

## Notice of Funding 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:** 2006 Learn and Serve America Community-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--subject to Congressional appropriation--of approximately \$40 million of Learn and Serve America funds to implement and support School-Based, Community-Based, and Higher Education service-learning programs in FY 2006. **Grants in bold font** in Table 1 below are described in this NOFO. See the School-Based and Higher Education NOFOs for information about those competitions.

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

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

The Corporation anticipates making approximately ten to fifteen program grants of between \$350,000 and \$500,000 for each of three successive years. The second and third years of funding are contingent upon satisfactory performance, the availability of funds, and other criteria established in the award agreement.

Funds for this grant competition are available under authority provided by Public Law 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.

All potential applicants should read this entire document well in advance of completing an application as some application requirements may necessitate action or planning in advance of the application due date. To successfully 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: [http://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 [LSAcommunity@cns.gov](mailto:LSAcommunity@cns.gov).

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

**Purpose of Grants:** The purpose of this grant competition is to promote the development and sustainability of high-quality community-based service-learning programs in youth-serving community organizations across the nation. Funds will be used by intermediary organizations to create curriculum materials; support training and technical assistance activities; make subgrants to local organizations that will implement service-learning programs for youth ages five to seventeen; and strengthen, expand, and anchor a network of youth-serving community-based organizations that implement service-learning programs.

Applicants are encouraged to develop proposals that demonstrate their ability to engage significant numbers of youth ages five to seventeen, particularly youth in disadvantaged circumstances, in high-quality service-learning; create new, or strengthen existing, partnerships with a variety of youth-serving institutions (K-12 schools, colleges, volunteer centers, faith-based organizations, etc); engage youth in intensive service-learning through the summer and/or other school holidays; and develop programs that leverage additional resources, including volunteers, at the local level.

**Eligible Applicants:** Applicants eligible for Learn and Serve America funds under the Community-Based initiative are state commissions on national and community service and Grantmaking Entities (GMEs). GMEs are defined as public or private non-profit organizations in existence at least one year at the time of application, experienced with service-learning, and proposing to make subgrants in two or more states. Local partners may include private and public schools, for-profit businesses, faith-based and other nonprofits, and institutions of higher education. The local partnerships are responsible for implementation, replication, and expansion of service-learning activities in local communities.

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

The Corporation requires that all applicants use the Corporation's web-based application system, eGrants, to submit applications electronically. Please 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 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 for National and Community Service 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 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 through state commissions on national and community service, faith-based and other nonprofit organizations, State Education Agencies, institutions of higher education, and Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories. Community-based funding is intended to support projects through subgrants and to create long-lasting support structures for service-learning. Such structures may include: state and regional service-learning coordinators, staff training, agency-wide service-learning policies, creation of national models, training curriculum, replication guides, and support for service-learning in national, certificate or credit-bearing training offered to networks of nonprofit agencies.

Community-based organizations play a crucial role in support of positive youth development in all service-learning programs. Since most service-learning programs operated by schools and colleges partner with a community-based agency, it is important that nonprofits understand and implement the tenets of good service-learning practice including developing and maintaining strong partnerships with local schools, institutions of higher education, for-profits, and faith-based and other community institutions. In these partnerships, the community-based organization plays a role of co-educator to the student as well as the connector and manager of the services the student provides. Learn and Serve America is interested in programs that will build the capacity of community-based organizations to partner with education institutions to sponsor service-learning.

Learn and Serve America is also interested in service-learning programs for youth that are led by community organizations. These programs are not required to partner with educational institutions, but may do so. Community-based programs that take place outside of the academic context are expected to have a clear curriculum with specific learning objectives. Learning objectives may focus on leadership, civic competencies, or the acquisition of technical skills.

Learn and Serve America programs must implement programs that meet the following definition of service-learning.

#### **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 youth organizations and young people 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 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 this grant competition is to promote the development of high quality community-based service-learning programs across the nation. Funds will be granted to intermediary organizations to create curriculum materials; support training and technical assistance activities; make subgrants to local organizations that will implement service-learning programs for youth ages five to seventeen; and strengthen, expand, and anchor the network of community-based organizations (including schools and faith-based organizations) that implement service-learning programs. Community-based programs are not required to partner with educational institutions, but may do so. These programs should be designed to create high quality service-learning programs for youth that take place outside of the academic context.

Applicants are encouraged to develop proposals that demonstrate their ability to engage significant numbers of youth ages five to seventeen, particularly youth in disadvantaged circumstances, in high-quality service-learning; create new, or strengthen existing, partnerships with a variety of youth-serving institutions (K-12 schools, colleges, volunteer centers, faith-based organizations, etc); engage youth in intensive service-learning through the summer and/or other school holidays; and develop programs that leverage additional resources, including volunteers, at the local level.

Community-based programs are expected to have a clear curriculum with specific learning objectives. While all service-learning combines service with structured intentional learning opportunities, community-based service-learning is not academically-based. Learning objectives may focus on leadership, civic competencies, or the acquisition of technical skills.

There are several important programmatic elements that should be present in any application:

- Youth participate in all aspects of the service-learning project, from planning and execution to reflection and assessment.
- Resource mapping of assets and needs in the geographic area of focus.
- 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.
- Community partnerships are collaborative, have clear roles and responsibilities for each party, as well as a shared vision and programmatic goals.
- Clear presentation of the intentional learning objectives to participants, staff, and partners;
- Adult volunteers (especially Baby Boomers) and other community partners participate actively, bringing expertise, career information, community support, and role models to the program.
- Recognition for both participants and programs, including national and local recognitions (e.g., President's Volunteer Service Award and Presidential Freedom Scholarships for participants); and
- A project action plan and timeline that includes ample time for all stages of the project including the service.

## II. Funding Information

Learn and Serve America will fund proposals in the two general categories of State-Based and National Grantees.

Approximately \$4,500,000 is available for approximately ten to fifteen program grants of \$350,000 to \$500,000 for each of three successive years. The second and third years of funding are contingent upon satisfactory performance, the availability of funds, and other criteria established in the award agreement.

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 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.

### A. State-Based

**Commissions** – Learn and Serve America will accept proposals from state commissions on national and community service (state commissions) to *develop new* community-based service-learning programs or to *expand and deepen* the programs within their networks. State commissions must indicate how their Learn and Serve America program supports the purposes above, meets Corporation strategic priorities, builds a pipeline for a lifetime of service for young people and complements the work they do in support of AmeriCorps and other service programs in their state. State commissions should also indicate how their program will complement the Learn and Serve America SEA Formula program in their state.

### B. National

**Nonprofit Focus** – Learn and Serve America will accept proposals from Grantmaking Entities (GMEs) to *develop new* community-based service-learning programs or to *expand and deepen* the service-learning practice of programs within their networks and to provide leadership and training to other local and intermediary organizations. A GME with an established service-learning program might seek to create and improve resources for deepening implementation within their regional or national networks. Models should feature developmentally appropriate activities and other characteristics of high quality service-learning, especially those that stress youth engagement and leadership. Models that expand impact, foster innovative community partnerships, and maximize potential for sustainability are encouraged. These programs may focus on creating intermediate and advanced-level tools (materials, training curriculum, evaluation tools, sustainability guides, policies, etc.) to support existing programs.

In addition, GMEs proposing to work with two or more multi-state youth-serving nonprofit organizations to support service-learning policy, research, and practice may apply. Such applicants may propose to provide training, create curricula, and share successful strategies with multiple multi-state youth-serving nonprofit organizations, with a particular emphasis on nonprofits that have not previously had Learn and Serve America funding.

The Corporation is interested in receiving proposals that make strategic investments in organizations with regional and national reach to *extend the reach* of community-based service-learning in Commissions and/or GMEs.

**Commission Focus** – Under this model a GME or state commission on national and community service (state commission) functioning as a multi-state GME may work with *multiple state commissions*. Applicants may be state commissions able to award funds in multiple states or nonprofit organizations that propose to provide training, create curricula and share successful strategies with multiple state commissions, with a particular emphasis on state commissions that have not previously had Learn and Serve America funding. The lead organization is expected to provide subgrants to state commissions to support service-learning activities. This strategy can strengthen the capacity of all state commissions to work with school age service-learning programs and can more closely align Learn and Serve America and AmeriCorps programs across the country.

Returning applicants must demonstrate that continued funding will allow the proposed program or project to build upon the lessons learned from the previous cycle. All applicants are encouraged to focus on one or more Corporation strategic initiatives and/or priority community needs. A focused program provides opportunities for common training across sites, better aggregated data on program results and provides greater structure to the effort.

### **Program Examples**

Please go to [http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/index.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp) to review high-quality program examples include some of the kinds of partnerships, activities, and program features that will receive funding through this competition.

### **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 set of performance measures 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 set of performance measures includes at least one output, one intermediate outcome, and one end outcome.

The development of 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 to for their programs, though the actual logic model is *not* a required part of the submission.

*For more information about logic models and 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>.*

### **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 the institutional change accomplished in the



previous round(s) of funding and how the current proposal furthers the institutionalization process for service-learning at the local/regional/state/national level.

All potential applicants should read this entire document well in advance of completing an application as some application requirements may necessitate action or planning well in advance of 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 [LSAcommunity@cns.gov](mailto:LSAcommunity@cns.gov).

## **Grant Period**

New 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 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 Community-Based Service programs are authorized by Title I Subpart B of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, 42U.S.C. 12542, et seq. Funds for this grant competition are available under authority provided by Public Law 108-447.

## **Applicable Regulations**

Applicable regulations include the Learn and Serve America Community-Based Service program regulations, 45CFR Part 2517 and the uniform administrative requirements for grants and agreements with institutions of higher education, hospitals, and other nonprofit organizations, 45 CFR part 2543.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### **1. Eligible Applicants**

Learn and Serve America Community-Based grants provide funds to state commissions on national and community service and Grantmaking Entities (GMEs). GMEs are defined by statute for the purposes of this competition as public or private non-profit organizations in existence at least one year at the time of application, experienced with service-learning and proposing to make subgrants in two or more states.

All potential applicants should read this entire document well in advance of completing an application as some application requirements may necessitate action or planning well in advance of 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 [LSAcommunity@cns.gov](mailto:LSAcommunity@cns.gov).

## 2. Matching Funds

The grantee share of the *total cost* 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 years

**Organizations that have already received a direct three-year Learn and Serve America grant must provide a 1:1 match.**

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 \$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 [LSAcommunity@cns.gov](mailto:LSAcommunity@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 application deadline for eGrants and paper submissions is 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 7, 2006. All Applicants must attempt to submit applications via eGrants.**

**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: CB” to [LSAcommunity@cns.gov](mailto:LSAcommunity@cns.gov), at least sixty days prior to the application deadline. This notification is not mandatory, but will help Learn and Serve more efficiently plan for the review of the applications. Include the name of 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 application requirements, and assist with eGrants application procedures 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 which describes the technical issue that prevented an eGrants submission.

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 Standard/Daylight Time on Tuesday, March 7, 2006. Applicants should include a helpdesk ticket number with their submission. Applicants should use a courier service as USPS service to government agencies often are 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 prolonged unavailability 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.

## **V. Application Review Information**

### **1. Review Criteria**

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

##### **A. Needs and Service Activities**

- Documented and compelling community need(s)
- Extent proposed activities 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

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

###### *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

**C. Participant Development**

- 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 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 Learn and Serve America staff. Grant approvals are made by the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer and the 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 reviews the most highly rated proposals from peer review according to selection criteria in Section V. After evaluating the overall quality of each proposal, and its responsiveness to the strategic priorities, 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 the Corporation 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 Notification

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 Part I. Funding Opportunity Description of this notice and are otherwise identified in the 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 (EIN).

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 30 days in advance of the application due date**. Expedited DUNS numbers may be obtained by telephone at a cost of \$99 (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 Corporation grant funds on *administrative* costs (see definition of administrative cost in appendix B).

**Statutory Budget Caps.** The National and Community Service Act of 1990 requires that Community-based grantees must budget at least 10 percent for planning and capacity-building activities in support of overall program activities. There is no maximum cap for the expenditures in this category.

**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 Training.** Grantees must attend the annual Learn and Serve America Grantee Training. The program budget must cover the 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.

As with all federal grant programs, 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.** 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; or
- impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.

**Intergovernmental Review.** This program is NOT subject to Executive Order 12372.

### 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, 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 [LSAcommunity@cns.gov](mailto:LSAcommunity@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 included, 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, send an email to [LSAcommunity@cns.gov](mailto:LSAcommunity@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 one of these scheduled calls 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 the below program narrative 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

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

#### B. Needs and Service 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 section of the Narrative in eGrants: 1) Needs Statement and 2) Activities.

**Needs Statement.** The needs statement in the proposal should reflect compelling community needs 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. The absence of service-learning should not be cited as a need since it is the method by which to address the needs.

**Activities.** The activities in which the service-learning participants will be engaged should correspond directly to the identified needs and build on community assets.

The needs articulated in this section should directly influence the service activities of subgrantees and be used to develop the performance measures in the Needs and Service Activities section.

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 agency and the community. Applicants should identify local, state and/or national partnerships in place and describe how they will help subgrantees strengthen

partnerships at the local level. Applicants should ensure that community partners are included in training activities and events.

Applicants may propose development of partnerships at both the grantee level and at the subgrantee level between the agencies and the communities. Subgrantees should be required to include well-defined roles for all partners, and detail the ways the partnerships will add value to each partner.

**Sustainability.** Making service-learning an integral part of the applicant's organizational mission and policies, and building support for service-learning at the state, national, regional and local level is an important and proven strategy for increasing program sustainability.

In order to make service-learning an integral part of organizations, applicants should include how they will work with agency leaders and others to influence policy decisions around support for service-learning at all levels.

The broader aim of every Learn and Serve America grantee is to institutionalize service-learning. Evidence of successful institutionalization that grantees can plan to support and/or implement includes:

1. Support for service-learning in policy documents at the agency, network and state levels;
2. Agency, network or state staff funded and dedicated to carrying out these service-learning policies;
3. Community partnerships that grow in number and scope every year;
4. Outside funding sources in place and under development;
5. Projects that feature public displays or community education elements, with media coverage for such events;
6. Training and professional development programs for staff that involve both orientation and ongoing efforts, and that use service-learning practices when possible (e.g., experiential learning, reflection, other community resource people);
7. Evaluation plans that provide evidence of impact on participants, agencies and staff, and other community partners; and
8. Efforts to collect and publicize compelling project stories from staff and agencies.

**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, communities and at home. Adults may be drawn from corporate, government, agency, or school partners, as well as from parents of program participants. Particular attention should be paid to the potential roles of baby boomers that 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. Developing Participants**

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 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 measures for at least *one* of the key participant development areas of civic engagement, reduction of risky behaviors, and academic engagement. A complete performance measure includes at least one output, intermediate outcome, and end outcome.

Applicants should indicate how they will support subgrantees in developing service-learning opportunities that maximize participant outcomes. Research suggests that service activities should be of sustained or significant duration (at least 20 hours a semester), engage students in effective reflection, and be available many times throughout a student's program involvement in order to have significant impact.

Applicants should address who will coordinate service activities, whether they are staff, participants, adult volunteers, or other 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. Participants 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. Include the following subheadings in this section of the application submission: 1) Program/Fiscal Oversight, 2) Federal Grant Experience/Track Record, 3) Staff Roles & 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 working with colleges and universities or private consulting firms 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 community partnerships, build the capacity of community partners to meet community needs through service-learning, and sustain support for institutionalization.

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 and include orientation sessions for staff with little or no experience, advanced training for experienced staff, follow-up events where staff at all levels can share learning and interact with community members.

Grant funds for training and capacity building must be at least 10 percent of the total grant award and there is no maximum amount. However, the intent of these funds is to engage young people in service-learning and it is expected that applications will implement pilot programs, at least, in two or more states in every year of the grant. However, implementation funds (Part II of the budget) may be used by subgrantees to train service-learning coordinators, who may be staff; supervisors; administrators; adult volunteers; national service members; and others responsible for organizing projects at their site.

## **F. Budget and Cost Effectiveness**

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

- Applicants must demonstrate a record of sound fiscal management, an adequate staffing level, and a sound record of handling federal grants. The program 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 these funds will be cited as matching funds.
- Applicants should clearly describe how the office or department proposing this program works with other programs and initiatives in the legal applicant 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 the program.

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