

Budget Tips

The description sections of each budget line item should include detailed descriptions such as:

- The rate at which FICA and retirement are calculated
- Local travel should include the estimated number of miles traveled each month and the reimbursement rate per mile
- Volunteer travel should include a monthly estimate and the reimbursement rate per mile
- Office supplies should be estimated at a monthly costs per person
- Monthly costs should be included for items such as rent, phone, printing, utilities, and any other items that reoccur monthly
- If the line item has an amount for grantee share, please describe if this will be in-kind or cash donation

If any budget line items are no longer used, they should be deleted rather than be kept in the budget with a zero dollar amount.

Try to avoid listing multiple items in one budget line item. Separate line items out as much as possible for clarity. For example, do not simply list recognition as one line item. If you have multiple expenses that go into recognition such as food, facility rental, and certificates, these should be separated out into different line items.

The specific source of funds for Section I and Section II of the budget must be listed. It is not enough to enter 'local sources' in this section. Instead list specific sources such as United Way, County Sales Tax, etc.

If line items are listed under Contractual Services, it is a requirement that your sponsoring organization has written procurement procedures specifically for your Senior Corps project.

Be sure that information entered in your budget is reasonable. Putting 65% of your budget into line items such as recognition is probably not reasonable.

You should probably plan to budget to attend the National Conference on Volunteering and Service each year. It is usually highly encouraged that you attend, so you might as well plan ahead!

Find out if your sponsor has an indirect cost rate agreement. Indirect costs are administrative costs that can't be directly attributed to program activities and are therefore incidental to the grant program. If your sponsor charges these administrative costs to your Senior Corps grant (in budget line J), you should have an indirect cost rate that has been approved by CNCS.