Welcome to the AmeriCorps Program Mgmt & Design Informational Session. This is the second in a series of 5 webinars that will orient you to 2018-2019 AmeriCorps*State grant funding and the basic concepts and frameworks to help you determine how your organization might seek a partnership.

Housekeeping:
-I have muted all phone lines to reduce background noise.
-If you have a question, please use your chat window or hold questions until the Q&A at the end of this session.
-This presentation will be made available on our website,
-You'll also find a lot more information regarding this opportunity.

AMERICORPS GRANTS

Provide funding to high-quality programs that are developed by an applicant who designs a set of activities that demonstrate an evidence-based or evidence-informed approach to creating community impact and solving community problems by engaging individuals in service as AmeriCorps members.

AmeriCorps Grants provide funding to high-quality programs that demonstrate an evidence-based or evidence-informed approach to strengthening communities and solving community problems by engaging individuals in service as AmeriCorps members.

Grants are awarded to nonprofits, Indian tribes, colleges and universities, and state and local public agencies to address unmet needs in education, economic opportunity, veterans services, disaster services, health, the environment, and more.

A grantee might use AmeriCorps resources to make an existing program more effective, to reach previously underserved communities, or to expand their activities beyond what they were able to do without AmeriCorps.

However, it is important to understand that AmeriCorps funds do not duplicate, displace or supplant resources that currently exist in a community. AmeriCorps members cannot be used to take the place of staff, current volunteers, or existing funding.

AmeriCorps grants are awarded on a competitive basis to eligible applicants.

AmeriCorps grants include an allotment of AmeriCorps member positions and associated funding. The funds awarded by CNCS are directly tied to the specific number of members awarded.

AmeriCorps grants are solely for program expenses and cannot be used for general organizational operating expenses.

All AmeriCorps Grants provide partial funding to support AmeriCorps projects and programs. Grant recipients must contribute additional resources to support the project.

PROGRAM DESIGN

- Need *4pts*
- Theory of Change and Logic Model *24pts*
- Evidence Base *12pts (across the tiers)*
- Notice Priority *3pts*
- Member Experience *7pts*

As your organization considers applying for an AmeriCorps grant and begins designing your program, there are many important factors to consider.

Being successful is more than just having a good idea for a program; if you become an AmeriCorps grantee, your organization will have many responsibilities. You will need to have the capability and experience to manage federal funds, to manage and oversee the grant and all of its components, and to ensure all members are well trained and supervised.

Today, I'd like to share the starting point for developing a program and discuss what your organization should have in place to manage an AmeriCorps program.

We are going to review the specific criteria that you should address (and program components you should develop) as you complete your AmeriCorps application. As laid out in the AmeriCorps Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and the related Application Instructions.

NEED

Program Criteria:

- The problem the program will address is prevalent and severe in communities where members will service and has been documented with relevant data.

It is essential to the program design that you be able to show how the problem you plan to address, the service activities (or intervention) the program will provide, and the anticipated outcomes relate to one another.

NEED

To Consider:

- Why does the problem exist? How is it perpetuated?

  – What data or research can you provide to support your rationale for why the problem exists?

  – Answering this will help to ensure that you are addressing the appropriate contributors to the problem.

- Who is directly affected by the need? How many people are directly affected? How severe is this?

- What makes this a compelling need? Is it likely to become worse? What will happen if you do nothing?

It's also essential that you provide evidence that supports the likelihood that your intervention will lead to the intended outcomes.

NEED

To Consider:

- What data could you use to document the extent or severity of this problem in your proposed community?

  - If you are proposing to place members in Albuquerque and Santa Fe, then you should have data for both locations and articulate the severity of the problem in both locations.

- Where are you getting your data?

- How recent is your data?

THEORY OF CHANGE

A theory of change is a theory (or hypothesis) for how an intervention can address or solve a stated problem. A theory of change articulates a problem, a proposed intervention, and the change (outcomes) that is expected to result from delivering the intervention. Underlying the theory is a set of assumptions, supported by evidence, about why the intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes.

Your theory of change is a method of explaining what needs to change, how you plan to create that change, why you think these particular activities will create the desired change, and the specific change you expect to see as a result.

THEORY OF CHANGE AND LOGIC MODEL

Shifts thinking from "what are we doing" to focus on "what do we want to achieve".

Program Criteria:

- Logic Model
- Narrative Text

THEORY OF CHANGE

The Theory of Change shall address:

- The proposed intervention is responsive to the identified community problem

- The applicant's proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, dosage, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) leveraged volunteers.

- The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified iun the applicant's theory of change.

Your theory of change is a method of explaining what needs to change, how you plan to create that change, why you think these particular activities will create the desired change, and the specific change you expect to see as a result.
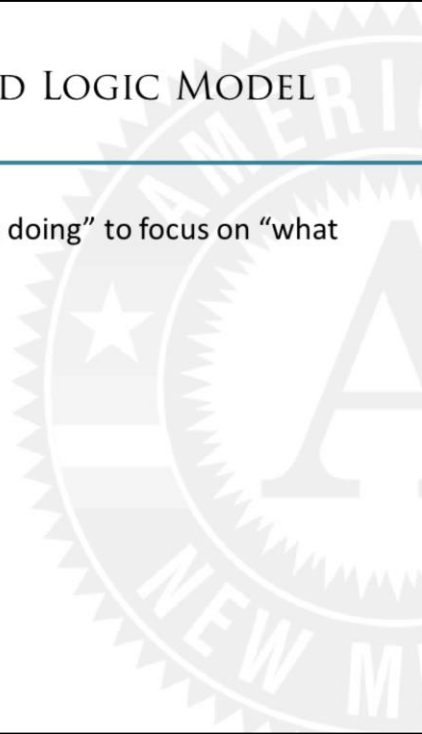
THEORY OF CHANGE

The Theory of Change shall address (Cont'd):

- The expected outcomes articulated in the application narrative and logic model represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem identified by the applicant.

- The rationale for utilizing AmeriCorps member to deliver the intervention(s) is reasonable.

- The service role of AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem

Your theory of change is a method of explaining what needs to change, how you plan to create that change, why you think these particular activities will create the desired change, and the specific change you expect to see as a result.

LOGIC MODEL

The Logic Model shall depict:

- A summary of the community problem outlined in the narrative.
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the interventions, including:
  - Number of locations or sites in which members will provide services
  - Number of AmeriCorps members that will deliver the intervention
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
  - The duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention)
  - The dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week.)
  - The target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level).

The logic model is a visual representation of the applicant's theory of change. Programs may include short, medium or long-term outcomes in the logic model. Applicants are not required to measure all components of their theory of change. The applicant's performance measures should be consistent with the program's theory of change and should represent significant program activities.

In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets for their performance measures. Recompeting applicants proposing to significantly increase or decrease output or outcome targets from their previous grant must provide a justification for this change.

Applicants should use National Performance Measures if they are part of the program's theory of change. Applicants are not required to use National Performance Measures and should only use them if they are part of the program's theory of change. Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization's performance data (e.g., program data observed over time suggests targets are reasonable), relevant research (e.g. targets documents by organizations running similar programs with similar populations), or prior program evaluations findings.

Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention. Logic model content that exceeds three pages will not be reviewed.

LOGIC MODEL

The Logic Model shall depict:

- The measureable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e., number of beneficiaries served) Identify which National Performance Measures will be used as output indicators.

- Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur as a result of the intervention.

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BASIC LOGIC MODEL: INPUTS

Instructions: A logic model is a well-specified conceptual framework that identifies the key components of the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice (i.e. the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the relationship among the key components and outcomes, theoretically and operationally.

LOGIC MODEL					
Project Resources	**Core Project Components**	**Evidence of Project Implementation and Participation**	**Evidence of Change** (Outcomes)		
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
What we Invest (# and type of AmeriCorps members)	What We Do	Direct Products from Program Activities	Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, opinions	Changes in behavior or action that result from participants' new knowledge	Meaningful changes, often in their condition or status in life

INPUTS

Term of Service	MSYs	Minimum # of Hours
Full Time	1.00	1700
Half Time	.500	900
Reduced Half Time	.381	675
Quarter Time	.265	450
Minimum Time	.212	300

To meet the minimum 20 Member Slot requirement, you may use any combination of member types.
(except for FTFA programs which require all full-time)

This chart shows the various terms of service or slot types that you can use in designing your program and the minimum number of hours a member must complete if serving in that slot.

You should consider what types of member service terms best support your program design in addressing critical community need.

INPUTS

To Consider:

- What are the minimum knowledge and skill requirements that you are looking for in a member?

- What characteristics are you looking for in a member?

- How will you ensure that you have a diverse corps of members?

- What do you need to do to ensure an inclusive service environment?

Basic Logic Model: Activities

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BASIC LOGIC MODEL: OUTPUTS

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<table>
<tr><td colspan="6" align="center">LOGIC MODEL</td></tr>
<tr><td>Project Resources</td><td>Core Project Components</td><td>Evidence of Project Implementation and Participation</td><td colspan="3" align="center">Evidence of Change
(Outcomes)</td></tr>
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OUTPUTS

Counts:

- Number of people served.
- Number of products created.

BASIC LOGIC MODEL: OUTCOMES

Instructions: A logic model is a well-specified conceptual framework that identifies the key components of the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice (i.e. the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the relationship among the key components and outcomes, theoretically and operationally.

LOGIC MODEL					
Project Resources	**Core Project Components**	**Evidence of Project Implementation and Participation**	**Evidence of Change** (Outcomes)		
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
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Outcomes

Change:

- Attitude/Belief
  - Increased interest in school
- Knowledge/Skill
  - Improved reading scores/grades
- Behavior
  - Increased school attendance
- Condition
  - Successful completion of high school

Not only do you need to define the problem you want to address and identify the intervention to be carried out by the AmeriCorps members, you also need to identify your outcomes.

Your outcome is the change in attitude, knowledge, behavior, or condition that results from the intervention. Outcomes may reflect changes in individuals, organizations, communities, or the environment.

Whatever outcomes you select, they must be measurable and must align with the problem and intervention you identified.

EVIDENCE BASE

- The assessment of an applicant's evidence base has two steps. First, the applicant will be assigned to an evidence tier. (See Mandatory Supplemental Guidance). Second, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the applicant's overall capacity to collect and use data (including performance measurement and evaluation data) will be assessed and scored.

Evidence should be used to support the basis for the proposed intervention. As a grant applicant, you need to design activities for AmeriCorps members that demonstrate an evidence-based or evidence-informed approach to strengthening communities and solving community problems.

The evidence basis for the intervention should demonstrate that the proposed intervention is likely to solve the identified problem and should support a particular design, frequency, intensity and duration of the intervention that is optimal to achieve the desired outcomes.

The evidence basis for an intervention, or member service activities, may come from one or more of the following:
` The results of impact evaluation(s) of the proposed program or of similar programs;
` Experimental or quasi-experimental research studies that document the effectiveness of this or similar programs;
` Past performance measurement data showing the outcomes of the program

All applicants shall provide a description of up to two research studies or evaluations that provide evidence that the proposed intervention is effective for the target population and community problem, and should describe how this evidence places them in the highest evidence tier for which they are eligible. Applicants should pay particular attention to the requirements for each tier of evidence. More points are

awarded for higher tiers of evidence.

EVIDENCE TIER

Applicants must:
- State the evidence tier in which they think they qualify;
- Clearly indicate and describe the evidence that supports the highest evidence tier for which they are eligible and;
- Describe the complete body of evidence that supports their program intervention including evidence from lower tiers.

An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of applying the strategic characteristics (moderate/string evidence) and understanding the relative strength of each applicant's evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the logic model. Applicants should use the evidence checklist to self-assess their evidence tier before completing the application.

Applicants should pay particular attention to the requirements for each tier of evidence. All requirements must be met in order for applicants to be assigned to a tier. Who do not fully describe their evidence base may not be assigned to a tier for which the applicant otherwise may have qualified.

EVIDENCE TIER

In 2017, the evidence tiers of funded AmeriCorps State and National competitive grantee's were as follows:

- Strong: 9%
- Moderate: 9%
- Preliminary: 38%
- Pre-Preliminary 27%

As these figures indicate, CNCS values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. Thus, do not be deterred from applying for funding due to your current evidence level.

Applicants classifying their evidence as preliminary who propose to replicate an identical or similar evidence-based intervention, as well as applicants classifying their evidence as either moderate or strong evidence should reference the Supplemental Guidance for evidence tier definitions. Submission of additional documents (e.g., advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives that are not research studies or program evaluations) that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements described in the Notice of Funding Opportunity will not be reviewed.

EVIDENCE TIER

Applicants must:
- Provide as much detailed information as possible;
- (if applicable) describe relevant performance measure data fully as outlined in the requirements for the pre-preliminary evidence tier;

Applicants are advised:
- To focus on presenting high-quality evidence from up to two of the strongest and most relevant studies while also summarizing the remaining body of evidence.
- That research which does not focus on a specific program or intervention, but rather focuses on a broader issue area or population, will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points.

EVIDENCE TIER

When describing research, the following must be described to receive points:

- The date the research or evaluation was completed, and the time period for which the intervention was examined;
- A description that shows the study's relevance to the proposed intervention;
- A description of the target population;
- The methodology used in the study (e.g., outcome study, random assignment, regression discontinuity design, propensity score matching, etc.);
- A description of the date, data source, and data collection methods;
- The outcomes or impacts examined and the study findings;
- The strength of the findings (e.g., effect size, confidence level, statistical power of the study design and statistical significance of findings).

NOTICE PRIORITY

Program Criteria:

- The applicant proposed program fits within one or more of the 2018 AmeriCorps funding priorities as outlined in the *Funding Priorities* section and more fully described in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance and the proposed program meets all of the requirements detailed in the *Funding Priorities* section and in the Mandatory Supplemental Guidance.

MEMBER EXPERIENCE

Program Criteria:

- AmeriCorps members will gain skills and experience as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.

- The applicant clearly describes how AmeriCorps members will have access to meaningful service experiences and opportunities for reflection.

- The applicant clearly describes how AmeriCorps members will have opportunities to establish connections with each other and the broader National Service network to build esprit de corps.

MEMBER EXPERIENCE

Program Criteria:

- The applicant clearly describes how AmeriCorps members will develop an ethic of and skills for active and productive citizenship and will be encouraged to continue to engage in public and community service after their AmeriCorps term.

- The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the programs operate.

- The applicant will also foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds, talents, and capabilities are welcomed and leveraged for learning and effective service delivery.
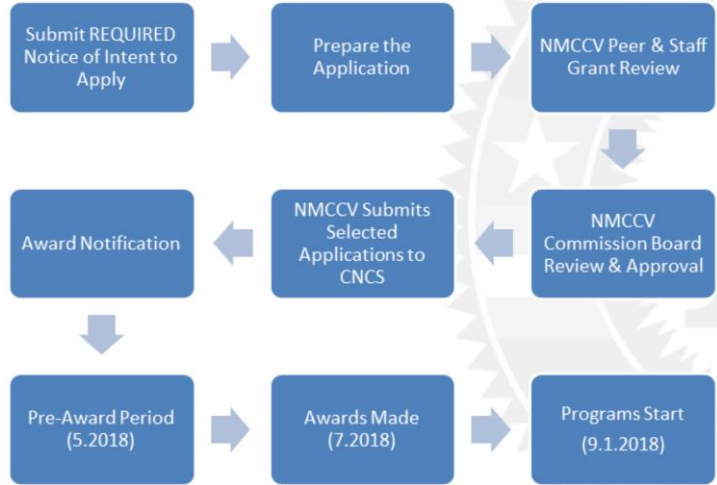
RESOURCES

- Building a High Quality AmeriCorps Program: From Blueprint to Implementation: New Program Start-up Guide – http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/files/legacy/fileman ager/down load/grantee_resources/programStartupGuide.pdf
- Learning Pathways for Program Start-Up – http://s3.amazonaws.com/resource_center_video/taag/progra m-start- up/index.html
- Resources for Recruiting Members and Volunteers – http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/volunteer-member-staff- management/recruitment

The AmeriCorps Notice of Funding Opportunity and the Application Instructions will outline the specific criteria that you should address (and program components you should develop) as you complete your AmeriCorps application.

You can find much more information about how to describe and document: Why AmeriCorps Members are a highly effective means to solving your identified community problem, How you plan to recruit, train and supervise your AmeriCorps members, How your program will provide a powerful service experience for members, How community volunteers will be engaged in your service activities, And your organization's commitment to identify itself as an AmeriCorps program and its members as AmeriCorps members.

You will need to review the Notice and the Application Instructions together to fully address all of the application selection criteria and the required narrative, budget, and performance measurement information.

GRANT REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

Submit REQUIRED Notice of Intent to Apply → Prepare the Application → NMCCV Peer & Staff Grant Review ↓

Award Notification ← NMCCV Submits Selected Applications to CNCS ← NMCCV Commission Board Review & Approval

Pre-Award Period (5.2018) → Awards Made (7.2018) → Programs Start (9.1.2018)

QUESTIONS?

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This concludes the AmeriCorps Program Mgmt & Design Informational Session This is the second of four webinars to assist grant applicants in understanding how to apply for AmeriCorps funding. In addition to these webinars, please review the Notice of Funding Opportunity and other materials posted on our website to help you prepare to apply for an AmeriCorps grant.