



AmeriCorps in Virginia: Frequently Asked Questions

How do I decide if AmeriCorps is a good fit for my organization?

AmeriCorps offers multiple streams of service, ensuring options for organizations of any size and capacity:

- [AmeriCorps VISTA](#) offers key capacity-building support for addressing poverty through the placement of talented, passionate individuals.
- [AmeriCorps NCCC](#) offers short-term support for service projects lasting 3-13 weeks through regional teams of 18-26-year-olds.
- [AmeriCorps Seniors](#) offers meaningful ways to engage seniors.
- [AmeriCorps State](#) offers grant funding to support the placement of AmeriCorps members who deliver services alongside staff.

Serve Virginia offers consultations for organizations to determine which stream of service is right for their needs. [Schedule a consultation](#)

Can AmeriCorps help support disaster services?

Yes! Depending on how your organization engages in disaster services and where you plan to utilize members, AmeriCorps can be a great way to prepare for or respond to natural disasters. Here are a few examples of AmeriCorps in disaster services:

- Organizations can request AmeriCorps NCCC teams to help develop disaster preparedness or respond to natural disasters.
- Organizations can utilize an AmeriCorps VISTA member in creating infrastructure for disaster services programs.
- Organizations can develop an AmeriCorps State program model that engages members in disaster preparedness activities and community outreach.

Can AmeriCorps serve in... [our food outreach ministry, in mentorship programs, within community health systems]?

Yes! AmeriCorps members can serve in a wide variety of ways, across the six AmeriCorps focus areas:

- Education
- Economic opportunity
- Healthy futures
- Environmental stewardship
- Veterans and military families
- Disaster preparedness and relief

[Schedule a consultation](#) with Serve Virginia staff to explore how you might utilize members across these different focus areas or if you need help finding existing program models that might inspire your organization.

What types of activities or tasks do members perform in support of an organization?

Members serve in a wide variety of roles depending on the organization's focus and program model. Generally, AmeriCorps State members are engaged in "direct service" to the community—directly engaging with those served, planning or preparing for programs to be directly implemented in the community, etc. Members should generally also gain hands-on experience through their service. Serve Virginia staff can help you think through if your proposed service makes sense for an AmeriCorps member.

Do AmeriCorps members all need to be serving in the same type of position and work toward the same community need, or can they serve in various types of roles and impact many different community needs?

Members can serve across varied community needs and roles, based on your program model. Serve Virginia staff can help you think through what this could look like based on the needs your organization addresses.

Can AmeriCorps members help with communication or fundraising strategies?

Yes, this would likely be a good fit for AmeriCorps VISTA. Serve Virginia staff can help direct you to resources to apply for AmeriCorps VISTA as it is not included in the upcoming RFA.

What types of funding are available, and what can the funding be used for?

AmeriCorps funds are meant to support developing and operating AmeriCorps State programs. Serve Virginia staff can help you navigate accessing other AmeriCorps programs like AmeriCorps NCCC, AmeriCorps VISTA, or AmeriCorps Seniors. Two types of AmeriCorps State grants are available:

- **Planning grants:** A planning grant **provides support to a grant recipient to develop an AmeriCorps program** that will engage AmeriCorps members in implementing evidence-based interventions to solve community problems. Grant recipients are awarded from \$75,000 up to \$240,000 for a 12-month planning period and are expected to be better prepared to compete for an AmeriCorps program grant in the following grant cycle. **A planning grant may not be used to support AmeriCorps members.**
- **Operational grants:** An operational grant **provides support to a grant recipient to implement an AmeriCorps program** that will engage **10 or more AmeriCorps members** in service to the community through an evidence-based or evidence-informed intervention, providing members with a living allowance, meaningful service opportunities, professional development, and supervision to create community impact. Funding levels vary based on number of members requested and are based on a formula of \$25,200 per full-time member (or prorated for part time members).

Can AmeriCorps planning or operational grants supplement other AmeriCorps programs?

While AmeriCorps State programs can focus on the same need as another AmeriCorps program offered by an organization, AmeriCorps resources cannot be used to manage other AmeriCorps resources. For example, AmeriCorps VISTA cannot be used to write an AmeriCorps grant, or AmeriCorps State cannot be used to supervise AmeriCorps Seniors, but they can all be engaged in programs and projects that address the same community need.

I'm interested in applying for American Climate Corps or Youth Mental Health Corps. Is that a part of this upcoming RFA or a different process?

Organizations interested in offering opportunities through American Climate Corps or Youth Mental Health Corps will apply for AmeriCorps State funding, and have access to additional resources by aligning to these specialized Corps. Your organization would design (or use an existing AmeriCorps program model) to apply for an AmeriCorps State planning or operational grant and, after being awarded, be connected to additional resources for the American Climate Corps or Youth Mental Health Corps as appropriate. Requirements for these programs, or details about what constitutes an "American Climate Corps" or "Youth Mental Health Corps" program, will be available in the RFA.

Can a planning grant be used to establish another program, such as Climate Corps?

Yes! A planning grant is a great way to develop a strong foundation for your program that can align with American Climate Corps or Youth Mental Health Corps.

Is there a required match?

Yes, details about the required match will be available in the RFA and start at 24% for the first 3 years an organization has AmeriCorps funding.

How do I create a winning AmeriCorps proposal?

All the requirements for the AmeriCorps proposal for planning or operational grants will be found in the RFA. As you put together your application, keep in mind these tips:

- Make sure your proposal includes meaningful service for your members. Whether describing proposed activities for a planning grant or positions in your operational program, **make it clear how members will be engaged in meaningful and significant service** that does not duplicate or displace existing staff or volunteers.
- Consider your organizational capacity, and ensure that your organization meets eligibility, can pass the risk assessment, and that it is clear how you plan to manage the program or planning process you propose.