



AmeriCorps

Hawai`i

Request for Grant Applications

AmeriCorps State Planning Grant

Federal Fiscal Year 2026 – 2027

Release Date:	February 6, 2026
Application Due Date:	March 2, 2026
Notice of Selection Date:	June 2026 (tentative)
Issue of Award Date:	August 2026 (tentative)

OVERVIEW

Commission Name:	Hawai'i Commission for National & Community Service
Federal Agency:	AmeriCorps
Federal Funding Opportunity:	FY2026 AmeriCorps State Formula Grants
Announcement Type:	Request for Grant Applications
Assistance Listing Number:	94.006

Hawai'i Commission for National & Community Service (HCNCS) is pleased to announce the 2026 - 2027 AmeriCorps State Planning Request for Grant Applications (RFGA). Grants of up to \$75,000 are awarded on a competitive bases to provide financial support to organizations that will develop an AmeriCorps program that will place AmeriCorps members who will directly serve only in Hawai'i. Planning grants help organizations become better prepared to compete for an AmeriCorps program grant in the subsequent grant cycle. Planning grants may not be used to support AmeriCorps members and cost associated with writing an AmeriCorps application may not be charged as direct costs to the grant. Planning grants are cost reimbursement grants. If awarded, HCNCS would provide specialized training and technical assistance.

Disclosure: Publication of this Request for Grant Applications (RFGA) does not obligate AmeriCorps State and National (ASN) or Hawai'i Commission for National & Community Service (HCNCS) to award any specific number of grants or to commit any amount of funding. The actual amount, timing, and process of grant funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

Any award made under this Notice may be terminated by the agency if it no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities.

Program Authority: Awards under this Notice are authorized by the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, (NCSA) (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.).

Who We Are: Hawai'i Commission for National & Community Services

The Hawai'i Commission for National and Community Service (HCNCS), also known as AmeriCorps Hawai'i, is the State of Hawai'i's designated commission to award and administer AmeriCorps State and National funds throughout the state.

Guided by Hawai'i's values and the AmeriCorps focus areas, the Commission supports high-quality service programs that address critical community needs and expand opportunities for individuals and organizations across the state.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps brings people together to tackle some of the country's most pressing challenges through national service and volunteerism. AmeriCorps members serve with organizations dedicated to the improvement of communities and those serving.

FUNDING

Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations that engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions to strengthen communities. An AmeriCorps member is a person who does community service through AmeriCorps. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits. After successful completion of their service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award they can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

AmeriCorps Funding Priorities

Faith-Based:

- Organizations that are faith-based.

Serve Communities:

- **Serve communities with concentrated poverty**, rural communities, and tribal communities.
- Implement programs for or **expand access to high-quality youth mental health and substance use recovery services** and prepare AmeriCorps members to enter behavioral health careers. These may include individuals who have experienced substance use and mental health challenges.
- **Focus on improving quality of life for veterans, active-duty members of the Armed Forces, and their families** through models that provide effective interventions or services or that are designed to recruit veterans, military spouses, and their older children into national service, e.g., veterans serving in mentorship roles.
- **Focus on public safety, crime prevention, and/or partnerships between law enforcement and the community.**
- **Focus on expanding outdoor recreation opportunities for future generations** by maintaining public lands; supporting wildland fire mitigation and sustainable forest management; and providing reforestation services.
- **Create workforce pathways for AmeriCorps members**, including deliberate training, such as pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities, certifications, and hiring preferences or support;
- **Focus on strengthening families**, e.g., activities that aim to support low-income parents through parenting education, responsible parenting and healthy relationship skills.

AmeriCorps Hawai'i Funding Priorities

In addition to the AmeriCorps Funding Priorities, AmeriCorps Hawai'i will also consider these priorities:

- **Support with Maui recovery efforts** post 2023 fire that provide immediate short-term needs as well as long-term paths to thriving communities.
- Support the protection, restoration, and sustainable management of local resources.

Benefit AmeriCorps Members:

- **Enhanced member experience** by providing opportunities for skill attainment, personal growth and connection to the community they are serving in support of a lifetime of civic participation.
- Enhance and expand services to formerly incarcerated and at-risk youth and/or engage those youth as AmeriCorps members.

Use Evidence:

- Utilize reports from the [AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange](#) on programs assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence to scale, replicate, or adapt the intervention.

To receive priority consideration, applicants must show the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes. Priority consideration does not guarantee funding.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

2026-2027 AmeriCorps Hawai'i Planning Grant Dates and Deadlines:

March 2nd, 2026: Applications and Budget due to AmeriCorps Hawai'i

June 2026: Notice of Selection (tentative)

August 2026: Issue of Awards (tentative) September

2026: Planning Grant Period Begins August 31st

2027: Planning Grant Period Ends

Applicant Information

Name of Organization:

Organization Address:

Employer ID Number/TAX ID:

DUNS Number:

SAM Registered (yes or no):

Name & Title of Primary Grant Contact: Phone:

Email:

Name & Title of Fiscal Grant Contact: Phone:

Email:

Application and Submission Instructions:

This is a working template designed to assist you in the input of the grant proposal into eGrants, the AmeriCorps Grants Management Portal. If an applicant passes the initial review process, instructions for entering into eGrants will be provided.

<https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp>

Please use this word processing document to apply for AmeriCorps Hawai'i Planning Grant funding for program year 2026-2027. Applicants will establish the following three main categories of a proposal:

- I. Program Design: Rational and Approach,
- II. Organizational Capacity

III. Project Budget

Instructions are provided above each review category. Response may be extended to allow for additional text to be entered; however, applicants are not to exceed the character limit listed.

*In order to streamline the application process, some narrative sections have been pre-populated. These sections require only that the applicants provide organization-specific information.

I. Program Design: Rational and Approach

A. Problem/Need Statement:

This section should clearly explain your proposed planning grant.

- Describe the need you plan to address with your AmeriCorps program and provide information about the extent/severity of the need in the community(ies) where your organization will focus its efforts. Cite specific relevant data.
- Describe why you are applying for a planning grant, why a planning grant is needed to address the previously described need, and what you hope to achieve during the one-year planning period.

(6,500 character limit, with spaces)

B. AmeriCorps Members as an Effective Tool

Organizations that will host an AmeriCorps Program recruit individuals both locally and nationally to serve as AmeriCorps Members. AmeriCorps Members agree to serve between 300 and 1700 hours with the program and implement direct service interventions to address a community need.

Examples of direct service functions include, but are not limited to: tutoring, mentoring, recruiting volunteers, assisting clients with financial stability services, building/ repairing homes, restoring parks/wilderness areas, facilitating after school programming, assisting in career readiness/job placement services, assisting individuals to transition to stable housing.

AmeriCorps programs are able to offer their members a living allowance to help cover basic expenses during the members' term of service. Members serving in a 1700hr term are required to receive a minimum Living Allowance of \$20,400 (subject to change annually) that is funded under the AmeriCorps grant award. Prorated living allowances are also typically provided by the grant to members serving in a part-time capacity. 1700hr members are also eligible to receive grant-supported healthcare coverage and child care assistance.

The average AmeriCorps program hosts between 8 and 25 AmeriCorps members who are either directly managed by the organization or are placed at service sites where the members are supervised by staff of partner agencies.

Applicants are to describe what their currently imagined AmeriCorps program plans

to achieve once operational. While the planning grant will help to determine specific of the program, applicants should include as much information as possible about the potential AmeriCorps programs as they currently imagine it.

- Describe why your organization believes that AmeriCorps Members could potentially be an effective tool for addressing the community need that is described in section A.
- Describe where you expect AmeriCorps members to serve, as well as how AmeriCorps members would be supervised.
- Describe the activities in which you propose to engage AmeriCorps members and how those activities will connect to the identified community need(s).
- Provide an estimate of how many AmeriCorps members your program would support and whether they would serve a full time or part time basis.
- Explain how AmeriCorps members are highly effective mean to solve this community problem.
- Explain how AmeriCorps members will be addressing unmet need and will not be duplicating or displace any current staff, volunteers or other service.

(6,500 character limit, with spaces.)

C. Planning Grant Approach and Timeline

The planning process with a timeline and benchmarks have been pre-entered below. Applicants may add additional activities such as conducting needs assessments, facilitating additional feedback sessions, etc.; however, the applicants should highlight any additional activities in **yellow**.

The AmeriCorps planning grant will provide resources and guidance to design a high-quality AmeriCorps program to serve the target communities selected by the organization. During the one-year grant period, the organization will identify critical issues affecting the target communities; develop a plan to deliver solutions; establish effective partnerships; and develop data collection systems that will be used for reporting, learning, and continuous improvement. The process will begin with research and training; with time dedicated to becoming familiar with AmeriCorps grant provisions, regulations, and resources available for new grantees.

Throughout the planning process, the organization will work closely with AmeriCorps Hawai'i Staff or commission assigned consultants to ensure that the training needs of the organization are being met and that the planning process is adequately implemented.

An advisory committee may also be created to include a variety of community stakeholders. The Advisory Committee will assist in crafting the overall program design by clarifying which community needs to address; identifying AmeriCorps members' service activities and sites; developing stakeholder roles, and outlining budget needs and sources of match funding.

Through the planning process, documentation of the community needs and plans for recruitment, training, and implementation will be used to structure a competitive AmeriCorps Program grant application that will be anticipated to be used submitted for the following funding opportunity” A competitive application will demonstrate the organization’s capacity to effectively manage an AmeriCorps program and will:

- Develop a strong performance measurement system that ensures collection of reliable data to exhibit the program's impact on the community being served.
- Create a process to select service sites;
- Design a recruitment strategy that aligns with the desired and required characteristics/skills for AmeriCorps members;
- Create policies, procedures, and forms to be used in anticipation of hosting an AmeriCorps program.
- Develop curriculum to be used in training members; and
- Create an effective orientation, training, and monitoring plan that includes applicable technical assistance.

The tentative timeline for the planning process follows and is not inclusive of all planning activities.

2026-2027 PLANNING GRANT TIMELINE

September 2026

- Read through the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Application Instructions, and Program Director’s Manual.
- Read the New Program Start-up Guide and the Guidance for Planning Grantees.
- Read the AmeriCorps Terms and Conditions.
- Attend Hawai’i State Commissions Two-day Program Directors Training (TBD virtual or in -person)
- Start to become familiar with the tools available through the National Resource Center.
- Have a one-on-one session with Staff/Commission Consultant – on Evidence.
- Begin meeting with an advisory committee of stakeholders to get input on the planning process.

October 2026

- Check in with the State Commissions Staff at least once a month.
- Attend 3-month ASC Planning Grant Training Series (Virtual)
- Begin contacting current AmeriCorps grantees to learn about their programs.
- Have a one-on-one session with Staff/Commission Consultant – on Theory of Change & Logic Model.
- Clarify the community needs to be addressed by the program through service activities of AmeriCorps members.
- Start to identify potential community partners and service

sites, or at least the criteria by which they will be selected.

- Consider the number of AmeriCorps members needed, and their profiles in terms of experience and skill sets.
- Outline a tentative operational program budget.
- Identify potential in-kind and cash donors.

November 2026

- Continue to have sessions with the Staff/Commission Consultant – on Performance Measures.
- Continue to attend ASC Planning Grant Training Series (Virtual)
- Check in with the State Commissions Staff at least once a month.
- Continue meeting with stakeholders for planning input.
- Define stakeholder roles for program implementation.
- Complete documentation of the community needs to be addressed by program.
- Determine staffing needs for the program.
- Develop member recruitment, selection, orientation, training, supervision, support and retention plans.
- Develop a "volunteer generation" plan, if volunteer participation is practicable. Develop a plan to enhance the capacity of community organizations through the AmeriCorps Program.
- If funds are available, attend the Pacific Regional National Service Conference

December 2026

- Continue to have sessions with the Staff/Commission Consultant – Data Collection Plan.
- Continue to attend ASC Planning Grant Training Series (Virtual)
- Have two more check-in calls with Commission Support Staff.
- Secure cash and in-kind donations.
- Develop plans for organizational capacity, service site training plans, monitoring and oversight plans, and program evaluation.
- Make significant progress towards identifying program operating sites and partner service sites where members will serve, taking care to create a process for selecting these sites that will ensure that the most appropriate and capable organizations are selected.
- Develop plans to demonstrate cost-effectiveness.
- Develop a performance measurement system to ensure that reliable data is gathered to demonstrate impact on communities to be served.

January 2027

- Continue to have sessions with the Staff/Commission Consultant – Data Collection Tools.
- Have at least two more check-in calls with the Commission Support Staff.

- Develop an updated operational grant program budget.
- Complete a community needs statement and the documentation of needs.
- Determine member activities and roles and how they align with unmet community needs.
- Complete the member recruitment, training and support plan.
- Complete a plan detailing how and where diverse resources will be obtained to assure program sustainability.

February 2027

- Continue to have sessions with the Staff/Commission Consultant – Evaluation.
- Have at least two more check-in calls with the Commissioner Support Staff.
- Finalize operational and service site selections.
- Complete a service site training plan.
- Finalize all program plans.
- Make significant progress in securing matching funds required by the operational program.
- Ensure that the program will have the ability to secure computer and other communications and information technology support, if and as needed.
- Complete at least one draft of the program grant application.

March 2027

- Complete session with the Staff/Commission Consultant – Evaluation.
- Receive feedback on the draft grant application from stakeholders.
- Complete at least one revised draft of the program grant application.
- Have at least two more check-in calls with the Commission Support Staff.
- Begin to input the grant application into eGrants for the next round of funding (<http://www.eGrants.cns.gov>).

April 2027

- Finalize grant application, complete its input into eGrants, and submit prior to the State Commission deadline.
- Begin working on forms and templates to support program implementation (e.g., member contract, member timesheets, eligibility form, memo of agreement with service sites, etc.).
- Begin working to prepare all support systems for program implementation (payroll, financial management, time tracking, monitoring and oversight tools, program evaluation tools, etc.)
- Begin working on an AmeriCorps policies and procedures manual
- Develop detailed member orientation and training curricula.

May 2027

- Participate in the hiring process as to persons to work on program/operational grant.

- Continue to pursue unfinished tasks, as practicable.

June 2027

- If applicable, attend the National Conference on Volunteering and Service.

July 2027

- Complete Grant close-out.
- If applicable, begin the member recruitment process.

II. Organizational Capacity:

A. Organization Capacity

Describe your organization's ability to successfully plan an AmeriCorps program.

- Describe how the organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure necessary to plan and implement the proposed project.
- Describe the organization's prior experience administering private, local, state, and/or federal funds.
- Describe the organization's financial management structure and what financial systems are used to manage funds. If the organization has already identified a potential applicant for the Grant Coordinator position, please include the individual's name and qualifications as part of this section.

(6,500-character limit, with spaces.)

B. Resource and Development

Please discuss the organization's experience in securing outside financial and in-kind contributions. What resources could potentially be utilized/secured to assist the organization in supporting a full AmeriCorps program in FY27-28?

(3,000-character limit, with spaces)

III. Project Budget:

A planning grant budget instructions and template has been provided. See attached documents.

- Maximum request of \$75,000.
- NO member- affiliated costs
- Match is required. Project budget must indicate a minimum grantee match amount of 24% of the total cost of facilitating the planning grant process.
 - Grantee match can come from cash and/or in-kind sources
 - Must be documented. Except under special permission, may not come from Federal sources.

****AmeriCorps Hawai'i is not obligated to fund grant proposals in their entirety and reserves the right to request applicants to make revisions to any portion of their organization's proposal.**