2023-2024
Planning Grant Overview
AmeriCorps: What Is It?

AmeriCorps (previously known as “The Corporation for National and Community Service” or “CNCS”) is the federal agency tasked with elevating service and volunteerism in America.

Pronounced: “Ameri – CORE”
NOT “Ameri – corpse”
AmeriCorps Focus Areas

AmeriCorps has identified six areas that they prioritize in all aspects of its mission.

- Disaster Services
- Economic Opportunity
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Healthy Futures
- Veterans & Military Families
AmeriCorps: What Does It Do?

Leads National Days of Service (including the 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance and Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

Provides grants to fund programs such as AmeriCorps State, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps Seniors

Provides Volunteer Generation Fund grants to State Service Commissions in order to promote skilled volunteerism

Connects individuals and organizations to help communities tackle their toughest challenges
Types of AmeriCorps Programs

- AmeriCorps Seniors
- AmeriCorps NCCC
- AmeriCorps State/National
- AmeriCorps VISTA
AmeriCorps in New Hampshire
What is Volunteer NH’s Role in AmeriCorps State?

Volunteer NH is New Hampshire’s designated State Service Commission. We administer AmeriCorps State grants and provide programmatic and fiscal oversight to subgrantees.
Volunteer NH Funding Priorities

In addition to supporting the six AmeriCorps Focus Areas, Volunteer NH has identified certain funding priorities for its grant competition (as defined by public input in the State Service Plan.)

Volunteer NH 2023-2025 Funding Priorities

- Food Security
- Affordable Housing
- Access to Mental Health Resources
AmeriCorps Planning & Program Grants
**Planning Grants**

**Planning Grants are** awarded to eligible organizations to spend up-to one year in preparation for applying to (and operating) an AmeriCorps Program.

The planning year is used to develop:
- AmeriCorps member activities
- Recruitment strategy
- Performance measurement/data collection plan
- Host sites
- Training for AmeriCorps members
- Matching grant funds

**Program Grants**

Are used to develop:
- Service Activities: Typically “direct service” activities
- Focus Areas: Programs generally fall within the six AmeriCorps focus areas
- Cohort Size: Members typically serve in a larger cohort (10+ members)
- Hour Requirement: Members have a specific hour requirement (anywhere from 100 – 1,700 hours)
AmeriCorps State Program Activity Examples

AmeriCorps State Programming Examples (under the six AmeriCorps “Focus Areas”):

- **Disaster Services**: Clearing/cleaning communities after a disaster; assisting communities in disaster preparedness
- **Economic Opportunity**: Transitioning individuals into affordable housing; improving job preparedness
- **Education**: Mentoring underserved youth; helping individuals earn a post-secondary degree
- **Environmental Stewardship**: Public trail maintenance; removing invasive species; providing environmental education
- **Healthy Futures**: Teaching healthy habits to children; assisting those affected by drug misuse in recovery
- **Veterans and Military Families**: Helping veterans/military families move into affordable housing; helping veterans secure employment
Planning Grant Requirements
Eligibility & Capacity Requirements

All organizations that apply must:

- Be an institution of higher education, local/state government, or a nonprofit.
- Have an active registration in SAM.gov.
- Have annual audited/reviewed financial statements (or be willing to fulfill this requirement before applying as a program).
- Be able to match the grant at 24%.
- Have adequate internal fiscal policies and controls in place.
- Be able to operate on a reimbursement basis.
- Have, or be willing to provide, adequate staffing towards the project.
Project Requirements

When considering applying, ask yourself the following…

• Does my organization want to develop a new program and/or expand a current program?

• Would this eventual program provide unique and valuable activities for AmeriCorps members?

• Are the activities I want accomplished by members already done by existing volunteers/staff?

• Is the program I want to develop in response to a pressing community need?

• Do I anticipate that this eventual program would have enough activities for ~10 members to serve full-time for a period of 10-12 months?

• Would the AmeriCorps program I’d like to develop be sustainable past one year?
Planning Grant Timeline

Pre-Award
- Notified of Award (April)

Q1
- Begin Planning Grant (July 12)

Q2
- Continue Planning Grant Work
  - Program NOFO Released (early February)
  - Submit Program Application (late March/early April)

Q3
- • Receive notification of Program Grant award (approval/denial)
  • Continue work on planning grant
  • If funded, can begin program in/after July 2024

Q4
Planning Grant Budget

The maximum amount you can request is $75,000, which you can spend on budget items like:

- **Staff Time** *(existing staff or hiring a new staff)* to work on Planning Grant activities such as
  - Holding stakeholder meetings
  - Contacting potential host sites
  - Creating template member documents
  - Writing progress reports
- **Hiring a contractor** to help with planning grant activities
- **Staff Travel** *(to planning grant-related meetings, etc.)*
- **Stakeholder Meeting Costs**
- **Other Support Costs** *(supplies, printing, etc.)*
- **Administrative Costs** *(please note this is limited to 5% of the federal share)*

What it does **NOT** support:

- **AmeriCorps Member Costs** *(no members come with a Planning Grant)*
- **General** organization expenses
- Anything else **not DIRECTLY related** to Planning-Grant activities (as outlined in your application).
Next Steps...

• **READ THE NOFO!!!**

• Submit an Intent to Apply by March 1.

• Attend the Planning Grant Application & Budget Training (*Date TBD*)

• Submit your Microsoft Form Application, Budget, & Required Additional documents by March 30.
Questions?

Programmatic Questions:
• Email Andrea@volunteernh.org & Emily@volunteernh.org

Fiscal Questions:
• Email Lesley@volunteernh.org