AmeriCorps Grant Writing Workshop
Part 2 of 4
Communicating Your AmeriCorps Program Design

SW SERVE WASHINGTON | AmeriCorps Washington

Introductions

1. Name
2. Organization
3. Main Focus of Your AmeriCorps program or Work
   - AmeriCorps Focus Areas; or
   - Overall Mission Focus

Agenda

1. AmeriCorps 101
2. AmeriCorps Program Design Elements
3. Other AmeriCorps Program Design Elements
4. Things you Need to Know
5. Wrap Up

Understanding AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps Guiding Principles

Get Things Done
Focused Impact and Activities
Evidence-Informed

Member Experience
Member Development
Encouraging Responsibility
Expanding Opportunity

Strengthen Communities
Volunteer Integration
National Days of Service
Inclusion and Diversity
Bringing people together

Brand and Corps Identification
Integrating the A
Understanding the Larger Identity
Building the Corps

AmeriCorps Guiding Principles

Compelling community problem

Program based in evidence of success and capacity to show impact

Get Things Done

Focused Activities that address the problem

Demonstrate impact & evidence of success

AmeriCorps Guiding Principles

Compelling Community Problem

- Demonstrate there is a need in your community or communities.
  - Do you have data you can share to show the readers of your grant that there is a problem?
  - Is it compelling?

AmeriCorps Guiding Principles

Well Thought Out Activities that address the problem

- Strong plan on how you are going to use AmeriCorps members.
  - Activities and Dosage
  - Hours/Member Slot Types
  - Service Term (3 months, 10 months, 11 months, etc.)
  - Sites
  - Target Population
- Activities you propose for members have some likelihood of working.

AmeriCorps Guiding Principles

Demonstrate impact & evidence of success

Minimum Expectations:
- Strong Program Design/Logic Model
- Able to report on and document success:
  - Performance measures - Output and Outcome
- **Over Time - Lay a Strong Foundation of Evidence Programming**

Questions to Consider

Getting at the why:

▶ What are currently doing that we are not reaching the scale, scope, and reach of what we want to do?

▶ What are the problems, areas or gaps that we are not meeting?

▶ If we could wave our magic wand, what would we want to do with these AmeriCorps members within an AmeriCorps program?

Questions to Consider

This leads to:

- What activities do we want members to do? Are any of these activities potentially unallowable or prohibited?

- Where would members serve?

- Are all members doing the same thing – yes or no?

  - If no, how many buckets of activities are you considering? Of those buckets, is each member doing all of them or are groups of members assigned to a particular bucket?

- How many members are you thinking about?

- When are they serving? Days, hours per day or week, length of service term – does all of this align with the places or spaces where members will serve?

- Based on this information, what type of member makes the most sense?

Member Slot Types

1 Slot

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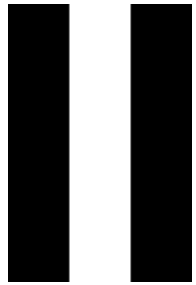
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AmeriCorps
Member

Service Term	Min. Hours
Full-Time	1,700
Three Quarter-Time	1,200
Half-Time	900
Reduced Half-Time	675
Quarter-Time	450
Minimum-Time	300
Abbreviated-Time	100

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA
	August		September		October		November		December		January		February		March		April		May		June		July		August	
	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT	FT	TQT
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Holiday
Weekend
Non-Existent Date
Training

The AmeriCorps Program Design Elements

Grants

AmeriCorps Narrative

Narrative – no more than 11 pages (including face sheet)*

- Executive Summary – required format
- **Program Design**
- Organizational Capability
- Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
- Evaluation Plan

Application Narrative

B. Program Design
1. Community Need and Stakeholder Engagement
2. Evidence Quality
3. Member Experience
4. Member Supervision

Please note: with each notice of funding…the sections and criteria can change. What is used here is only for the purpose of providing examples and is based on the current Washington State Formula RGA.

Community Need and Stakeholder Engagement Section

❑ 2 pieces that are reviewed for the full points

1. Narrative for this section; and
2. Logic Model Document

Main elements that tell your AmeriStory – Your Program Design

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Community Need and Stakeholder Engagement

❑ Narrative includes:

   ❑ What is the problem or problems?

      ❑ detailed summary of the community(ies) problem;

      ❑ Use data that is current and local.

   ❑ What makes your program unique?

   ❑ Describe the methods you've used successfully to engage within the communities being served.

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Problem	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	Outcomes		
				Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
Community problem that the program activities are designed to address	What we invest	What we do	Direct products from program activities	Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, opinions	Changes in behavior or action that result from participants' new knowledge	Meaningful changes, often in their condition or status in life
			Visual Representation 8 Pages Details are important!			

Logic Model - Opportunities

- Get Things Done – ISSUE AREA
- Member Experience - MEMBERS

Problem	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		
				Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term

Problem	Inputs What we invest (including # and type of AmeriCorps Slots)	Activities/ Interventions What We Do	Outputs Direct products from program activities	Short Term Outcomes Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes and opinions	Mid Term Outcomes Changes in behavior or action that result from participants' new knowledge	Long Term Outcomes Meaningful changes, often in their condition or status in life
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Logic Model - Problems

- ❑ What is showing up as an issue that makes you think something needs to be done?
- ❑ What is happening in your community/communities that merits attention?
- ❑ How do you know? What evidence/data do you have? Is the evidence/data current?

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Logic Model - Activities

Get Things Done Side:

❑ What specifically will members do to address the problem?

❑ As you think about their day, what are they doing?

Member Side:

❑ What specifically will you do to support the member outcomes you are hoping to achieve?

Where possible, do they list the details of the activities:

- Dosage or Intensity - i.e. number of hours per session;
- Frequency - i.e. 1 time a week;
- Length – i.e. total number of weeks or sessions;
- Target Population.

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Logic Model - Outputs

Outputs →

- Counts
- Number of people served
- Services delivered
- Projects completed
- **Need to include the performance measure up top**

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Logic Model - Outcomes

IMPACT

Short-Term → Changes in knowledge, skills and/or attitudes

Medium-Term → Changes in behavior or actions

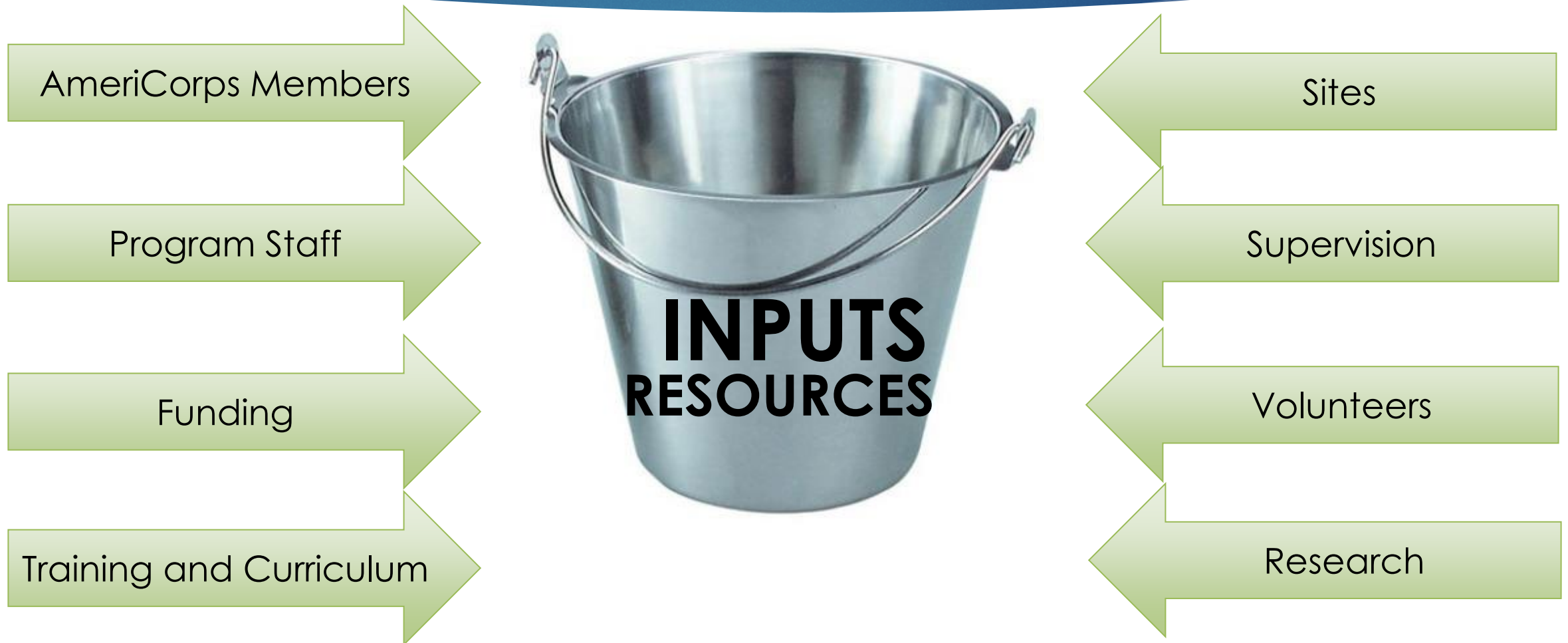Long-Term → Changes in condition or status in life

Need to include the performance measure up top

Environmental Programs:

Think of categories in terms of time

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Logic Model - Inputs

AmeriCorps Members

Program Staff

Funding

Training and Curriculum

INPUTS RESOURCES

Sites

Supervision

Volunteers

Research

Logic Model - Inputs

AmeriCorps Members →

← Sites

INPUTS RESOURCES

- Characteristics of AmeriCorps members, including specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required to implement the intervention

- Context in which the intervention is delivered i.e. the setting

Questions to Consider

▶ What partners do I need to engage with that could serve as sites and stakeholders in my very important program?

▶ What will it take to support the AmeriCorps program I am considering?

  ▶ Staff

  ▶ Supervision

  ▶ Recruitment

  ▶ Retention

  ▶ Training

  ▶ Data Collection and Reporting

  ▶ Fiscal and Grants Management

Problem	Inputs What we invest (including # and type of AmeriCorps Slots)	Activities/ Interventions What We Do	Outputs Direct products from program activities	Short Term Outcomes Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes and opinions	Mid Term Outcomes Changes in behavior or action that result from participants' new knowledge	Long Term Outcomes Meaningful changes, often in their condition or status in life
In the 4 elementary schools we will target, more than 60% of K-2nd grade students score below expected levels on critical early reading skills. Across the state, 73% of students in grades 3rd through 6th score proficient and above on school reading assessments. In the 4 targeted elementary schools, the percentages of students in grades 3rd through 6th that score proficient and above are as follows: 45%; 52%; 63%; and 58%. The poverty data is high for the targeted schools. The state average for students on free and reduced lunch is 65%. For our four targeted schools, the percentages on free and reduced lunch are as follows: 95%, 83%, 91%, and 78%. Students who do not show reading proficiency by third grade are four times more likely to not graduate high school. Remediating reading difficulties after third grade requires intensive and expensive interventions and research shows it takes four time longer to remediate a student's poor reading skills in 4th grade and beyond. Additionally, the school district we serve has a high teacher turnover rate, with 65% of teachers leaving within the first	30 Three Quarter Time AmeriCorps Member 4 Elementary schools located in the Rockdale school district: 1) Donner Elementary; 2) Dasher Elementary; 3) Dixon Elementary; and Blitzen Elementary Staff: 1 Full Time Program Director; 2 Full time Program Coordinators Site Supervisors: Reading Specialist at each school will provide direct supervision to members and assist with identifying targeted students and scheduling interventions. Evidence Based literacy curriculum Data System to log interventions, weekly and ongoing assessments, and other data collection strategies. Year Long Member training that focuses on literacy interventions, poverty, school equity, youth development, and more. Teacher Certification Track that members can access to be fully certified by the end of their service term.	LITERACY INTERVENTIONS: Members will be assigned a core focus group of students, K-3, for which they will provide: one-on-one interventions, 20 minutes each time, 3 days a week. grade specific small groups (no more than 3 per group) to engage in shared reading activities 2 times per week for 30 minutes each time On average, members will maintain a caseload of 15 students. These target students will have been identified as having reading achievement gaps (Tier 2), but are not referred to special education or other services (Tier 3). Other Activities include: Monitor student progress weekly; Assess students more intensely 4 times per year; Develop and implement 2 literacy focused events that engage volunteers in working with targeted students (i.e. on Dr. Seuss Day); Recruit volunteers to read to kids MEMBER EXPERIENCE: Provide orientation and ongoing training to support members in being strong literacy tutors and education advocates Make available a fast track teacher certification process	LITERACY INTERVENTIONS: **ED1A – 450 students served (K-3 Tier 2 students in 4 elementary schools)** Number of literacy events implemented Number of volunteers recruited MEMBER EXPERIENCE: Number of members who successfully complete their year of service Number of members who complete teacher certification	LITERACY INTERVENTIONS: **ED5 – 360 students with improved academic performance (through school issued MAP assessments)** Students demonstrate increased scores on Fountas and Pinnell reading assessments. Students demonstrate they can read more words per minute. Increased interest in school. Increased interest in reading. Improved report cards. MEMBER EXPERIENCE: Increase awareness of education and poverty challenges that exist in the community served Members indicate they believe they have the power and influence to help address the education and literacy challenges we face.	LITERACY INTERVENTIONS: Students report they read daily for pleasure Students report they read with family members at least 3 times a week Improvements in classroom behavior Improvements in classroom participation. MEMBER EXPERIENCE: : Members develop an idea they could implement or share with others to address an education issue. Members work in education field or enter further schooling with an education focus post AmeriCorps service	LITERACY INTERVENTIONS: Increase in students who are at or above reading level in 3rd grade. Increase in students who are at or above reading level in 4th and 5th grade. Increase in students who are at or above reading level in 6th grade and beyond. Students graduate high school. MEMBER EXPERIENCE: Members continue to work in the education field 3 years after their year of service. Members say their AmeriCorps experience increased their involvement in community and/or civic life afterwards

Scoring

Narrative

▶ Based on the criteria and what was requested in each section

Logic Model

▶ Based on the criteria and what was requested in each section

▶ Does it read well left to right and right to left

▶ Is it plausible, reasonable

▶ Does it convey a strong theory of change

Does each item provide the required and requested detail?

Are there any red flags?

Are there any items that require clarification?

Would you recommend this program for funding based on what was provided?

Other AmeriCorps Program Design Elements

Program Development and Evidence

❑ Describe your program and its impact on the proposed community being served

❑ Describe how program design is evidence-based or evidence-informed

Evidence can come from many sources:
- Your own data;
- Other people's data;
- Research in the field;
- Your own evaluation (outcome or impact);
- Other "like" organization's evaluations (outcome or impact)

Please note: with each notice of funding…the sections and criteria can change. What is used here is only for the purpose of providing examples and is based on the current Washington State Formula RGA.

Member Experience

❑ Describe a "week in the life" of an AmeriCorps member. What will members be doing day-to-day? What is the anticipated schedule for members? If your organization is offering more than one position, make sure to describe all positions.

❑ Please detail how AmeriCorps members will be provided an opportunity to be leaders and gain skills during their term of service that will be valued by future employers.

❑ Describe an AmeriCorps member recruitment plan and identify an applicant pool to recruit AmeriCorps members best suited to serve the community and deliver the proposed intervention.

❑ Detail how your program creates a supportive and safe environment for members and stakeholders.

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Member Supervision

- ❑ AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service (e.g., structure for member supervision: cadence and format of supervisor/AmeriCorps member check-ins, member and supervisor opportunities to assess strengths and opportunities for growth, member training plan, etc.).

- ❑ AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations (e.g., structure for support of supervisors, training plan for supervisors related to supervision and AmeriCorps rules and regulations, cadence and format of AmeriCorps supervisors/their supervisors check ins, opportunities to assess strengthens and opportunities for growth of supervisors, etc.).

- ❑ How will you create and maintain strong communication lines and oversight of the supervisors/host sites/partnered organizations too.

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Organizational Background and Staffing

- Describes the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing, and providing oversight of the program.

What staff support will our program require to support my AmeriCorps program?

- Human Resources

- Member Management
Site Management

- Data Management

- Fiscal and Grants Management

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Application Narrative

C. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

- ☐ Recruitment
- ☐ Retention
- ☐ Data Collection

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Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

1. **Member Recruitment**
   - ***The following criteria must be addressed in the narrative:***
     - The applicant provides a description of budget expenses to support successful recruitment of AmeriCorps members best suited to serve the community,

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

2. **Member Retention**
   - ***The following criteria must be addressed in the narrative:***
     - The applicant provides a description of budget expenses to support retention of AmeriCorps members

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

3. **Data Collection**
   - ***The following criteria must be addressed in the narrative:***
     - The applicant provides a description of budget expenses to support data collection, continuous improvement activities, and evaluation in service to evaluating the interventions and impact on the community and the member experience.

What are some overall things I need to know?

Communicating My AmeriStory

➤ Program Design/Theory of Change:
  ➤ 2 pieces that are reviewed for the full points
    ➤ First section of the Narrative; and
    ➤ Logic Model Document

Member Activities

Allowable Activities

Activities that are consistent with the approved **grant narrative, logic model, performance measurements,** program documents, **budget**, and larger national priorities.

Training Opportunities

- AmeriCorps Technical Assistance Webinars:
    - https://www.americorps.gov/partner/funding-opportunities
- Serve Washington Technical Assistance Webinars
- On3Learn Courses - https://on3learn.digitalchalk.com
    - On3Learn Applicant Courses
        - Is Our Organization a Fit?
        - Understanding the Application and Narrative
        - Logic Model
        - Performance Measures
        - Budget
    - On3Learn Staff Courses
        - Logic Model
        - Performance Measures
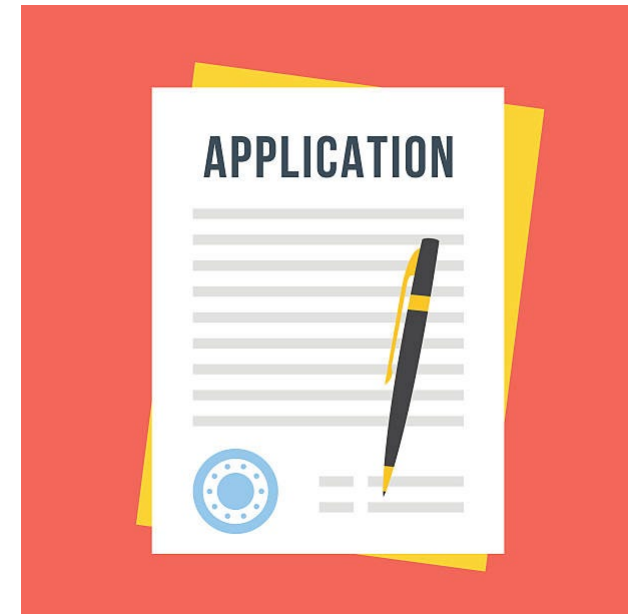
Training Series Calendar

Monthly Call	Pre-Work
Wednesday, 2/5 – 11 am PT	AmeriCorps Grants and Budget Development 101
Wednesday, 2/19 – 11 am PT	Communicating Your Program Design (Narrative, Logic Model/Theory of Change)
Wednesday, 3/5 – 11 am PT	Performance Measures and Evaluation
Wednesday, 3/19 – 11 am PT	Budget Nuts and Bolts

Questions