## AmeriCorps Program Start-Up Blueprint

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two-six months prior to the start of the year:</th>
<th>Site Partnerships</th>
<th>Recruitment</th>
<th>Member Development</th>
<th>Policies and Procedures</th>
<th>Budget/Fiscal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Hold focus meeting with each site.</td>
<td>- Research possible outlets for recruitment, e.g., community fairs, the media, or colleges.</td>
<td>- Assess needs for member orientation by talking to former members, site supervisors, and other national service programs.</td>
<td>- Develop budget for member orientation.</td>
<td>- Read grant provisions and the Program Director’s Handbook.</td>
<td>- Review budget</td>
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<td>- Meet individually with each site supervisor to determine needs, objectives, member roles.</td>
<td>- Identify target member population and resources.</td>
<td>- Brainstorm training topics and formulate goals for orientation.</td>
<td>- Read Starting Strong: A Guide to Pre-Service Training and other resource materials on training.</td>
<td>- Begin interviews, reference checks and hiring for staff positions.</td>
<td>- Obtain funds to provide cash match (if applicable).</td>
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<td>- Develop program calendar.</td>
<td>- Create marketing materials, such as flyers, brochures, newspaper and radio ads, and a website.</td>
<td>- Plan and design member orientation.</td>
<td>- Develop forms, such as service-hour tracking forms, member contracts, member handbook, grievance procedure, and monitoring and reporting.</td>
<td>- Develop accounting system to capture program expenditures (CNS and match).</td>
<td>- Set up payroll for staff and members.</td>
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<td>- Plan orientation for site partners.</td>
<td>- Spread the word! Go to fairs, visit colleges, post flyers.</td>
<td>- Develop for member orientation.</td>
<td>- Order and purchase office supplies, member gear and AmeriCorps handbooks.</td>
<td>- Calculate grantee share and invoice.</td>
<td>- Calculate in-kind for sites.</td>
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<td>- Develop and publish service descriptions.</td>
<td>- Read Starting Strong: A Guide to Pre-Service Training and other resource materials on training.</td>
<td>- Subscribe to a national service listserv.</td>
<td>- Prepare member orientation budget.</td>
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<td>- Conduct orientation for site partners, including a review of policies, prohibited activities, service descriptions and reporting procedures.</td>
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<td>- Arrange for logistics, such as meeting space and food; assign tasks to staff.</td>
<td>- 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.</td>
<td>- Train sites on documenting in-kind match (if applicable).</td>
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<td>- Create formal Memorandams of Understanding with site partners.</td>
<td>- Set and begin interviews (two per member) with program staff and host site.</td>
<td>- Contact trainers: Call your commission, board, outside trainers, community colleges, etc.</td>
<td>- Help out-of-state members find affordable housing by networking with other programs or arrange for temporary housing for their first month.</td>
<td>- Develop bidding procedures.</td>
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<td>- Begin reference and criminal background checks.</td>
<td>- Collaborate with other national service programs or partner sites.</td>
<td>- Arrange for transportation and child care.</td>
<td>- Select health care provider.</td>
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### Site Partnerships
- Ensure each service site plans an orientation for members.

### Recruitment
- Send welcome letter to new members.

### Member Development
- Finalize orientation logistics.
- Rehearse trainings.
- Hold prospective member social event.

### Policies and Procedures
- Monitor member files to see what still needs to be turned in.

### Budget/Fiscal
- Enroll FULL TIME members in health care plan.

### One week before start of the year:
- Meet with members and site supervisors to set goals and ease the start-up process.

### First month of program year:
- 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.

### Ongoing during the year:
- 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.
- 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.