the coordinators will be trained and supported.

Applicants should discuss how they will promote respect and tolerance by providing students with the opportunity to serve with others from diverse backgrounds (e.g. differences in age, ability level, ethnicity, English proficiency, religion, economic status, and disability).

Applicants should ensure that their subgrantees include opportunities for youth voice and leadership. Students should have a decision-making role in all aspects of the project, from conception through evaluation.

## **E. Organizational Capacity**

The *Organizational Capacity* section of the narrative must answer questions in the application instructions and be responsive to the guidance below. Previous grantees must explain how this proposal builds on the successes, challenges, and infrastructure of their past program(s). Applicants should include the following subheadings in this section of their applications: 1) Program/Fiscal Oversight, 2) Federal Grant Experience/Track Record, 3) Staff Roles and Experience, 4) Evaluation Plan, and 5) Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA).

**Program/Fiscal Oversight.** Applicants must be capable of providing sound fiscal management and oversight. Fiscal and program oversight plans should include the type and frequency of monitoring. All grantees have the responsibility for monitoring subgrantees to assess their progress towards meeting performance measures and provide on-site technical assistance.

**Federal Grant Experience/Track Record.** Applicants must provide evidence that they have had the experience and/or the capacity to manage federal grants. Applicants should also be capable of assessing the capacity of subgrantees, where appropriate, and the proposal should detail the plan for this.

**Staff Roles and Experience.** Applicants should list the key personnel who will oversee and implement their service-learning programs and describe their experience administering federal



grants. Applicants must ensure that qualified personnel who have appropriate experience in service-learning and program and fiscal management are responsible for program operations.

**Evaluation Plan.** The evaluation plan should contain the strategies grantees will use to track progress toward meeting the performance measures. Applicants are strongly encouraged to allocate ample resources for program evaluation. Grantees and subgrantees may consider an independent evaluation and/or seeking support from higher education or other experts to help design data collection and evaluation system.

**Training and Technical Assistance.** It is the grantee's responsibility to provide program participants with the training/support needed to develop strong school-community partnerships, build the capacity of community partners to meet community needs through service-learning, and sustain support for institutionalization.

For Consortia applicants, the training and technical assistance narrative section should outline a strategy and intended outcomes for the training and support that will be provided to subgrantees. This section should include plans to build and support a network for subgrantees to share ideas, solve program issues, etc.

Applicants should describe how they will provide high-quality professional development for service-learning faculty and staff. Professional development plans should reflect established best practices in youth development and service-learning. Professional development in service-learning should include orientation sessions for educators with little or no experience, advanced training for experienced educators, and events at which educators at all levels can share learning and interact with community members.

## **F. Budget/Cost Effectiveness**

The *Budget/Cost Effectiveness* section of the narrative must answer questions in the application instructions and be responsive to the guidance below.

- The budget should reflect and support the priorities and plans outlined in the other narrative portions of the application.
- Previous grantees must build on the successes, challenges, and infrastructure of their past program(s). Both new and previous grantees must demonstrate replicability of project models and activities.
- Applicants should articulate how they are leveraging other federal, state, or local funds to support the program, regardless of whether or not these funds will be cited as matching funds.
- Applicants should clearly describe where their program is situated in relation to other federal, state, or privately supported initiatives within their organization. Note the potential for collaborative or complementary opportunities.
- Applicants must budget and plan for support of Learn and Serve America national identity and publicizing of their program.

- Applicants must discuss in detail any organizational or outside financial support for key staff positions and how these relate to long term institutional support for service-learning.