



AmeriCorps

AMERICORPS 2026-27 COMPETITIVE GRANT PROCESS



FAQ

Please note, the AmeriCorps Agency is currently reworking its website and some links in the RFA may be unavailable while this work is ongoing. Once the site is restored, all applicants are encouraged to consult [AmeriCorps.gov](https://www.americorps.gov) for more information on developing and running an AmeriCorps program.

Who can apply for a competitive AmeriCorps grant?

Competitive funding for AmeriCorps programs is available to nonprofit organizations, Native American Tribes, institutions of higher education, state agencies, community or faith-based organizations, subdivisions of the state including cities, counties, and municipalities, or a partnership of any of the above entities. All MSA AmeriCorps programs must operate solely in Massachusetts, and all member service activities must take place within the state.

Are there limits on how big or small a program can be?

The Massachusetts Service Alliance suggests new programs aim for a corps size of between 15 and 25 members for their first program cycle. Programs must have at least 10 fulltime (or equivalent) members. Programs requesting more than 35 full time members should reach out to MSA at ACQuestions@mass-service.org before applying.

Is AmeriCorps right for my organization?

AmeriCorps programs leverage the unique energy, focus and skillsets of members to help their communities improve outcomes focusing on one of six critical impact areas- education, economic opportunities, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, and Veterans and Military families.

AmeriCorps is NOT a fit for programs primarily looking for increased funding, additional staffing or internal capacity development. Running an AmeriCorps program requires a significant financial and administrative commitment from programs and in most cases requires the hiring of additional, dedicated staff. If you aren't sure whether an AmeriCorps program is right for your organization, please reach out to MSA to discuss available opportunities.

Who are AmeriCorps members and what attracts them to service?

Each member cohort reflects the needs and nature of their program. Some programs target students just out of high school or college looking to gain experience or serve their communities, others look for people with specific professional skills looking for targeted certification or career growth. Programs in Massachusetts engage in trail cleanup, legal advocacy, historic restoration, classroom teaching and more. In addition to their living stipend, full time members (1700 hours) have the option of receiving health care, child care, and will receive an education award of \$7395 on completion of service. You can learn more about each of these benefits on the AmeriCorps website.

To be eligible to serve, all members must:

- Be a United States citizen, U.S. national, or a lawful permanent resident alien of the United States.

- Be at least 17 years of age; and Have a high school diploma or GED or work towards obtaining one while in the program. It is a requirement to obtain a high school diploma or GED before one is eligible to use the Education Award.
- Be clear of any record on the National Sex Offender Public Registry.
- Have a criminal record clear of any conviction(s) of murder.

AmeriCorps members are neither volunteers nor employees of the organization. Members must sign a contract with the program and commit to a specific term of service. All members must receive adequate support and supervision during the duration of their service term.

How long is a Competitive grant? When can I run my program?

Competitive grants are generally for 3 years, but are issued annually for 12 month periods. A short 'continuation application' is required each year and subject for review by the AmeriCorps Agency, but programs do not participate in the competitive process. The typical grant year runs from August-September each year. For this grant, programs may not begin prior to August 1st, 2026 without receiving prior permission from MSA. Programs have flexibility to set their exact program dates within the 12 month grant period.

How will my application be assessed?

MSA's RFA is being released in anticipation of a formal Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) from the AmeriCorps Agency. Applications will first be reviewed by a panel of community members drawn from diverse backgrounds from across Massachusetts. Reviewers will focus on the relevance of the identified community need, the appropriateness of the planned intervention, and the preparedness of the organization to support members and carry out proposed activities. Community reviewers will recommend whether proposals move forward in the application process past the this stage of the process. In some cases, reviewers may make their recommendations conditional on key clarification questions. MSA will follow up as needed with clarifications during the week of October 20th. Applications recommended by the community, will then be reviewed by MSA's Staff and Board. Selected applications will be moved on to the National Competition, where applications will need to be modified to comply with the AmeriCorps NOFO. MSA will provide additional support and training for those selected to apply. Organizations will need to have staff capacity available in November and early December to make needed changes and upload final documents. Competitive selections are made by the AmeriCorps Agency based on reviewer scores. This process is very competitive and all applicants will need to make sure their applications are awarded every point possible based on criteria provided in the NOFO.

How competitive is the grants process?

Last year, the AmeriCorps Agency awarded just 15% of new applicants, a significant decrease from previous years. MSA expects this year's competition will be similarly competitive.

Do I need to submit a budget with my application?

All applicants will need to submit a budget. Unless granted prior permission, this should be a Cost Reimbursement budget as described in Appendix A of the RFA. Changes and corrections to the budget will be possible prior to final submission to the AmeriCorps Agency.

Where can I learn more about specific topics related to AmeriCorps or the application process?

AmeriCorps Website (which may be down at the time of this posting) has many resources to help organizations determine whether a State and National Program is right for them. Below are helpful videos covering technical sections of the application:

Performance measures, evidence and evaluation: [HERE](#)

Evidence Base: [HERE](#)

Budget Development (detailed training will be provided for successful applicants): [HERE](#)

Our program includes member roles that are less than full time. How can I calculate how many full-time equivalent members we should request?

Full time equivalent members can be estimated using the chart below. Programs can divide MSY as they see fit, but must have the equivalent of at least 10 full time members:

Member Positions	Calculation	Total MSYs
_____ Full Time (1700 hours)	_____ members x 1.000	= _____
_____ Reduced Full Time (1200 hours)	_____ members x 0.700	= _____
_____ Half Time (900 hours)	_____ members x 0.500	= _____
_____ Reduced Half Time (675 hours)	_____ members x 0.3810	= _____
_____ Quarter time (450 hours)	_____ members x 0.2646	= _____
_____ Minimum time (300 hours)	_____ members x 0.2117	= _____
	TOTAL MSYs Requested	= _____

What is the timeline for the application process?

Applications are due to MSA on **Oct 8, 2025 by 2:00 P.M. EST**. The review process is as follows (some dates are still to be determined):

September 5th, 2025	AmeriCorps competitive Grant application RFA Released
September 20th, 2025	Online Intent to Apply Due (optional, strongly encouraged) Intent to Apply: https://www.tfaforms.com/5079246
October 8th, 2025	Submission of competitive Grant Application due to MSA by 2:00 P.M. EST Formula Application Link: https://www.tfaforms.com/5142083
October 21-24, 2025	Possible clarification questions from MSA- be sure staff are available to answer
Early November, 2025	Notification of status
November 2025	Adjust application to suit AmeriCorps Agency NOFO
Mid December, 2025	Final applications uploaded to AmeriCorps system (eGrants).
April/May 2026	Notification of results from the AmeriCorps Agency

What Terms and Conditions does the AmeriCorps Agency place on programs? Are any activities prohibited?

For reference, General Terms and Conditions from the 2025 Service Year are posted [HERE](#). AmeriCorps State and National Terms and Conditions are posted [HERE](#). Programs are strongly encouraged to read through these terms carefully. All competitive awards are bound by these terms.

The AmeriCorps Agency has a list of activities that cannot be undertaken on grant or during service hours. The list is [HERE](#). In addition to this list, programs must comply with applicable executive orders. A list of executive orders can be found [HERE](#).

Will there be other opportunities to apply for funding this year?

The AmeriCorps Agency only runs one competitive grant process each year. MSA will run a formula grant process with similar terms starting in late January or early February 2024.