AmeriCorps Member Recruitment Toolkit Overview

Introduction

Congratulations for being selected as a Washington Campus Coalition partner for our Civic Leadership & Engagement Corps program! We are so excited to partner with you this coming year. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to service in our communities!

To help get you started, we've created this toolkit to assist you in developing and executing a recruitment plan to find and select your AmeriCorps members. Creating a comprehensive recruitment strategy is key to articulating your program's strengths and reaching quality candidates.

This toolkit includes the following resources:
1) *Key Concepts* (below)
2) *Steps to Recruitment Success*
3) *Describing the Benefits of Your Program*
4) *Designing Fliers & Graphics*
5) *Improving Outreach & Online Presence*
6) *Assessing Prospective AmeriCorps Members*
7) *Enrollment Process Overview*

We hope these resources will assist you in discovering great members who will contribute to your program's success. Recruitment can be tricky, but we are committed to supporting you throughout the process.

Key Concepts

AmeriCorps hiring language
Hiring AmeriCorps members is different from hiring employees. Please use language that recognizes key differences. For example, say, "We have an open AmeriCorps position" instead of "We have a job opening;" "Our member will serve at…" instead of "Our members will work at…;" and "If selected for the position…" vs. "If hired…"

Local recruitment is essential!
Regardless of the slot type for the positions you've been awarded, please focus on local recruitment for your positions. From our experience, candidates recruited locally tend to be the most successful and are more representative of the population you are planning to serve.

300 and 450-hour positions are only recruited locally by host sites. Most 300 and 450-hour members are students at Washington Campus Coalition member institutions.

900 and 1700-hour stipend positions are recruited locally by host sites and are also posted nationally on the AmeriCorps website (Program Type = "AmeriCorps State/National"). WACC staff will send you the direct link for your position(s) once posted and eligible national applications as we receive them. Please review these in addition to any applications you receive from your local recruitment efforts. Note that many ideal 1700-hour candidates are recent graduates! Many half-time 900-hour candidates are part-time students. See *Improving Outreach & Online Presence* for more information.

Know your audience
Seek to understand the perspectives, backgrounds, needs, values, and experiences of who you are hoping to recruit. What are your candidates looking for in seeking a position with your organization? What do they hope to gain? How does your opportunity align with where they are in their career? What incentives are most salient? What barriers might prevent candidates from applying? See *Describing the Benefits of your Program* for more information.

Sharpen your elevator speech
Be ready to "sell" your position! Be able to succinctly summarize the position and key benefits, refine talking points, and create template emails and social media posts for sharing widely. Be ready to tailor your message to distinct audiences.

Timing is critical!
Time your recruitment whenever possible for when students or candidates are typically looking for opportunities. For example, most positions that start in August or September should be recruited in spring. Most students looking for summer internships begin their search in early winter. Start early to get the best candidates!

- Note that the earliest members can start for the 24/25 program year is August 1, 2024. Members must begin service by July 31, 2025, at the latest to be part of this program year.

- Start dates for 900 and 1700-hour positions posted nationally will be bumped back two weeks if we are within 2-3 weeks of the listed start date and you have not yet selected a candidate (stipend positions must start on the 1st or 16th of the month).

- Don't forget that once you have your candidate selected, enrollment typically takes 3-4 weeks, though this can sometimes be completed faster. Members cannot begin their service until they are fully enrolled, including required background checks and fingerprinting.

Create an equitable screening process
Ensure your position description, postings, fliers, and interview questions are culturally competent. Be transparent about each step of the process with candidates about what they can expect. Check for personal bias during interviews (see this article for resources and suggestions). Use a standardized rubric for assessing applications.

Please explore the rest of the resources available in this toolkit for more information!