

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Corporation for National and Community Service

AmeriCorps State and National Program Recovery Plan

AmeriCorps State and National

AmeriCorps State and National engages individuals (AmeriCorps members) in service to support thousands of local community organizations. The AmeriCorps members' service expands these organizations' capacity to achieve their missions and builds community involvement and support. Additionally, each AmeriCorps member recruits and manages an average of 12 community volunteers.

AmeriCorps has a track record of accomplishment in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, and health and human services. AmeriCorps members develop an ethic of service and the leadership skills needed for active, productive citizenship, and research shows they are more likely to maintain a commitment to their communities after their service has ended.

Depending on the community and local organization's need, individuals enrolled as AmeriCorps members provide between 300 to 1,700 hours of service. AmeriCorps members might receive a small stipend to offset their living expenses while engaged in this extensive service experience and are eligible for an Eli Segal Education Award upon successful completion of their term of service. The Education Award can be used to repay qualified student loans or to pay for further education.

Funding

Operating Expenses, Recovery Act (95-2729 2009 \ 2010)	
AmeriCorps State and National	\$89,000,000

Objectives

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act), AmeriCorps State and National programs will engage approximately 10,000¹ additional individuals in service to their communities while meeting critical community needs resulting from, or exacerbated by, the current economic crisis. Individuals currently unemployed will gain work experience and valuable skills, and nonprofit organizations and communities negatively affected by the economic crisis will gain critical human resources. Activities include, but are not limited to:

- Employment and Skills Training;
- Tutoring and Literacy;
- Financial Planning;
- Home Foreclosures and Housing Assistance;
- Housing Rehabilitation and Access;

¹ This estimate assumes no transfer of funds to the National Service Trust, and would be affected in the event of such transfer.

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- Healthcare Access;
- Non-profit Capacity Building; and
- Volunteer Generation and Management.

Recovery Act funding through the AmeriCorps program will be awarded as grants to current national, regional and local AmeriCorps grantees with a proven track record and demonstrate the capacity to efficiently and effectively draw upon this new resource to assist communities in need. Grants will include additional members and/or match waivers and/or federal funds for the grantee portion of the match.

Activities

AmeriCorps members funded through the Recovery Act will engage in a range of activities (examples provided above) in service to individuals and communities affected by the economic crisis. The service of the AmeriCorps members will also bolster the capacity of community organizations that are faced with an increased need for their services.

Characteristics

Funding from the Recovery Act will be awarded as grants. Grant recipients will primarily be nonprofit community organizations, but might also include local governments, Indian Tribes and institutions of higher education. Approximately 2/3 of the funds will be awarded competitively to existing, proven AmeriCorps grantees – either directly or via state service commissions. By statute, 1/3 of the funding will be distributed to state service commissions based on a population-based formula and, in turn, states will select grant recipients. Approximately \$1 million will be used to pay the childcare costs of eligible Recovery AmeriCorps Members. All of the grant funds will go to non-federal recipients.

Non-formula requests for Recovery Act funding will be reviewed by staff using the following criteria:

- Grantee capacity to manage the requested resources.
- Alignment of proposed activities with priorities outlined by the Corporation.
- Proposed impact
- Cost-effectiveness

The Acting Director of AmeriCorps State and National will present a recommended funding package to the Chief of Program Operations and the Acting CEO. The Acting CEO will have final approval authority.

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Delivery Schedule

Now through March 9 – Planning

March 9th – Disseminate AmeriCorps Recovery Act grant application guidance

April 3rd – Applications due

April 17th – Formula grants awarded

May 8th – Competitive grants awarded

Environmental Review Compliance

Not applicable

Savings or Costs

AmeriCorps State and National does not anticipate increases or reductions in future operational costs related to Recovery Act funding.

Measures

AmeriCorps State and National will develop performance measures for priority service areas to be used by grantees addressing those areas. Grantees addressing other community needs will propose performance measures in their applications.

AmeriCorps State and National's quantifiable outputs and outcomes will include the following:

1. Output – number of AmeriCorps recovery corps positions created.
2. Outcome – number of clients receiving employment and skills training and counseling.
3. Outcome – number of hours of tutoring and literacy services provided to clients.
4. Outcome – number of clients placed in jobs.
5. Outcome – number of clients receiving tutoring and literacy services.
6. Outcome – number of clients with improved academic success.
7. Outcome – number of clients receiving services related to financial planning.
8. Outcome – number of clients receiving services related to home foreclosures and housing assistance programs.
9. Outcome – number of clients who are able to remain in their housing.
10. Outcome – number of clients receiving housing rehabilitation, weatherization and efficient-energy services.
11. Outcome – number of existing homes and structures rehabilitated, weatherized or made more energy-efficient.
12. Outcome – number of homes and structures made accessible for disabled persons.
13. Outcome – number of homeless individuals transitioned into affordable housing.
14. Outcome – number of clients receiving information on health insurance, health care access and health benefits programs.

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15. Outcome – number of clients enrolled in health insurance and health benefits programs.
16. Outcome – total value of monetary donations raised.
17. Outcome – total value of in-kind donations raised.
18. Outcome – Increase in the number of clients served from prior year.
19. Outcome – Increase in the number of services offered to clients from the prior year.
20. Outcome – number of community volunteers recruited to address needs in their communities.
21. Outcome – number of clients served by community volunteers.

Grantees will submit quarterly progress reports showing their progress toward meeting their targets. These grantees will continue to report separately on their non-Recovery AmeriCorps activities.

Performance data related to Recovery Act activities will be made available to the public on the Corporation's website and on Recovery.gov.

Monitoring/Evaluation

Grantees will be initially assessed for risk during the application review process. The results of these assessments will inform the development of AmeriCorps State and National's Recovery Monitoring Plan. Monitoring will be both fiscal and programmatic and will be a joint effort between the program and grants offices. The focus of the monitoring is to ensure that grantees are implementing their grants as expected and utilizing funds in an appropriate and timely manner.

All grantees will be monitored as follows:

- Fiscal monitoring will consist of monthly review of grantee drawdowns from the Payment Management System, and reviews of the quarterly FFR.
- Programmatic monitoring will consist of monthly reviews of AmeriCorps member enrollments and reviews of quarterly progress reports.
- Within 10 business days of the submission of the quarterly reports, grantees will receive feedback identifying any issues that need to be resolved.

Additionally, based on the results of the regular monitoring described above and the initial risk assessments, grantees may also receive site visits.

Transparency

Program cost and performance information by grantee will be disseminated in a press release, posted on the Corporation's Recovery webpage (nationalservice.gov/recovery) and on Recovery.gov as appropriate.

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Accountability

Managers and employees are held accountable for operations and results of the AmeriCorps State and National program through the Corporation's appraisal system. Performance plans include criteria that measure the performance of each manager and employee on the completion and quality of essential duties and responsibilities, including oversight of program partners and achievement of key program milestones on schedule and within budget.

Barriers to Effective Implementation:

1. Each state government's requirements and protocol for making decisions on proposals will have an impact on its service commission's ability to respond quickly to the funding announcement.