



AmeriCorps 201: What you need to know



**Kansas
Volunteer
Commission**

Today's Learning Objectives

- Planning your program
- Planning your budget
- Program requirements
- Next steps

Objective 1

Planning Your Program

Member Service Activities:

Allowable Activities

- “Direct service activities that will advance the goals of your program...that will result in a specific identifiable service or improvement that otherwise would not be provided” (45 CFR 2520.25)
- “Capacity-building activities that advance your program’s goals” (45 CFR 2520.30)
 - Up to 10% of time may be spent fundraising (45 CFR 2520.40)
- Must be included in, or consistent with, your approved grant application

Examples of Allowable Direct Service Activities (45 CFR 2520.25)

- Tutoring children in reading
- Helping to run an after-school program
- Engaging in community clean-up projects
- Providing health information to a vulnerable population
- Teaching as part of a professional corps
- Providing relief services to a community affected by a disaster
- Conducting a neighborhood watch program as part of a public safety effort

Examples of Allowable Capacity- Building Activities (45 CFR 2520.30)

- ❑ Strengthening volunteer management and recruitment
- ❑ Conducting outreach and securing resources in support of service activities that meet specific needs in the community
- ❑ Helping build the infrastructure of the sponsoring organization
- ❑ Developing collaborative relationships with other organizations working to achieve similar goals in the community

Requirement to Recruit & Support Volunteers (45 CFR 2520.35)

- ❑ Some component of your program that is supported through the grant must involve recruiting or supporting non-AmeriCorps volunteers.
- ❑ If this requirement would constitute a fundamental alteration to your program structure, it may be waived in response to your written request for such a waiver in the grant application.

Prohibited Activities (45 CFR 2520.65)

- ❑ Attempting to influence legislation
- ❑ Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes
- ❑ Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing
- ❑ Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements

Prohibited Activities (45 CFR 2520.65)

- ❑ Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office
- ❑ Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials
- ❑ Helping to register people to vote

Prohibited Activities (45 CFR 2520.65)

- ❑ Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization

Prohibited Activities (45 CFR 2520.65)

- Providing a direct benefit to a business organized for profit, a labor union, a partisan political organization, a non 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization, or an organization engaged in religious activities, unless Corporation assistance is not used to support those religious activities

Members vs Employees

(45 CFR 2540.100)

□ **Supplantation:**

- Grants may not be used to replace State and local public funds that had been used to support programs of the type eligible to receive Corporation support

□ **Nonduplication:**

- Corporation assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program

Members vs Employees

(45 CFR 2540.100)

□ **Nondisplacement:**

- Grants may not be used to provide services and activities that could otherwise be performed by employed workers or that will supplant the hiring of, or result in the displacement of, employed workers in the community
- An organization may not displace a volunteer with an AmeriCorps member
- A service opportunity for a member cannot be created if it will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual
- Members cannot perform the duties of a former employee or a current employee that is on leave or is on strike/locked out

Objective 1

Planning Your Budget

Sections of the Budget

- **Section I: Program Operating Costs**
 - Staff costs, travel, equipment, training, etc.
- **Section II: Member Costs**
 - Living allowance, FICA, helathcare, etc
- **Section III: Administrative/Indirect Costs**
 - Costs to operate the organization not directly attributable to the program
 - Cannot exceed 5% of total Corporation funds actually expended under this award

Matching Funds

(45 CFR 2521.35-2521.90)

- Grantees must meet an overall increasing match requirement, up to 50% by year ten according to the following table:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10+
Minimum Overall share	24%	24%	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

Member Benefits

(45 CFR 2522.240-2522.250)

□ **AmeriCorps educational awards**

- Provided 100% by the National Service Trust—not part of the grant
- Used to finance future education or to pay off qualified student loans
- \$4,725 for full-time; pro-rated for part-time

□ **Living allowance**

- Allows members to meet certain costs of living while serving in the program
- Not required for education award grants and less than full-time positions
- Minimum \$11,400 per year for full-time
- Pro-rated for less than full-time

Member Benefits

(45 CFR 2522.240-2522.250)

□ **Childcare**

- Program must provide child care assistance to qualified full-time members
- Assistance may be through an eligible provider or a childcare allowance
- Corporation will pay 100% of the allowance or cost of care at eligible provider, whichever is less

Member Benefits

(45 CFR 2522.240-2522.250)

□ **Healthcare**

- Program must provide health care coverage to all eligible full-time members
- Coverage must meet minimum standards determined the Corporation

Other Costs to Consider

□ **Programs responsible for:**

- Member training
- All aspects of member recruitment and management
- Member orientation
- Program-related travel

□ **Costs should be written into the budget**

Minimum Number of MSYs

- **MSY=Member Service Year**
 - Equivalent to one full-time term of service over the course of the year (1700 hours)
- **Minimum number of MSYs that can be requested in grant application is five (5)**

Possible Terms of Service in MSYs

- **1 Full Time Member=1 MSY**
 - 1700 hours of service
- **1 Half Time Member=0.5 MSY**
 - 900 hours of service
- **1 Reduced Half Time Member=0.381 MSY**
 - 675 hours of service
- **1 Quarter Time Member=0.2646 MSY**
 - 450 hours of service
- **1 Minimum Time Member=0.2117 MSY**
 - 300 hours of service

Cost Per MSY (45 CFR 2522.485)

- Requested amount **may not exceed \$12,600 per MSY**
- Example:
 - XYZ organization is awarded 10 MSY's, which it will use for 10 full-time AmeriCorps members
 - The maximum amount they can receive from the Corporation would be: $10 \text{ MSYs} \times \$12,600 = \$126,000$
 - This amount **does not** include the education award nor childcare costs, which are provided separately from the grant
 - This amount **does** include member support costs, program staff salaries, overhead, travel costs, etc.

Staffing suggestions

- ❑ This is not a program that could easily be absorbed into the duties of current staff
- ❑ We recommend one full-time program director for every 10 MSYs
- ❑ We recommend that the program director and the fiscal manager not be the same person
- ❑ Depending on the size of the program, other staff might be beneficial as well

Objective 3:

Program Requirements

Program Development Assistance and Training

- Programs are **required** to attend four quarterly meetings during the course of the year
 - Address important topics relevant to Americorps program management
 - Performance measurement
 - Member recruitment and retention
 - Financial management
 - Program sustainability
 - Program updates, clarifications, reminders
 - etc

Programmatic Reporting

□ **Progress Reports**

- Due quarterly
- Member data (slots filled, hours served, etc.)
- Volunteer data (volunteers recruited by program, hours served, etc.)
- Progress on performance measures
- Great stories
- Challenges and significant program changes

Financial Reporting

- **Periodic Expense Report (PER):** due monthly
 - Program Operating Costs for month
 - Member Costs for month
 - Administrative Costs for month
 - Broken down into grantee share (match) and CNCS share

- **Financial Status Report (FSR):** due quarterly
 - Cumulative report of grantee and CNCS expenses
 - Information obtained from PER's

Performance Measures

(45 CFR 2522.500-2522.650)

- All grantees must establish, track, and assess performance measures for their programs
- All grantees must ensure that any program under their oversight fulfills performance measure and evaluation requirements
- Each application must include a minimum of one set of aligned performance measures
 - Includes one output, one intermediate outcome and one end outcome

Example of a Set of Aligned Performance Measures

TutorCorps AmeriCorps Tutoring Program

- ❑ **Output:** Number of students that participated in a tutoring program
- ❑ **Intermediate Outcome:** Percent of students reading more books
- ❑ **End Outcome:** Number and percent of students who have improved their reading score to grade level

Types of Performance Measures

□ **Community-Focused**

■ *Needs and Service Activities*

- *Examples: tutoring, building homes, running after-school programs, etc.*

■ *Community Strengthening*

- Examples: developing volunteer programs in a community; engaging residents in community development efforts, etc.

□ **Member-Focused**

■ *Participant Development*

- Examples: increasing member civic engagement, providing members with technical training, etc.

Evaluation (45 CFR 2522.500-2522.540 and 2522.700-2522.740)

- Evaluation is a more in-depth, rigorous effort to measure the impact of programs
- Programs receiving more than \$500,000 in federal funds (other than EAP) must arrange for an **independent evaluation** of the program
- Programs receiving less than \$500,000 in federal funds and EAP grantees must arrange for an **internal evaluation** of the program

Performance Measurement vs. Evaluation

□ **Performance Measurement**

- Annual snapshot of program progress
- Used for monitoring and accountability

□ **Evaluation**

- Covers at least one year
- More in-depth, rigorous effort to measure process and/or impact
- Uses scientifically-based research methods
- Compares program outcomes with what would have happened in the absence of the program

Internal vs. Independent Evaluation

□ **Internal Evaluation**

- Performed “in house” with the assistance of someone knowledgeable about evaluation

□ **Independent Evaluation**

- Conducted by an independent expert (or experts) external to the program/organization

Objective 4:

Next Steps

Interested in Applying for Funding?

- Take the organizational readiness assessment, which can be found at www.kanserve.org
- Join the KVC mailing list: email shoytal@ksde.org
- Attend a technical assistance session to be conducted at various locations around the state to learn how to fill out the grant application.
- Contact the KVC with further questions

Useful Links

□ Performance Measurement/Evaluation:

- http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/resources/online_pubs/perf_meas/ac_home.php

□ Budget and Other Resources:

- www.kanserve.org – click on “AmeriCorps”

□ AmeriCorps Regulations:

- http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/manage/index.asp

□ Our Website:

- www.kanserve.org

For More Information

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