

AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) Service Project Application Instructions

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INTRODUCTION

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is a federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. By implementing several programs including AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and the Social Innovation Fund, CNCS provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country. More than two million Americans will serve through these programs to support thousands of national and community nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies to meet community needs in economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, veteran and military families and other critical areas. National and community service programs work closely with traditional volunteer organizations to broaden, deepen, and strengthen the ability of citizens to contribute not only to their communities, but also to our nation.

AMERICORPS NCCC

One of the programs of CNCS, AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), is a full-time, residential, national service program whose mission is **to strengthen communities and develop leaders through direct, team-based national and community service**. Each year hundreds of young adults, ages 18-24, serve for 10 months as NCCC members on diverse teams of 8 to 12 people at one of five regional campuses.

AmeriCorps NCCC teams are assigned 3-5 service projects throughout their 10 month service term, primarily in the 8-10 states within that region. Service projects help to meet critical community needs in the areas of **natural and other disasters, infrastructure improvement, environmental stewardship and conservation, energy conservation, and urban and rural development**. Teams are available to support community and faith-based based organizations, national nonprofits, schools, local-, regional-, and federal municipalities, national and state parks, and Native American and Alaskan Native tribes.

Throughout AmeriCorps NCCC's 20 years of service, teams of members have assisted communities in preparedness, mitigation, response, recovery from the effects of natural disasters, constructed and rehabilitated low-income housing, built and repaired trails, lead and managed community volunteers, installed energy efficient modifications to homes, businesses and public facilities and addressed many other local needs. Since 1994, more than 21,000 people have served in AmeriCorps NCCC, providing assistance to hundreds of thousands of Americans.

AMERICORPS NCCC MEMBERS

Members are young men and women, ranging in age from 18 to 24 years old, and represent a wide variety of socio- economic, cultural, geographic, and educational backgrounds. They include those with graduate degrees and some who are working towards their high school equivalency diplomas. All members have earned their place on an NCCC team by demonstrating a commitment to serve communities and a desire make the nation stronger through 10 months of national service. The rewards for their service include: an increased understanding about how active citizenship can make a positive difference in the lives of others and build stronger communities, technical and interpersonal skills that will serve them well in the future, and an education award that will enable them to either continue their education or reduce educational debt.

AMERICORPS NCCC SERVICE PROJECTS

NCCC accomplishes its mission by working with local community organizations and groups to help meet a community need that would not be fully addressed without additional assistance. Rather than providing cash grants, the AmeriCorps NCCC program places teams to serve with sponsoring organizations. These projects are generally 6 to 13 weeks in duration, but will vary depending on the specific requirements of each project. Projects must be capable of fully engaging at least one full team of 8 to 12 members effectively. Transportation and some basic tools are provided by AmeriCorps NCCC, however, project sponsors are required to provide materials, specialized tools, orientation, training, and technical supervision. The project sponsor is responsible for arranging lodging for the team and works with AmeriCorps NCCC staff prior to the start of the project to arrange for meal and other logistical needs.

AMERICORPS NCCC PROJECT FOCUS AREAS

NATURAL AND OTHER DISASTERS

Natural and Other Disaster projects address the needs of communities affected by floods, hurricanes, wildfires, and other disasters. These projects span the entire disaster cycle from preparedness, mitigation, and readiness to response and recovery. Natural and Other Disaster projects aim to protect communities and habitats from disaster and fire damage, strengthen communities' abilities to prepare for and mitigate disasters, help communities to more thoroughly or quickly rebuild after disasters, and strengthen communities' abilities to respond to and recover from disasters. In addition, projects often help those in communities improve or restore housing and assist in more thoroughly or efficiently meeting medical and basic human needs of those in disaster areas. Furthermore, many Natural and Other Disaster projects aim to enhance organization capacity and capabilities to provide disaster services to communities nationwide. Examples of service activities for these projects include: supporting disaster centers, shelters, and facilities; preparing and distributing meals; mucking and gutting homes and buildings; surveying community assets; and distributing educational materials and preparedness kits.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT

Infrastructure Improvement projects address the needs of communities by contributing to the safety and well-being of community citizens through the repair and building of public structures. Infrastructure Improvement projects aim to improve quality and accessibility of public infrastructure, preserve cultural and historic integrity of communities, and enhance public spaces. Examples of service activities for these projects include: building and repairing wheelchair ramps, boardwalks and footbridges; assembling playgrounds; repairing and painting public facilities; renovating museums, historical buildings and cemeteries, and restoring and refurbishing picnic areas and campsites.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND CONSERVATION

In the tradition of the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s, Environmental Stewardship and Conservation projects address the needs of communities by helping them maintain and protect their natural resources. Environmental Stewardship and Conservation projects aim to preserve, protect, and enhance parks, natural habitats, and at-risk ecosystems as well as improve knowledge and understanding of environmental conservation practices in communities nationwide. Examples of service activities for these projects include: trail building and maintenance; planting trees; removing invasive plant species; cleaning up rivers, streams, and wetlands; and facilitating environmental education workshops and camps for youth.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Energy Conservation projects address the needs of communities by helping citizens to more effectively and efficiently utilize their local resources. Energy Conservation projects aim to increase community energy efficiency, increase use and application of sustainable energy technology, and improve knowledge and understanding of sustainable energy practices in communities nationwide. Examples of service activities for these projects include: conducting energy efficiency assessments; assisting with installations of energy efficient modifications to homes, businesses, and public facilities; developing and improving recycling programs; performing home weatherization projects; and facilitating educational programming on energy sustainability and conservation practices.

URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Urban and Rural Development projects address the needs of communities in ways that improve the quality of life for citizens. Urban and Rural Development projects aim to improve community food security and nutritional practices, more thoroughly or efficiently meet medical and basic human needs, improve public safety and community resilience, and improve access to economic opportunities and housing. Other aims of Urban and Rural Development projects include seeking to improve student academic engagement and performance, expand public engagement in local communities, and preserve cultural or historical integrity of communities. Examples of service activities for these projects include: supporting homeless shelters, food banks, youth and family service organizations; renovating and constructing homes for those in need; leading neighborhood and community revitalization projects; assisting students, parents, and families through tutoring and afterschool programming, and helping to provide employment counseling and health awareness to community citizens.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS: AN OVERVIEW

Applying for an AmeriCorps NCCC team is a two-step process. The **first step** is submitting a Project Concept Form for review by AmeriCorps NCCC staff. If the concept form is approved, you will be invited to complete the **second step** and submit a full application for review by AmeriCorps NCCC staff.

STEP 1: COMPLETE AN AMERICORPS NCCC PROJECT CONCEPT FORM (PCF)

The PCF serves as an opportunity to provide an overview of your organization, to briefly identify the community need to be addressed and to propose a service project that can help to meet that need. Regional staff uses the PCF to assess whether the proposed project fits within the scope of NCCC's five Project Focus Areas (pg. 3-4). If the concept of the project has been found to meet basic requirements, you will be invited to complete a full application for an AmeriCorps NCCC team(s).

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE AMERICORPS NCCC SERVICE PROJECT APPLICATION

If you have been invited to apply, a representative from the AmeriCorps NCCC Region that corresponds with your state will send the full AmeriCorps NCCC Service Project Application to you in a fillable PDF format. While you are in the process of completing your application, staff members for your NCCC Region are available to provide you with technical guidance, should you solicit it. Regional contact information can be found at the end of this instructional guide or on our [website](#). AmeriCorps NCCC has regional deadlines for application submissions, and are based on the dates for which you are requesting a team. Deadlines and notifications may be acquired through your Regional Office representative.

PROJECT APPLICATION REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Any project application submitted should outline project goals and activities. All approved Project Applications **must meet the following criteria**.

The proposed project:

- Meets a compelling community need(s) that falls within the scope of at least one AmeriCorps NCCC Program Focus Areas.
- Has clearly defined outputs and outcomes.
- Has a clearly outlined work plan for each team with a weekly and monthly work schedule that details 40-45 hours of service activities for an AmeriCorps NCCC Team of 8-12 members.
- Has a clearly outlined training plan with training that corresponds to the proposed tasks and any potential safety hazards.
- Has identified (at least) one Site Supervisor to provide guidance, weekly planning, supervision and who will be accessible during the team's scheduled service time.
- Has identified housing that meets NCCC standards.
- Demonstrates that the organization will support the safety and security of an NCCC team and will provide safety and security training to the team during their on-site orientation.
- Demonstrates an understanding of service learning and identifies continued learning/teaching opportunities throughout the service project.
- Has outlined a sustainability plan that demonstrates how the work performed by the NCCC team(s) will be built upon or maintained.

All Project Applications are evaluated using a standard criteria set and scored using the ratings below.

Review Rubric Rating Scale	
Rating	Description
Exceeds Criterion	A high-quality, detailed response that addresses all aspects of the Selection Criteria and exceeds some. Strengths are substantial and solid. No weaknesses are identified, or any weakness has a minimal effect on the overall quality of the response. A high confidence that the proposed activities will achieve and exceed the anticipated results.
Meets Criterion	A quality response that addresses most or all aspects of the Selection Criteria. Strengths are substantial, but do not exceed what is required. No weaknesses are identified, or any weakness has a minimal effect on the overall quality of the response. Proposed activities should achieve the anticipated results.
Partially Meets Criterion	Response addresses some to most aspects of the Selection Criteria, but makes assumptions and leaves aspects unexplained. Strengths are not significant, and some weaknesses affect the overall quality of the response, demonstrating room for improvement. It is unclear how the proposed activities will achieve all of the anticipated results.
Does Not Meet Criterion	A low-quality or very weak response that does not address most of the Selection Criteria. Overall response is lacking or inadequate, making assumptions in key elements. Weakness relating to vague or inaccurate detail are numerous or significantly outweigh the strengths. There is low or zero confidence that the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.

Each application undergoes multiple reviews by AmeriCorps NCCC staff. Following this review process, the Region Director reviews and authorizes a list of projects that have been recommended by fellow staff. The assignment of teams to projects is contingent upon the availability of sufficient funds for the program, the availability of teams, the frequency of prior team assignment and Campus and National priorities.

STEP 1: AMERICORPS NCCC PROJECT CONCEPT FORM - INSTRUCTIONS

The Project Concept Form (PCF) serves as an opportunity to provide an overview of your organization, to briefly identify the community need to be addressed and to propose a service project that can help to meet that need. AmeriCorps NCCC Regional staff uses the PCF to assess whether the proposed project fits within the scope of at least one of NCCC's five Project Focus Areas (pg. 3-4). If the concept of the project has been found to meet basic requirements, you will be invited to complete a full application for AmeriCorps NCCC team(s).

Please use the information below for instructions if you are a prospective sponsor interested in applying for an AmeriCorps NCCC team. The instructions will correspond to each question on the Project Concept form. Answer each question as fully as possible. During this step, AmeriCorps NCCC Regional Offices will have the ability to provide you with technical guidance, should you solicit it. If you have any questions or need additional clarification about any item on the Project Concept Form, please contact them. A directory of AmeriCorps Regional Office staff contacts is located at the end of this document on pg. 24 or on our [website](#).

The Project Concept Form consists of the following components.

- I. Applicant Information
- II. Project Information
- III. Focus Areas
- IV. Narratives
- V. Locations of Service and Team Lodging
- VI. Authorize and Submit

APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. Enter your organization name and contact information.
2. When registering your organization, you are required to provide your EIN. Known as the Employer Identification Number (EIN) or the Federal Tax Identification Number, the EIN is a unique **nine-digit number** assigned by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to business entities operating in the United States for the purposes of identification. This number allows CNCS to quickly and accurately identify all organizations that have received CNCS resources for reporting and tracking purposes.
3. Select all of the organization types that apply to your organization; only organizations that fall within the types specified here are eligible to apply. If you have questions on what category your organization may fall into, please contact the representative at your NCCC Regional Office.
4. The Authorized Representative is the organization's designated representative from your organization that is legally authorized and certified to submit the Project Concept Paper and the Application. This person is often referred to as the Project Sponsor and will be the primary person that AmeriCorps NCCC staff will be communicating with regarding the allocation of NCCC teams and organizational support to execute the project. They also should be the signatory on this project application and, if approved, the Sponsor Agreement between AmeriCorps NCCC and your organization.

PROJECT INFORMATION

5. Please provide the title of the project for which you are applying. This title will be used to distinguish between applications if you submit multiple applications to CNCS, so please consider language that most aptly describes the project.

Indicate the number of teams requested and estimated completion time in weeks. This should be calculated for a team of 8 to 12 members serving full time 40-45 hours per week. Please keep in mind that NCCC teams often complete projects quicker than anticipated.

Indicate the proposed **start date** and whether these dates are fixed (not changeable based on the nature or timeline of the project) or flexible (able to be reasonably changed). This will allow the NCCC staff to better arrange logistics and possibly combine the deployments of multiple projects within a specific time frame.

Indicate the proposed **end date** and whether these dates are fixed (not changeable based on the nature or timeline of the project) or flexible (able to be reasonably changed). This will allow the NCCC staff to better arrange logistics and possibly combine the deployments of multiple projects within a specific time frame.

Questions 6-7: These questions address funding and labor resources that your organization receives in relation to this proposed project.

8. If your organization has ever received services of an NCCC team, please enter the number of teams that your organization received going back 20 years. Additionally, please provide the month and year that your organization received the last team. This is one criteria used to determine how we allocate our limited resources.
9. NCCC has effectively partnered with sponsoring organizations that also utilize the services of youth corps that require fees. Fee-for-Service is defined as an agreement in which a youth or community service organization pays fees or reimburses costs to an organization in exchange for member or team support. NCCC does not require a fee but finds value in partnering with organizations that do. NCCC makes every effort to augment and support these local collaborations as much as possible when partnering with sponsoring organizations. Please specify if your organization has ever had a fee-for-service arrangement and, if so, describe how your organization plans to incorporate your existing partnership with NCCC.

FOCUS AREAS

10. Please select from the drop down the primary area of community need that the project will address; *please refer to pages 3-4 for definitions of each category*. You are required to enter a primary area of community need to be addressed.

NARRATIVES

The Narratives section of the Project Concept Form includes 2 topics. Each topic consists of questions you must answer. When completing the Narrative topics, be sure to:

- Clearly label each sub-topic.
- Type single spaced within the fields.
- Type both the question and answer.
- Include activities for the entire span of the project period.

TIP: You may prefer to answer questions first in a word processing document and then paste them into the fillable PDF format. Avoid using special formatting or tables within the fields. You may however attach them separately. To remove special formatting, you can utilize the notepad tool or equivalent that are standard with most home computer systems. If you find that your organization's responses are too long for the fields provided, please provide an attachment noting the section and question number above your continued narrative.

11. Need Narrative

- A. Describe the overall mission of your organization
- B. Provide a brief overview of the community need
- C. Describe how the project and AmeriCorps NCCC team will meet the need
- D. Geographic area to be served
- E. Demographics of the community

12. Project Design Narrative

Within this field, please describe the following:

- A brief description about the service tasks and activities for which your organization is requesting an NCCC team.
- Goals and desired outcomes expected from the involvement of NCCC and how they are related to the community need and mission of your organization
- Briefly describe the accessibility of the work site for persons requiring mobility, vision or hearing accommodation. Because teams are not assigned to the project when the Project Concept Form is submitted, accommodations may or may not be required. If a member of the NCCC team has special accessibility requirements, regional NCCC staff will work with you to arrange accommodation if the project has been approved and a team is assigned.
- Description of lodging arrangements you are exploring for the team. This is where you should further explain information about disability accommodation, and information on laundry, kitchen and shower availability that you noted in question #17 – Primary Lodging Site (see below).

LOCATIONS

13. Primary Location of Service

The Location of Service is the physical location a team will be performing work during their time with your organization. AmeriCorps NCCC uses this information to ensure the safety of teams and to report to Congress where teams are performing work across the country (and in their districts). AmeriCorps NCCC requires a site supervisor to provide technical guidance, training, and instruction

during the service project. The site supervisor should be an individual who currently has the technical skills and abilities to perform the tasks at the project site and will train members on completing the project tasks.

In this section please enter:

- The name of your organization
- The street address, city, state and zip code where members will be serving, which may or may not be the location of the organization listed.
- Check the box if the project site is accessible for persons requiring mobility, vision or hearing accommodation. Please describe in more detail accessibility in the Project Design narrative. Because teams are not assigned to the project when the application is submitted, accommodations may or may not be needed. If a member of the NCCC team has special accessibility requirements, regional NCCC staff will work with you to arrange accommodation if the project has been approved and a team is assigned.
- The name of the supervisor that will be providing consistent site supervision throughout the team's service on the work site.
- The Organizational Title for the Site Supervisor
- The Site Supervisor's phone number; please note the best number to reach this person, a cell phone is strongly encouraged.
- Site Supervisor e-mail

14. Primary Lodging Site

If selected for service, the sponsoring organization is required to provide lodging for the team and, where applicable, is responsible for any fees associated with the lodging space. **Note:** Some NCCC regions may be able to provide lodging for projects on their campus facilities. When available, these projects must be within a reasonable driving distance of the regional campus. Please inquire with your regional NCCC Regional staff to learn more about availability and driving distance requirements.

Accommodations should be responsive to the following requirements:

- Adequate space for 8-12 members with separate female and male sleeping facilities
- Access to bathroom, shower, and laundry facilities
- Availability of cooking and food storage facilities or meals provided by sponsoring organization
- Availability of cleaning supplies and basic cleaning tools proportionate to the size of the accommodations and team. We suggest basic supplies such as toilet paper be available at the lodging site.
- Safety and security of members, their personal belongings, and equipment
- Reasonable driving distance (inquire with your region for specifics)
- Providing food and/or meals is encouraged, but **not required** in order to receive a team.

In this section, please enter the lodging arrangements you are exploring for the team. During this step, lodging does not need to be finalized. Enter as much information as is possible with your potential lodging. If you need more explanation, please include in the Project Design Narrative section above.

- Indicate the organization name of the lodging provider
- Select the lodging type from the drop-down menu
- Select the lodging category from the drop-down menu
- Indicate the team's anticipated arrival and departure date at the lodging site
- Indicate the street address, city, state and zip code of the lodging site
- Please provide the lodging contact name; this person will be the primary contact for anything related to the lodging site.
- List the phone number and email for the lodging contact person. A cell phone number is strongly encouraged.
- Check this box if beds are provided at this site. Providing beds is not required, however, we are requesting this information in order to ensure teams are provided with the equipment they will need.
- Check this box if the lodging site can accommodate individuals with mobility, vision or hearing limitations. Because teams are not assigned to the project when the concept form is submitted, accommodations may or may not be required. If a member of the NCCC team has special accessibility requirements, NCCC Regional staff will work with you to arrange reasonable accommodation at team lodging if the project has been approved and a team is assigned.
- Select whether laundry is available on site. If applicable, please include additional information about fees in the Project Design narrative. If not, please provide the closest laundry facilities available to the team.
- Select whether a full kitchen is available on site for the team to use. Please detail the use and appliances available in the Project Design narrative. A full kitchen includes a full-sized refrigerator, a stove and/or oven and a sink large enough to clean dishes. If a full-sized kitchen is not available on site, please provide the closest kitchen facility available to the team. If a full kitchen is not available, please note if a microwave and refrigerator or any size is available to the team.
- Select whether showers are available on site. If not, please detail alternate accommodations in the Project Design narrative.

PROJECT CONCEPT FORM SIGNATURE

Please review the document for completeness and accuracy. Then sign and date the Project Concept Form. The person who signs the document must be the applicant organization's authorized representative who has the authority to commit resources to your organization. An electronic signature is accepted and encouraged.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Complete and submit this PCF to the NCCC regional program office associated with the state this project is located. A directory of AmeriCorps NCCC Regional Office staff contacts is located at the end of this document on pg. 24 or on our [website](#). Upon review of the Project Concept Form, the regional program office representative will notify the organization of its status. Please do not complete the full application until instructed to do so. It is preferred that the Project Concept Form be submitted electronically by email, however it can also be submitted by mail or fax to the regional program office.

