



## 2020-21 AmeriCorps Planning Grant Review Tool

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Application Section	Score
Program Design (50 points maximum)	
Organizational Capability (25 points maximum)	
Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 points maximum)	
<b>TOTAL SCORE (100 points possible)</b>	

**Overall Recommendation:**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Strongly</b> recommended for funding	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommended for funding	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommended for funding with reservations or concerns	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly <b>NOT</b> recommended for funding
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**Overall Comments/Concerns/Questions:**

## Referenced Document

Applicants are required to complete applications for funding in accordance with the [2021 Serve Kentucky Request for Proposals Guidance-Formula](#).

## Application Scoring

A maximum of 100 points may be awarded to each proposal. The average of the reviewers' scores will provide a rank-ordered list of programs, which will then be used by Serve Kentucky staff and Commissioners for selection purposes.

### Important Notes:

- **Comments are required for all sections; indicate strengths and weaknesses in each section.**
- Comments should be as specific as possible.
- The minimum number of points that may be awarded is 1.
- Please only use whole numbers (no fractions).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While no points will be assigned to this section, reviewers will be asked to examine whether or not the applicant followed the required format below.

"[*Organization name*] proposes to utilize a Kentucky AmeriCorps Planning Grant to explore opportunities for the future utilization of AmeriCorps members to address [*list community need(s)*] in the target communities of [*list the counties*] that will be engaged."

Executive Summary does not deviate from required format:  Yes  No

Comments:

## RATIONALE AND APPROACH/PROGRAM DESIGN

**Problem/Need Statement (10 points): Score \_\_\_\_\_**

The applicant should:

- Describe the community need(s) the organization is hoping to address.
- Provide information about the extent/severity of the need in the community(ies) where your organization will focus its efforts.
- Cite specific relevant data when possible.

**AmeriCorps Members as an Effective Tool (20 points): Score \_\_\_\_\_**

Organizations that will host an AmeriCorps Program recruit individuals both locally and nationally to serve as AmeriCorps Members. AmeriCorps Members agree to serve between 300 and 1,700 hours with the program and implement direct service interventions to address a community need. Examples of direct service functions include, but are not limited to; tutoring, mentoring, recruiting volunteers, assisting clients with financial stability services, building/repairing homes, restoring parks/wilderness areas, facilitating after school programming, assisting in career readiness/job placement services, assisting individuals to transition to stable housing.

AmeriCorps programs are encouraged to offer their members a living allowance to help cover basic living expenses during the members' term of service. Members serving in a 1,700-hour (full-time) term typically receive \$15,100 minimum living allowance that is funded under the AmeriCorps grant award. Adjusted living allowances may be provided by the grant to members serving in less than a full time capacity. 1,700-hour members are also eligible to receive grant-supported healthcare coverage and childcare assistance. Organizations may choose to provide additional benefits as available through various means. Examples could include, housing allowances, other medical benefits, travel expenses, etc.

The applicant should:

- Describe why the organization believes that AmeriCorps members could potentially be an effective tool for addressing the community need described.
- Describe any community/organizational resources that exists in the project's target community(ies) that could potentially be utilized to recruit AmeriCorps members if a full program grant were to be awarded in FY22.

**Planning Grant Approach and Timeline (20 points): Score \_\_\_\_\_**

The AmeriCorps planning grant will provide resources and guidance to design a high-quality AmeriCorps program to serve the target community(ies) selected by the organization. During the one-year grant period, the organization will identify critical issues affecting the target community(ies); develop a plan to deliver solutions; establish effective partnerships; and develop data collection systems that will be used for reporting, learning, and continuous improvement. The process will begin with research and training; with time dedicated to becoming familiar with AmeriCorps grant provisions, regulations, and resources available for new grantees.

Throughout the planning process, the organization will work closely with both Commission Staff and a Program Design Coach of its choosing to ensure that the training needs of the organization are being met and that the planning process is adequately implemented.

The organization will create an advisory committee comprised of various community stakeholders whose duties include crafting the overall program design by clarifying which community needs to address; identifying AmeriCorps members' service activities and sites; developing stakeholder roles, and outlining budget needs and sources of match funding.

Through the planning process, documentation of the community needs and plans for recruitment, training, and implementation will be used to structure an operational AmeriCorps Program grant application.

The application should demonstrate the organization's capacity to effectively manage an AmeriCorps program:

1. Develop a strong performance measurement system that ensures collection of reliable data to exhibit the program's impact on the community being served.
2. Create a process to select service sites;
3. Design a recruitment strategy that aligns with the desired and required characteristics/skills for AmeriCorps members;
4. Create policies, procedures, and forms to be used in anticipation of hosting an AmeriCorps program.
5. Develop curriculum to be used in training members; and
6. Create of an effective orientation, training, and monitoring plan that includes applicable technical assistance.

Applicants may add additional activities such as conducting needs assessments, facilitating additional feedback sessions.

Note: Logic models are not required for planning grants.

**Program Design (50 points): Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_**

Program Design Comments:

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY**

The applicant should:

- Describe how the organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure necessary to plan and implement the proposed project.
- Describe the organization's prior experience administering private, local, state, and/or federal funds.
- Describe the organization's financial management structure and what financial systems are used to manage funds.

**Organizational Capability (25 points): Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_**

Organizational Capability Comments:

## COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY

### Resource Development (10 points): Score \_\_\_\_\_

The applicant should:

- Discuss the organization's experience in securing outside financial and in-kind contributions.
- Describe what resources could potentially be utilized/secured to assist the organization in supporting a full AmeriCorps program in the future?

### Project Budget (15 points): Score 15

***The Fiscal Team at Serve Kentucky will ensure the following before submission to CNCS/AmeriCorps.***

- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.
- The budgeted match is equal to or more than the required match of 24% for planning grants.
- Current indirect rate cost if used to claim indirect/administrative costs.
- Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash), the sources of these commitments, and if the commitments are proposed or secured.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy Comments:

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 points): Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_