



AmeriCorps Program and Planning Grant Description

Commission Name: Serve Indiana - Governor's Commission on Community Service

Federal Agency: AmeriCorps

Funding Opportunity Types: FY 2024 AmeriCorps State and National Grants

CFDA Number: 94.006

The mission of AmeriCorps is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic participation through service and volunteering.

The following non-federal entities (defined in 2 CFR 200.1) are eligible to apply:

- Federally Recognized Tribes
- Institutions of higher education
- Local governments
- Nonprofit organizations
- States

Organizations that propose to operate only in Indiana must apply through Serve Indiana. Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one State or Territory must apply directly to AmeriCorps.

If planning grantees opt to apply for a full operational AmeriCorps grant, those are awarded to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions/practices to strengthen communities. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education

Award from the National Service Trust that members can use to pay for higher education and training program expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

Serve Indiana awards planning grants up to \$75,000. The planning grant period is August 1 through August 31. Per statute, the planning grant award may not last more than 365 days and cannot be extended for any reason.

Summary of the Application Process

All AmeriCorps applications must end up in the federal system of record, eGrants. However, based on internal administrative hurdles, it is not always possible to make eGrants accessible to planning grant applicants at all times. As a result, Serve Indiana asks that planning grant applicants submit applications outside eGrants via a Word document to info@serveindiana.org.

Given the complexity of drafting a budget in eGrants, budgets are not requested if, and until an applicant's Planning grant application is approved and moved forward. If moved forward, applicant's will work closely with the Serve Indiana's team to draft a budget that is in line with the applicant's plan while also being in compliance with various State and federal rules. All planning grants have a 24% match requirement. However, approved applicants are able to request a match waiver which are reviewed by AmeriCorps agency staff.

Full instructions on how to complete the eGrants application, incorporating content from the word planning grant application, will be provided to applicants who are approved to move forward.

Timeline for Process:

- **February 1st:** Required intent to apply is due by 5:00 p.m EST
- **March 1st:** Application is due to info@serveindiana.gov by 11:59 p.m. EST
- **April 19th:** Notice of funding is released
- **April 30th:** Budget, application, and any pending clarifications due in eGrants

Page Limits

The application narrative must not exceed 5 pages in Word format, including:

- 1.5 line spacing
- 1-inch margins
- 12-point familiar font, such as Times New Roman, Calibri, etc.

Narratives

Below are some general recommendations to help you present your plan in a way the reviewers will find compelling and persuasive.

- Be clear and succinct. Do not use jargon, boilerplate language, rhetoric, or exaggeration. Describe clearly what you intend to do and how your project responds to the selection criteria.
- Avoid circular reasoning. The problem you describe should not be defined as the lack of the solution you are proposing.
- Don't make assumptions. Even if you have received funding from AmeriCorps in the past, do not assume your reviewers know anything about you, your proposed program, your partners, or your beneficiaries. Avoid overuse of acronyms.
- Use an impartial proofreader. Before you submit your application, let someone who is completely unfamiliar with your project read and critique the project narrative.

Application sections to be completed:

All questions must be answered to the best of your ability. Please put thought into your questions, however extremely lengthy answers are not required. Make sure you are answering the questions to the best of your ability and thoroughly.

Insert each section title as headers exactly as outlined here.

Executive Summary: Use the template below.

This planning grant will be utilized to develop an AmeriCorps program which will engage AmeriCorps members to [AmeriCorps member activities] in [geographic locations where member activities will take place]. Members will address the needs of [beneficiaries to be served] resulting in [anticipated outcome of project]. Program activities will primarily be in the areas of [identify the relevant CNCS focus areas].

Problem/Need:

The applicant:

- Provides an explanation of the ideas that will be explored during the planning period.
- Describes how the community need/problem is prevalent and severe in communities where the program plans to serve and the need has been documented with data.
- Provides a preliminary description of how AmeriCorps members might be used to meet the identified community need.
- How will these funds be utilized to help build capacity within your organization or AmeriCorps program?

Planning Grant Timeline:

The applicant Looking at this funding as being spent across four quarters, what are your quarterly goals? *[Copy question 2 answers into the "Rationale & Approach (Program Design) section of the application]*

- Quarter 1:
- Quarter 2:
- Quarter 3:
- Quarter 4:

How will you ensure that Quarterly goals are being met? What does success by the end of Quarter 4 look like for you?

Organizational Capability:

The applicant describes:

- How it has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan the proposed program.
- How it has relevant experience administering federal grants or other grant funds.
 - Its plans to engage community members and partner organizations in the planning process.

who will oversee this grant within the organization?

Are you planning on hiring someone with these funds? What duties do they already have, if any?

Please reach out to Cassandra, ckellogggillenwater@serveindiana.gov, with any questions.

Thank you for your interest in AmeriCorps!