



2015 AMERICORPS NARRATIVE GUIDELINES

December 4, 2014

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NARRATIVES SECTION

- × Executive Summary
- × Program Design
- × Organizational Capability
- × Cost Effectiveness
- × Evaluation Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fill in the blanks **ONLY**. There is nothing else you need to do!

The [**NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION**] will have [**NUMBER OF**] AmeriCorps members who will [**WHAT THE MEMBERS WILL BE DOING**] in [**THE LOCATIONS THE AMERICORPS MEMBERS WILL BE**]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [**ANTICIPATED OUTCOME OF PROJECT**]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional [**NUMBER OF LEVERAGED VOLUNTEERS, IF APPLICABLE**]. Who will be engaged in [**WHAT THE LEVERAGED VOLUNTEERS WILL BE DOING**].

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [**FOCUS AREA(S)**]. * The CNCS investment of \$[**AMOUNT OF REQUEST**] will be matched with \$[**AMOUNT OF PROJECTED MATCH**], \$[**AMOUNT OF LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL FUNDS**] in public funding and \$[**AMOUNT OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS**] in private funding.

* - if the program is not operating in a CNCS' focus area, omit this sentence.

PROGRAM DESIGN

1. **PROBLEM/NEED**

- ❖ Describe how you will address the community problem/need by your proposed project.
- ❖ Describe how the community problem/need is widespread and has been documented as a need with relevant data.

2. **THEORY of CHANGE & LOGIC MODEL**

- ❖ Describe the proposed intervention. (include the roles of the ACMs and leveraged volunteers)
- ❖ Describe how the proposed intervention will lead to the outcomes.
- ❖ Describe how the ACMs will produce contributions to existing interventions that are also addressing the same problem/need.
- ❖ All the basics of the logic model are logically aligned.

PROGRAM DESIGN cont...

3. EVIDENCE BASE

- ❖ Documented evidence that the proposed intervention will lead to the outcomes.
- ❖ For sub-grantees required to submit an evaluation report- the evaluation reports is considered a part of the evidence base program.
- ❖ 5-tiered evidence levels:
 - ❖ No evidence
 - ❖ Pre-preliminary evidence
 - ❖ Preliminary evidence
 - ❖ Moderate evidence
 - ❖ Strong evidence

PROGRAM DESIGN cont...

4. NOTICE PRIORITY

- ❖ Describe how the proposed project includes one or more of the 2015 AmeriCorps funding priorities.
- ❖ Describe how the proposed project meets all of the requirements outlined in the NOFO. (detailed on p.3 of the NOFO & in the Glossary)

5. MEMBER TRAINING

- ❖ Describe how ACMs will receive training to be effective in service.
- ❖ Describe how ACMs and volunteers will adhere to rules. (including prohibited activities)

PROGRAM DESIGN cont...

6. MEMBER SUPERVISION

- ❖ Describe how ACMs will receive the necessary support from their supervisor to be effective in service.
- ❖ Describe how supervisors will be adequately skilled-up to follow AmeriCorps rules, program rules, and expectations of the program
- ❖ Describe how supervisors will guide and support ACMs during their term of service.

7. MEMBER EXPERIENCE

- ❖ Describe what job skills/experience ACMs will gain as a result of their training and service.
- ❖ Describe how ACMs will have access to meaningful experiences and opportunities for reflection.

PROGRAM DESIGN **cont...**

- ❖ Describe opportunities made available for ACMs to connect with each other and with other National Service Members to build morale.
- ❖ Describe how ACMs will develop an ethic of and skills for active and productive citizenship to continue to engage in public and community service after their term of service.
- ❖ Describe how ACMs will be recruited from the communities in which the program operates.

8. **COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION**

- ❖ Describe how Members will know they are AmeriCorps Members.
- ❖ Describe how staff and community members know who are ACMs.
- ❖ Describe how ACMs will get and wear service gear displaying the AmeriCorps logo.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY

1. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND & STAFFING

- ❖ Describe how your organization has the ability to administer the proposed AmeriCorps project.
 - ❖ Experience
 - ❖ Staffing
 - ❖ Management structure
- ❖ Describe your organization's previous experience administering AmeriCorps projects or other federal projects.
- ❖ Describe how your organization has engaged community members and partner organizations in planning and implementing its intervention.

2. COMPLIANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

- ❖ Describe how you will prevent and detect compliance issues.
- ❖ Describe the plan of how you, sub-contractors, and service site locations (if applicable) will be held accountable if instances of risk or non-compliance is identified.
- ❖ Describe the plan of how you, sub-contractors, and service site locations (if applicable) will comply with AmeriCorps rules and regulations? (i.e., do you have a system in place for checks and balances?)

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY

3. PAST PERFORMANCE (for Re-Compete Apps)

- ❖ Describe how your organization achieved performance measurements targets anytime during the last 3 years of AmeriCorps program operation.
 - ❖ How successful were you?
 - ❖ Did you identify any problems? If so, how do you resolve them?
 - ❖ If you did not achieve your performance targets, why not? What is your plan for improvement?

- ❖ Describe how your organization achieved 100% Member enrollment (most recent year of operations); or if not achieved, what is your corrective action plan.
- ❖ Describe how your organization achieved 100% Member retention (most recent year of operations); or if not achieved, what is your corrective action plan.
- ❖ Describe any compliance issues or areas of weakness identified during the last 3 years of operations (if applicable). Also, explain the corrective action plan that was implemented.
 - ❖ What is your plan for continuous improvement?

COST EFFECTIVENESS

I. COST EFFECTIVENESS

- ❖ Is the budget sufficient to carry out the program effectively.
- ❖ Does the budget align with the applicant's narrative?
- ❖ Is the program design cost effective and the benefits justify the cost?
- ❖ Have you raised or described an adequate plan to raise non-CNCS resources to fully support your AmeriCorps project?

HOW SHOULD I WRITE MY NARRATIVE?

- ➔ Highlight your program strengths.
- ➔ Be clear and to the point.
- ➔ Avoid circular reasoning.
- ➔ Explain how the program actually works.
- ➔ DO NOT make assumptions.
- ➔ Use an open-minded proofreader.
- ➔ Follow the instructions.

QUESTIONS???

