

### AmeriCorps Program Start-Up Blueprint

	Site Partnerships	Recruitment	Member Development	Policies and Procedures	Budget/Fiscal
<b>Two-six months prior to the start of the year:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hold focus meeting with each site.</li> <li>- Meet individually with each site supervisor to determine needs, objectives, member roles.</li> <li>- Develop program calendar.</li> <li>- Plan orientation for site partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research possible outlets for recruitment, e.g., community fairs, the media, or colleges.</li> <li>- Identify target member population and resources.</li> <li>- Create marketing materials, such as flyers, brochures, newspaper and radio ads, and a website.</li> <li>- Spread the word! Go to fairs, visit colleges, post flyers.</li> <li>- Develop and publish service descriptions.</li> <li>- Post information about your program on the AmeriCorps Recruitment and Placement System (<a href="http://www.americorps.org/resources/">www.americorps.org/resources/</a>), via The Portal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assess needs for member orientation by talking to former members, site supervisors, and other national service programs.</li> <li>- Brainstorm training topics and formulate goals for orientation.</li> <li>- Plan and design member orientation.</li> <li>- Develop budget for member orientation.</li> <li>- Read Starting Strong: A Guide to Pre-Service Training and other resource materials on training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read grant provisions and the Program Director's Handbook.</li> <li>- Begin interviews, reference checks and hiring for staff positions.</li> <li>- Develop forms, such as service-hour tracking forms, member contracts, member handbook, grievance procedure, and monitoring and reporting.</li> <li>- Order and purchase office supplies, member gear and AmeriCorps handbooks.</li> <li>- Subscribe to a national service listserv.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review budget</li> <li>- Obtain funds to provide cash match (if applicable).</li> <li>- Set up payroll for staff and members.</li> <li>- Develop accounting system to capture program expenditures (CNS and match).</li> <li>- Calculate grantee share and invoice.</li> <li>- Calculate in-kind for sites.</li> <li>- Prepare member orientation budget.</li> </ul>
<b>One month prior to the start of the year:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct orientation for site partners, including a review of policies, prohibited activities, service descriptions and reporting procedures.</li> <li>- Create formal Memorandas of Understanding with site partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop interview form and procedures.</li> <li>- Set and begin interviews (two per member) with program staff and host site.</li> <li>- Begin reference and criminal background checks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arrange for logistics, such as meeting space and food; assign tasks to staff.</li> <li>- Contact trainers: Call your commission, board, outside trainers, community colleges, etc.</li> <li>- Collaborate with other national service programs or partner sites.</li> <li>- Arrange for transportation and child care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Once members have been selected, send them info packets and request documents needed for your files, such as W-4s, driver's licenses, diplomas, and birth certificates.</li> <li>- Help out-of-state members find affordable housing by networking with other programs or arrange for temporary housing for their first month.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Train sites on documenting in-kind match (if applicable).</li> <li>- Develop bidding procedures.</li> <li>- Select health care provider.</li> </ul>

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				- Review proposal and set up evaluation mechanism.	
	<b>Site Partnerships</b>	<b>Recruitment</b>	<b>Member Development</b>	<b>Policies and Procedures</b>	<b>Budget/Fiscal</b>
<b>One week before start of the year:</b>	- Ensure each service site plans an orientation for members.	- Send welcome letter to new members.	- Finalize orientation logistics. - Rehearse trainings. - Hold prospective member social event.	- Monitor member files to see what still needs to be turned in.	- Enroll FULL TIME members in health care plan.
<b>First month of program year:</b>	- Meet with members and site supervisors to set goals and ease the start-up process.		- Hold member orientation. - Help members to get forbearance for qualified loans. - Plan ongoing development: set dates for regular team meetings, trainings, service projects, celebration, and reflection.	- ENROLL members into eGrants. Enter member information into MY SERVICE LOG in order to track hours. - Set up schedule of due dates for reports (both fiscal and program). - Implement evaluation mechanism.	- Set up schedule of due dates for reports (both fiscal and program). - Set up format and times for meeting to review budgets versus actual expenditures.
<b>Ongoing during the year:</b>	- Obtain feedback from sites through written evaluations or monthly meetings. - Monitor sites through regular site visits and meetings with key staff. - Share program successes with partners.	- Continue outreach and recruitment efforts. - Continue selection process.	- Survey members on training needs. - Conduct mid-year and end-of-year performance evaluations. - Meet monthly with members individually and as a team. - Arrange for post-service planning, such as résumé writing or job shadows.	- Enter member hours into MY SERVICE LOG. - Keep members informed of hours. - Timely submission of reports (both fiscal and program). - Prepare and submit exit paperwork.	- Regular monitoring of budget versus actual expenditures. - Monitoring of match in budget versus actual reported. - Timely submission of reports (both fiscal and program).

## **Key Responsibilities of Operating an AmeriCorps Program**

Grantees are responsible for the following activities:

- ✓ Designing and implementing a high-quality program design that meets locally identified needs and results in measurable results through AmeriCorps service activities.
- ✓ Recruitment, selection, training and supervision of AmeriCorps Members.
- ✓ Recruitment, selection, orientation and monitoring of partner sites where AmeriCorps Members serve.
- ✓ Meeting match requirements and implementing activities to promote program sustainability.
- ✓ Fiscal and program outcome reporting utilizing the AmeriCorps web-based reporting systems.
- ✓ Designating appropriate staffing (at least one full-time program director) to manage and lead the program.
- ✓ Attendance at required program director training and meetings.
- ✓ Fiscal and programmatic oversight in accordance with federal AmeriCorps provisions and other requirements.

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