AmeriCorps Washington

FFY24 State Competitive Grants NEW/RECOMPETE RFGA

September 20, 11:00am

Please sign-in via the chat box:

- Name(s)
- Organization/Program
- City/County

Welcome

- House Keeping Items
  - **Please Sign-in!** Name, organization, county in the chat box
  - Call is intended for NEW and RECOMPETE applicants
  - Silence phones, use webinar features, closed caption available
  - Recording

- Agenda
  - Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding
  - Eligibility
  - Process and Timeline
  - RFGA/NOFO Key Highlights
  - PHA Specifics
  - Helpful Tips and Tricks
  - Q & A

National Service in WA

NATIONAL SERVICE IN
WASHINGTON

700
local service sites

5,300
AmeriCorps Seniors and
AmeriCorps members

$35.2
million AmeriCorps
and local funding

$180.6
million AmeriCorps
scholarships earned
since 1994

AmeriCorps.gov/WashingtonState

SERVE WASHINGTON

AmeriCorps

https://americorps.gov/national-service-report/wa

AmeriCorps Funding

"...brings people together to tackle pressing challenges through national service...AmeriCorps helps make service a cornerstone of our national culture..."

Competitive Funding (fall competition)

- Larger programs (20+ MSYs)
- Meet National Priorities
- Single Focus Area (or well established multi effort)
- Moderate to Strong Evidence

Formula Funding available in the spring.

AmeriCorps Funding

Historic Focus Areas

- Disaster Services
- Economic Opportunity
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Healthy Futures
- Veterans and Military Families

AmeriCorps Funding

Priority Funding Areas

- Underrepresented/Underserved Communities
- Evidence-Based Interventions
- Veterans and Military Families, Caregivers, and Survivors
- Environmental Stewardship
- Workforce Pathways
- Enhance Member Experience
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Second Chance Youth
- Civic Bridge Building
- High Quality Early Learning

Use NOFO/Supplemental Guidance to see specifics in each area and then simply list in narrative section.

AmeriCorps Funding

Priority Funding Areas in WA

- Strategies driven by community
- Organizations that reflect those served
- AmeriCorps members that reflect those served
- AmeriCorps members with high school credentials or informal education
- Career pathway models
- Models that show commitment to DEIA
- Models that engage older adults, tribes, rural and other underrepresented communities

AmeriCorps Members

- Engage in Direct Service
  - Minimum 70% Direct Service
  - Maximum 20% Training
  - Maximum 10% Fundraising

- Do Not Duplicate or Displace
  - Service should not duplicate activities already in locality of program
  - Position can't supplant paid employees or volunteer positions

- Are Not Employees
  - "Participant" in national service position, perform service, serve, have a position description
  - Avoid terms such as "work," "job," or "job description"

Budget Tips

Cost-Reimbursement: (app instructions pg. 22)

- Fully explain the calculations used for each amount in the budget "narrative"
- Ensure the budget "narrative" mathematically adds up to the actual amount in the associated line item
  - Staff Travel to Meeting X = $1,186
  - Narrative = Airfare $650, Ground Transport $50, Lodging Two Nights $400, Per Diem Two Days $86 (all equals $1,186)
  - Registration Fees = Training (not travel)
- Itemize
  - Salary and Fringe Benefits categories are per person/role, not one lump item in each category
  - Don't be overly vague or general

Budget Tips

...cont. Cost-Reimbursement: (app instructions pg. 22)

- If you change a line item in section I or II, be sure to recalculate section III – admin/indirect rate

- Do you have a federally approved ICR? Use it!

- Don't forget Source of Funds section which is an explanation of funds used for grantee share – the two totals should match

- Be sure to include fingerprinting and background check costs

- Remember – 25% of the application score comes from budget adequacy and cost effectiveness

Budget Tips

Fixed-Amount: (app instructions pg. 33)

- New instructions to use "allowance rate" column
- Don't forget Source of Funds section which is an explanation of additional funds used – this total should match the total you under "other revenue" in the demographics section

*Checklist on pg. 36 applies to all budget types

Eligible Applicants

Applications

- Minimum 20 MSYs
- Begin No Earlier Than August 1, 2024 and No Later Than January 1, 2025
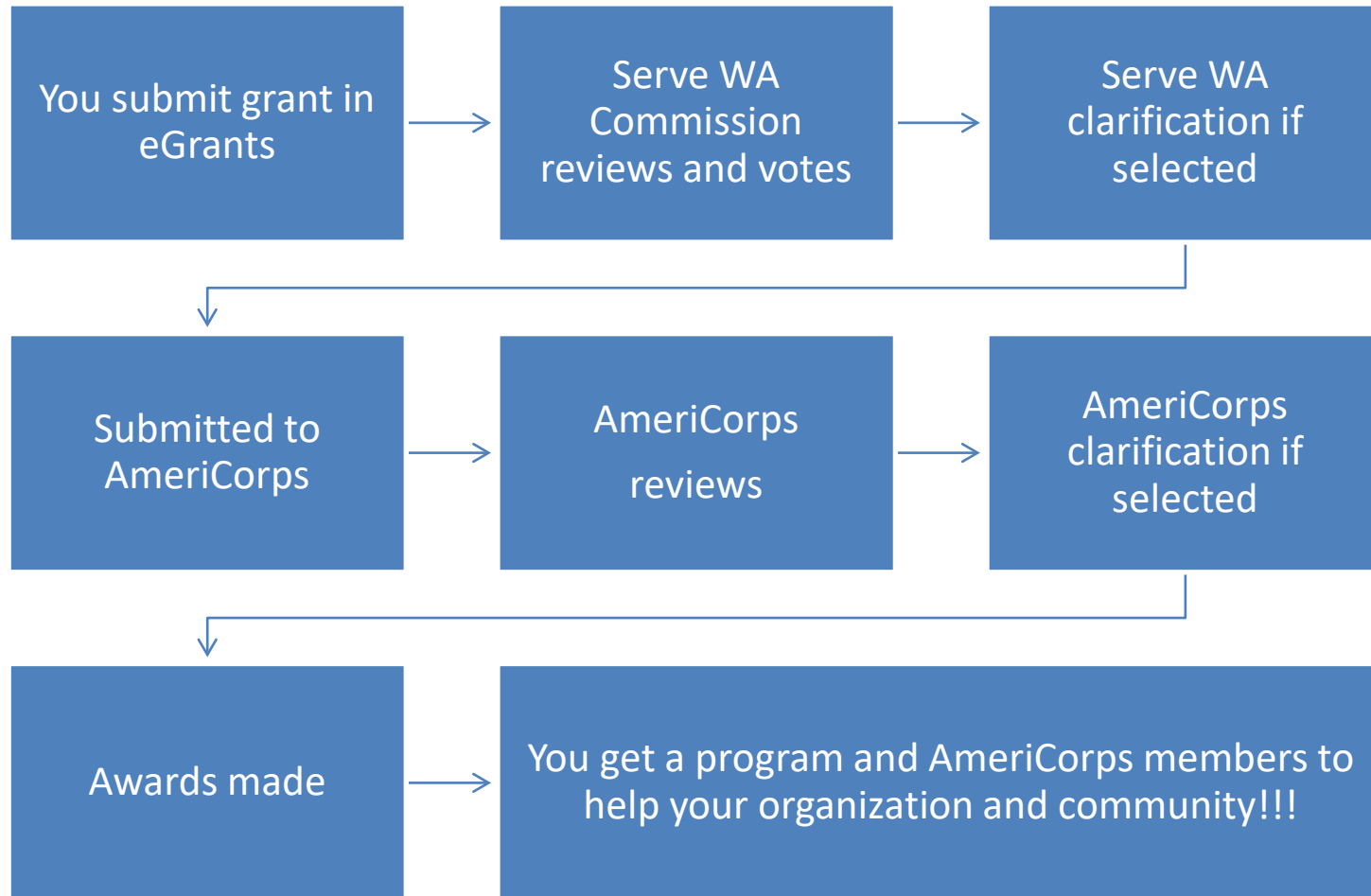
Eligible Entities

- Nonprofits
- Institutions of Higher Ed
- State and Local Governments
- Tribal Governments
  - Federally Recognized Tribes apply to AmeriCorps the Federal Agency
  - Non-Federal Tribes apply to Serve WA

Additionally

- UEI number, EIN, SAM registration

RFGA Process

You submit grant in eGrants → Serve WA Commission reviews and votes → Serve WA clarification if selected

Submitted to AmeriCorps → AmeriCorps reviews → AmeriCorps clarification if selected

Awards made → You get a program and AmeriCorps members to help your organization and community!!!

RFGA Timeline

Serve WA Request for Grant Applications Released	September 11, 2023
Serve WA Technical Assistance Call for Applicants	September 20, 2023
Completed Applications Due from Applicants	**October 6, 2023, 5:00pm**
Serve WA Staff Review for Compliance	October 9-10, 2023
Serve WA Grant Review Committee Application Review	October 11 - November 2, 2023
Serve WA Grant Review Committee Meeting **Note: Applicants must be available by phone on this day in the event the GRC needs additional information or clarification. Interviews will not be conducted.**	November 3, 2023
Serve WA Clarification/Revision Period for Some Applicants	Beginning On/Around November 7, 2023
Serve WA Commissioners Vote on Grant Review Committee Recommendation	December 7, 2023
Serve WA Notification to Applicants Regarding Vote	Week of December 11, 2023
Serve WA Clarification/Revision Period Continues for Selected Applicants	Notification – December 15, 2023
Serve WA Submits Applications to AmeriCorps (by)	**January 4, 2024, 2:00pm**
AmeriCorps Notifies Successful Applicants	mid-April 2024 – ASN July 2024 – PHA
AmeriCorps Clarification/Revision Period	TBD (after notification, before award)
AmeriCorps Issues Awards	mid-July 2024 – ASN September 2024 - PHA

Defining Terms

NOFO vs. RFGA	
NOFO: Released by AmeriCorps for National Directs and State Commissions apps	RFGA: Released by Serve Washington for Competitive and Formula apps

Competitive vs. Formula	
National Competition held every fall	State Competition held most springs

Cost-Reimbursement vs. Fixed Amount	
New applicants, line-time budget, match required and reported	Need permission, flat rate based on MSY, match not reported

New vs. Recompete vs. Continuation		
New – first time applicants	Recompete – reapplying for new 3-year grant	Continuation – entering year 2 or 3 of current cycle

Key Highlights

NOFO Items that **DO NOT** apply to Serve Washington applicants:

- Dates – instead, **follow the dates in the RFGA**
- **DO NOT** send additional documents to AmeriCorps – instead, **follow RFGA** and send to servewa@ofm.wa.gov

Key Highlights

NOFO Items that **DO** apply to Serve Washington applicants:

- Page Limits

- Narratives (changed)

- Cost Share (match)

- Maximum Cost per MSY $25,000

- FT Living Allowance $**18,700**-$37,400 (increase)

- Criminal History Checks

  - Approx. budget (in WA) - $68 per staff/member + out-of-state variable costs
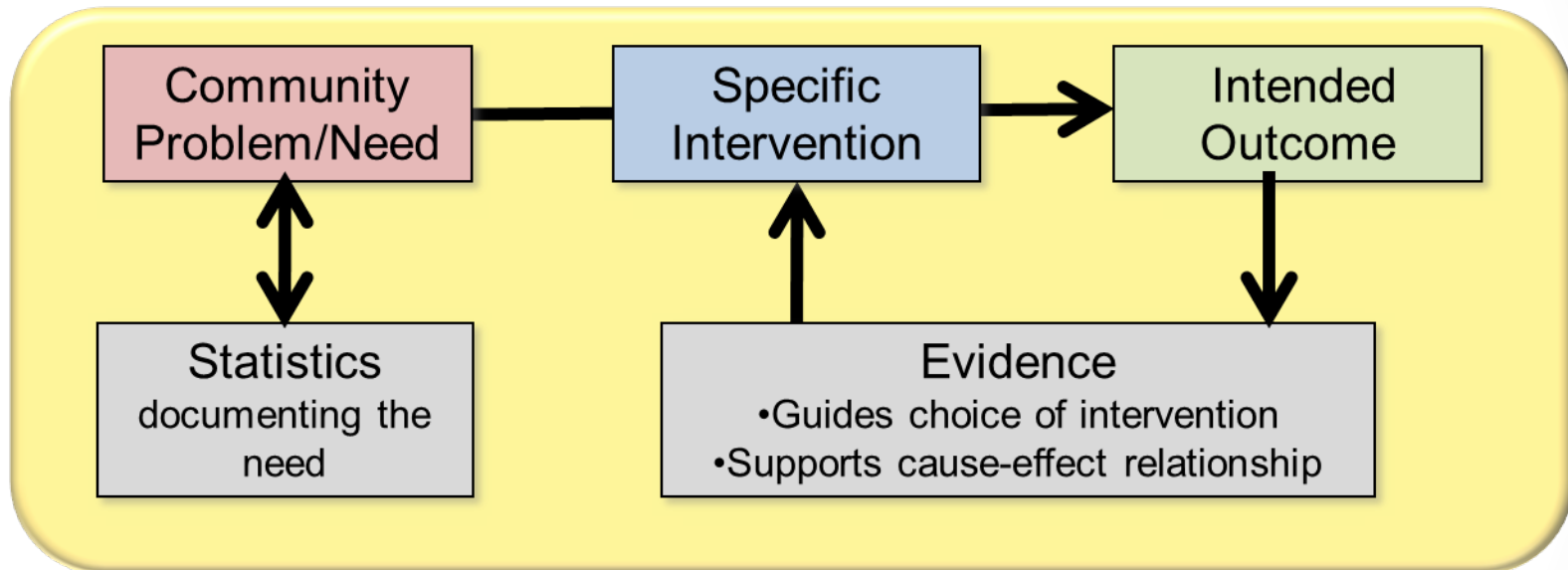
- Prohibited and Unallowable Activities

Key Highlights

Application "Weight"

- Executive Summary (0%)

- Program Design (50%)

- Organizational Capability (25%)

- Cost Effectiveness/Budget Adequacy (25%)

Program Design includes Community, Logic Model, Performance Measurement and Evidence...

Theory of Change

Community

Community Problem/Need

- The role current or historical inequities faced by underserved communities may play in contributing to the problem.
- The community need as it relates to the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index
- AND to communicate the severity and prevalence of the problem.

Searching for Statistics

EQUITY LENSE

SCOPE: Who and how many are directly affected? How severe is this?

SIGNIFICANCE: What makes this a compelling need? Is it likely to become worse? What will happen if we do nothing?

CAUSE(S): Why does the need exist? How is it perpetuated?

Caution: lengthy problem statements outlining multiple negative conditions when irrelevant.
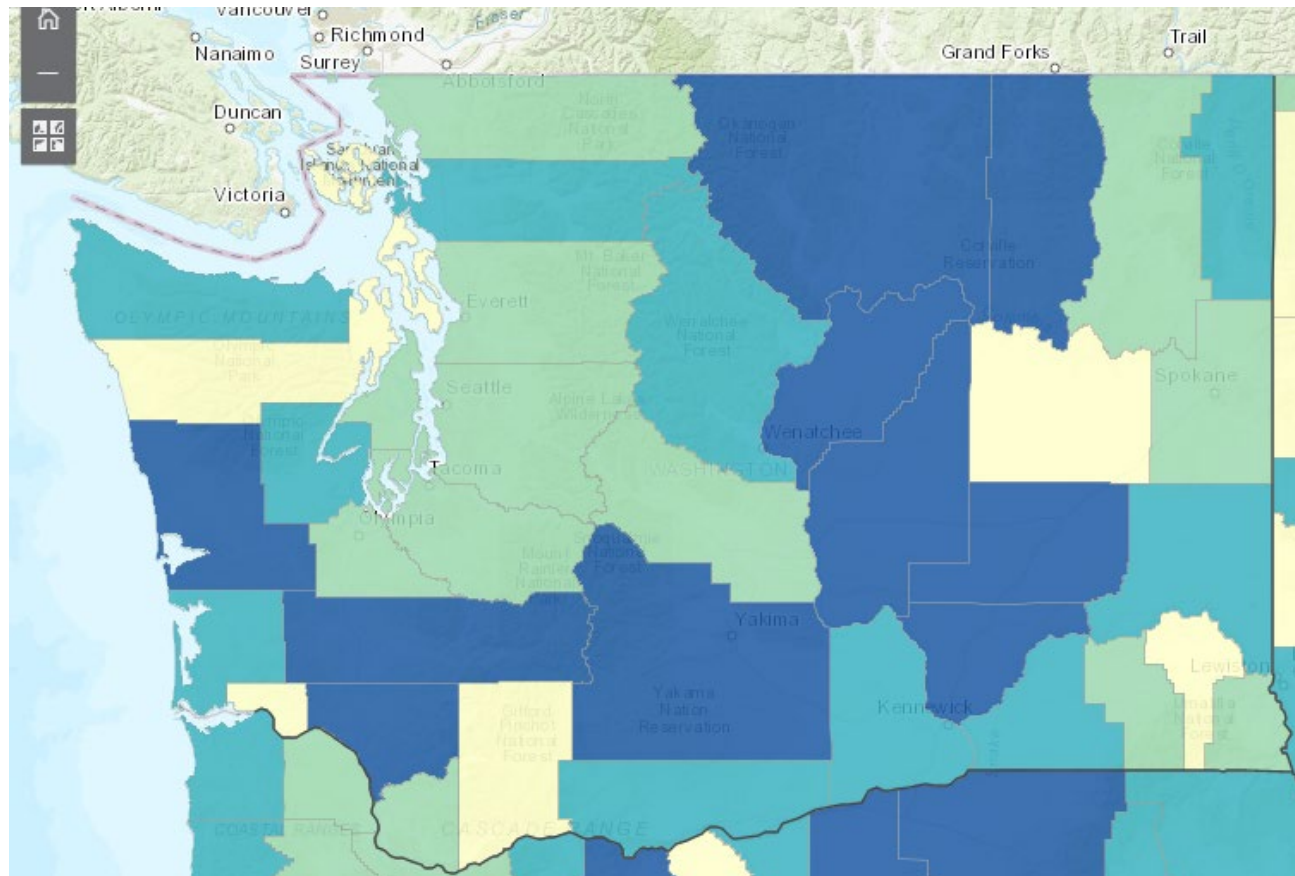
Searching for Statistics

RACIAL EQUITY LENSE

Language matters. "State data have consistently pointed to differences in access and outcomes experienced by people of color. ...Be explicit about racism and other forms of oppression as the underlying causes for the inequities that exist and show up in state data."
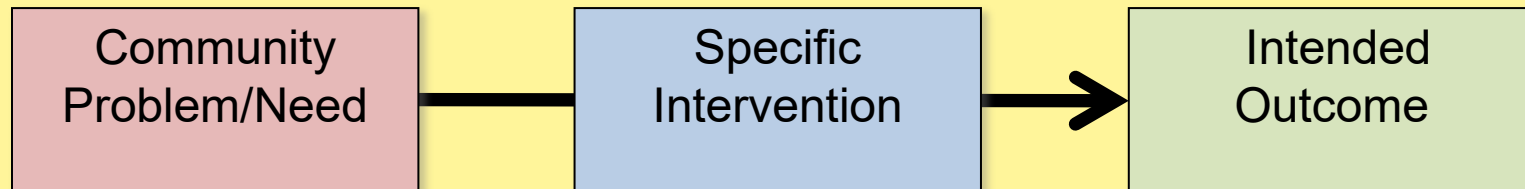
Relating Need to Social Vulnerability Index

Key Logic Model Components

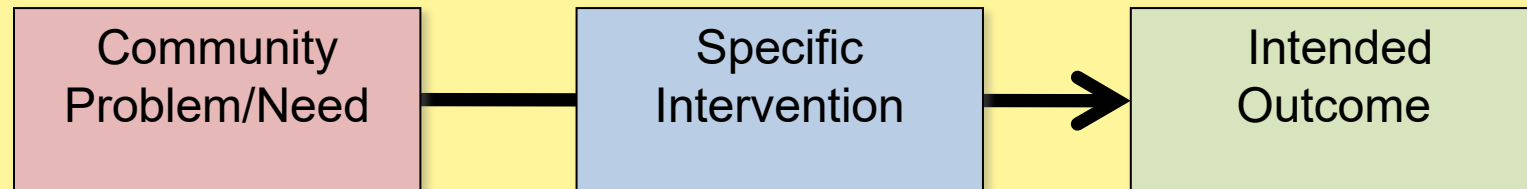| Community Problem/Need	→	Specific Intervention	→	Intended Outcome

Simply the change you hope to see.

Caution: outcomes that are difficult to measure or do not align with intervention and need.

Key Logic Model Components

Community Problem/Need	→	Specific Intervention	→	Intended Outcome

A set of activities that will produce the intended outcome.

Specific design and dosage; outline FREQUENCY, INTENSITY, and DURATION.
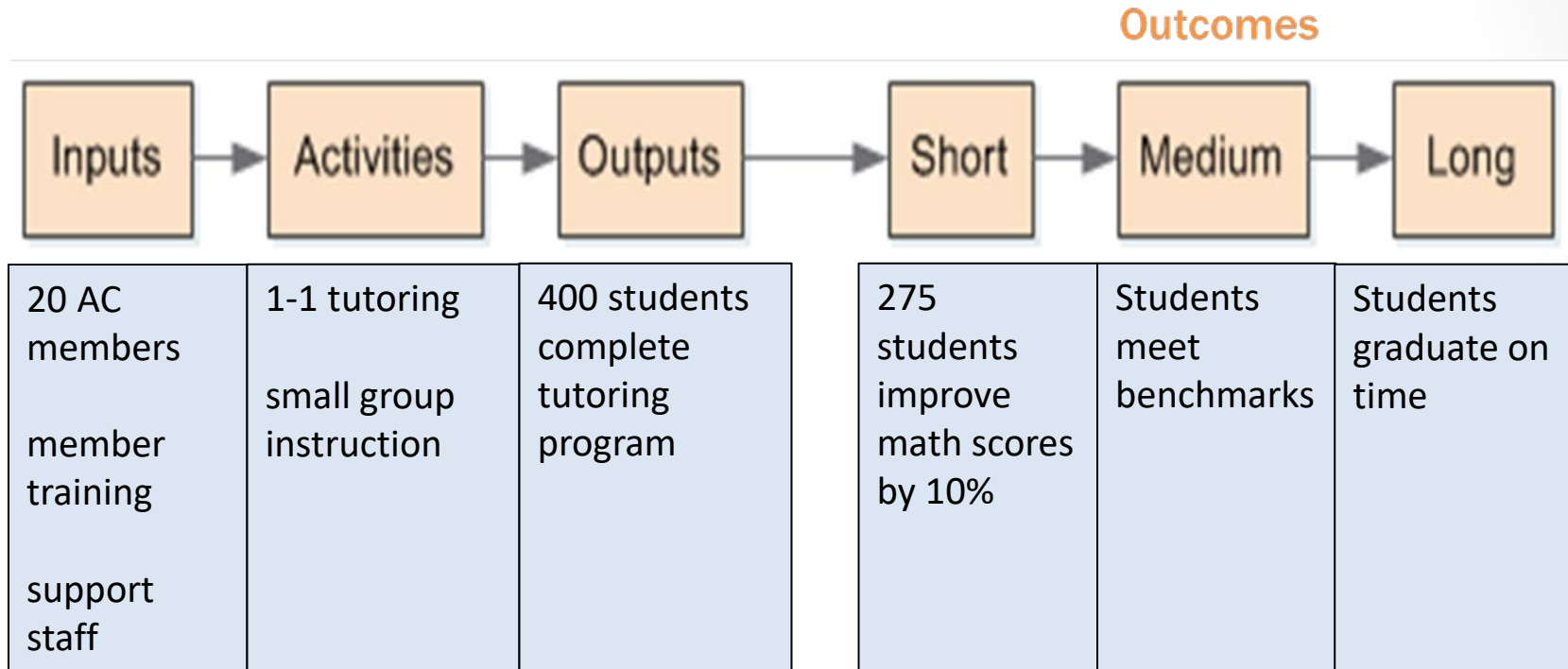
Who does what with whom? How often? How many times? How long?

Caution: interventions defined in general terms but without detail or support of evidence.
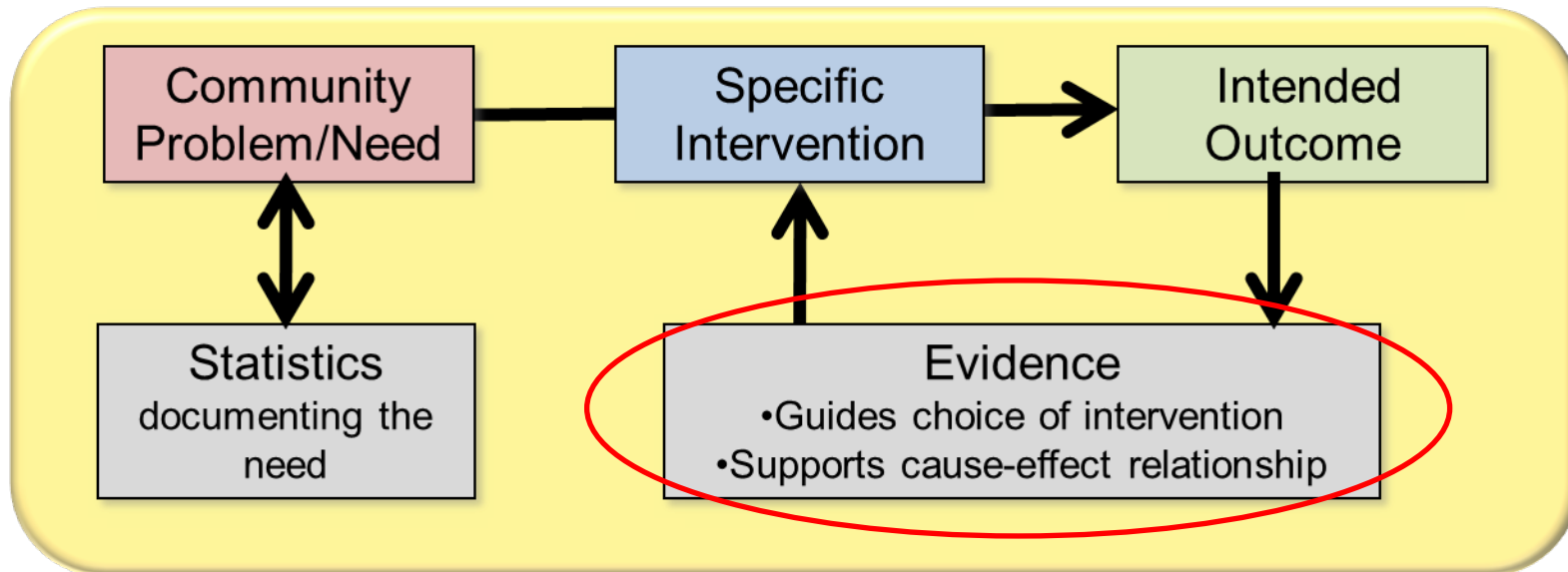
Logic Model

If…Then… ➡️

Outcomes

Inputs	Activities	Outputs		Short	Medium	Long
20 AC members member training support staff	1-1 tutoring small group instruction	400 students complete tutoring program		275 students improve math scores by 10%	Students meet benchmarks	Students graduate on time

⬅️ *…But…How*

Theory of Change

Evidence

Narrative Section

1) Fully summarize any study designs and key findings of any outcome or impact evaluations submitted

2) Describe any other evidence that supports the proposed program design (such as past performance data or other research findings)

3) If you submit evaluation reports for consideration, you must also describe in this section _how the intervention described in the submitted reports **is the same** as the intervention described in the application_

Evidence

Two Parts Scored

- Evidence Tier (use Supplemental Guidance)
  - Pre-Preliminary – cite performance data and describe evidence-informed program design
  - Preliminary – cite and describe evidence and able to submit two* evaluations
  - Moderate – cite and describe evidence and able to submit two* high-quality RCT or QED evaluations
  - Strong – cite and describe evidence and able to submit two* high-quality RCT or QED evaluations that have been tested at multiple sites

*recompete applicants required to submit an evaluation of their own program can submit in addition to this guidance (in some cases up to three evaluations submitted)

- Evidence Quality
  - Describe how the level of evidence supports the proposed program design
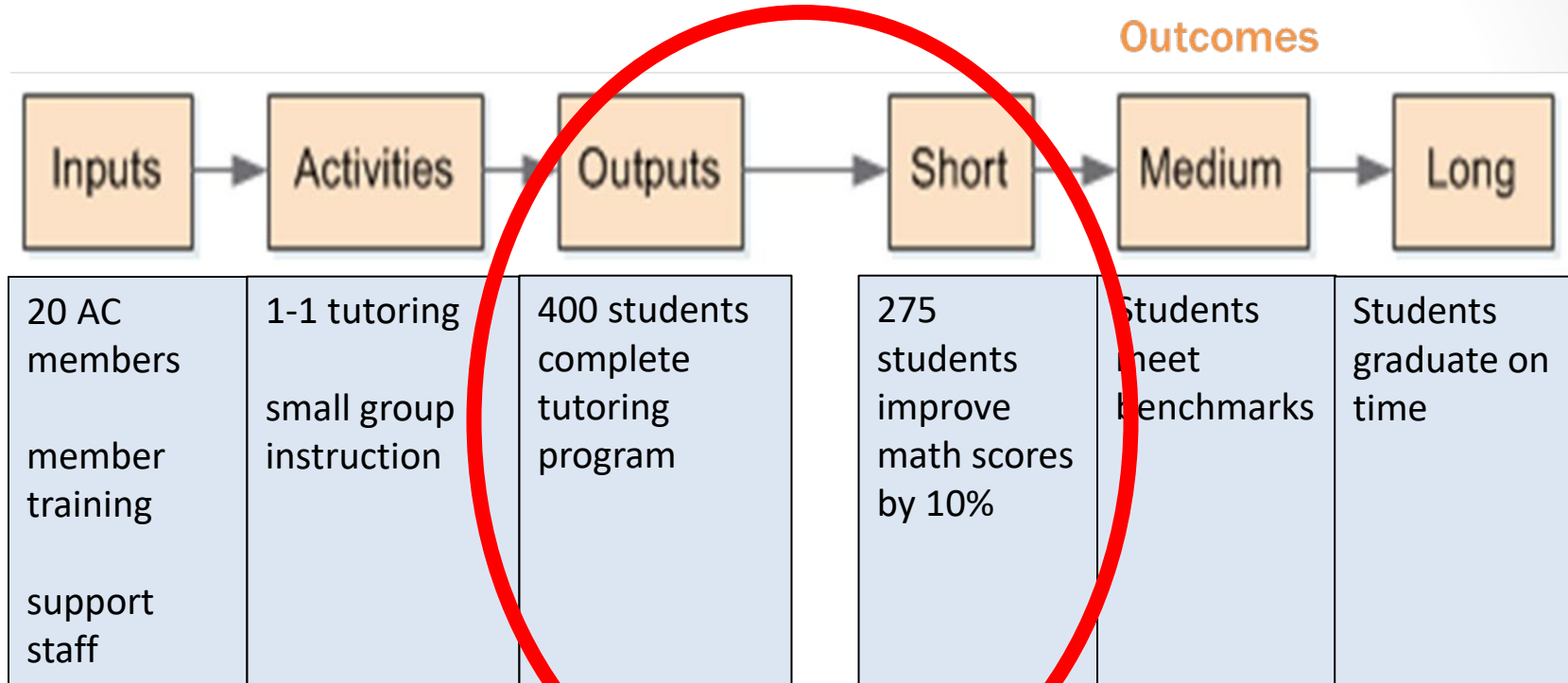
Performance Measurement

Each program must have at least one aligned measure (composed of an output and an outcome) reflecting its **primary intervention**.

Performance Measurement

If…Then… ➡️

Outcomes

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short	Medium	Long
20 AC members member training support staff	1-1 tutoring small group instruction	400 students complete tutoring program	275 students improve math scores by 10%	Students meet benchmarks	Students graduate on time

⬅️ *…But…How*

Performance Measurement

Keep performance measure module simple/to the point

Sample Problem Statement: *Many students are not reaching 3rd grade reading level benchmarks. Research shows when students get behind, they often stay behind.*

Performance Measurement

Keep performance measure module simple/to the point

Sample Described Instrument: *a pre- and post student engagement assessment will be completed by all students who attend at least 4 session. Students must demonstrate at least a 25% improvement on the assessment to be counted as improved. We know that many students without support becomes less engaged, so any improvement can be considered significant.*

Additional Docs

Submit to servewa@ofm.wa.gov – NOT the Federal Agency!

- Operational/Financial Management Survey (ONLINE ONLY)
- Audited Financials (Single Audit or other)
- *Evidence Support Documentation
- *Evaluation Plan (Recompetes Only)
- *Required Program Evaluation Report (Recompetes Only)
- *Labor Union Concurrence
- *Tribal Eligibility

RFGA, NOFO and App Instructions all outline this.

* = if applicable

Evaluation Plan

Recompete Applicants

- Fully Address EACH Criteria
  - Intro & Program Description (Theory of Change + Scope of Evaluation)
  - Measurable Outcome of Interest
  - Research Question(s)
  - Evaluation Design
  - Sampling Methods
  - Data Collection
  - Analysis Plan
  - Evaluator Qualifications
  - Timeline
  - Budget

eGrants Tips

- Create application pieces outside of eGrants
- eGrants does not allow for fancy formatting
  - No bold, italics, bulleted lists, charts
  - Can use ALL CAPS for section headings
- eGrants automatically double spaces when printing
- Spacing not always perfect between Word and eGrants
- Save and validate often once in eGrants
- Use Chrome (now that IE is gone, Chrome is next best)

Application Tips

- Read NOFO, App Instructions, Supplemental Guidance
- No web addresses or URL links (cite source in narrative)
- Numbers/Data/Demo should match in all sections – if you update one section, think to yourself "where else might this need updated"
  - an updated target in the LM, also needs updated in the PM module
  - an updated budget, also needs updated in the Executive Summary
- Be accurate on the Face Sheet as to the Authorized Rep vs project/program director (Auth Rep has signing authority)
- Project/Contract date: one full year (1st of the month through last day of last month)(not the same as Member Service Year)
- Print final application for review
- Give yourself an early deadline – system has been known to be down or challenging
- Impartial Reviewer

Recompete Applicants

Remember!

- Increase in the maximum cost per MSY
- Increase to living allowance
- New criteria for narratives
- Don't reuse old application narratives
- Update data, statistics, and evidence
- National Performance Measures sometimes change, even if using the same NPM, read the current definitions and requirements
- Verify evaluation plan and report requirements

Q&A

Are you ready for AmeriCorps?

[Serve WA Readiness Assessment](#)

[Serve WA RFGA](#)

Email questions to servewa@ofm.wa.gov