2021-2022
Host Site Application
Technical Assistance Session
Welcome and Thank you!
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Today’s Agenda

- Brief Welcome and Introduction
- Focus Areas and Performance Measures
- Application Requirements and Tips, including updates to this year’s RFP
- Top 5 Reasons Organizations Aren’t a Current Fit
- Questions throughout
Who’s in the room?

Please introduce yourself in the chat:

- Name (pronouns)
- Organization name
- One question you’re hoping to have answered today
Guidelines for today’s session

- Please refer to the Info Session from Dec. 7th for more of an introduction to our program
- Please ask questions!
  - We’re unable to give specific feedback on your proposal, but we can answer questions that are relevant to everyone and include them in our FAQ.
- We will refer to the RFP and Attachments throughout – available on our website
- Session will be recorded and posted to our website
- Please be on mute if you’re not talking
The Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA), established in 1991, is a private, nonprofit organization. As the state commission on volunteerism and service, we generate collaboration and public-private partnerships at the local, state and federal level to grow volunteerism and service initiatives in MA.

Our mission is to expand volunteerism and service in Massachusetts by providing individuals and organizations with funding, training, and support, which enables them to strengthen communities and make our Commonwealth a better place to live.

Learn more at Mass-Service.org
The mission of the Commonwealth Corps service internship program is to engage Massachusetts residents of all ages, backgrounds, and identities in direct service to strengthen communities, address critical needs, and increase volunteerism.

- Commonwealth Corps is a state-funded service internship program administered by the Massachusetts Service Alliance.
- Dual focus on community/organizational impact & on member growth/development
- Focus areas of Economic Opportunity, Education, Health & Nutrition, Veterans’ Support, or Youth Development/Youth Violence Prevention.
Host Site Expectations and Requirements

- MSA and host sites share member recruitment and management responsibilities, with technical support from MSA throughout the year – an ongoing partnership!
  - Main contact and supervisor roles (may be the same person)
  - Update this year: weekly meetings for remote members and ensuring enough support for members serving from home.
- Evaluation and reporting:
  - Intake, mid-year, end-of-year progress reports, plus member support systems.
- Fiscal responsibility:
  - Cash match per member: $2000 per half-time (min. of 3 members) and $4000 per full-time (min. of 2 members)
  - Reimbursement for members for service-related travel away from their usual host site location
  - Optional but encouraged additional benefits to members

See p. 13-14 of RFP for more details.
## 2021-2022 Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 8</td>
<td>Intent to apply due (optional)</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 29 by 5pm EST</td>
<td>Full applications due to MSA with all attachments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early February</td>
<td>Community Review Process</td>
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<td>Mid-Feb to Mid-March</td>
<td>Clarifications with applicants – be sure to check emails!</td>
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<td>Early April</td>
<td>Notification of final application status and intro webinar</td>
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<td>April – June</td>
<td>Member recruitment and selection period for sites</td>
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<td>June 30</td>
<td>Deadline to submit finalists to MSA for approval</td>
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<tr>
<td>July – Early August</td>
<td>Finalize member paperwork, approval, onboarding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early and Mid-July</td>
<td>Initial host site orientation and trainings (required)</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 16 &amp; 17</td>
<td>Initial MSA member orientation (required)</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 18</td>
<td>On-Site Member Orientations can begin (TBD by site)</td>
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Focus Areas and Performance Measures
All host sites must address the capacity-building measures and the measures from ONE focus area:

- Economic Opportunity/Workforce Development
- Education (Early or General/K-12)
- Health & Nutrition
- Veterans’ Support
- Youth Development/Youth Violence Prevention

New this year: Due to the uncertainty of the year ahead caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, we will offer the selected host site partners the opportunity to adjust their measures over the summer before the start of the service term.
Goal: To expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness of programs and organizations. Activities may also leverage resources for programs and/or organizations. These activities should achieve lasting positive outcomes for the beneficiary populations served by the organization.

Projects should:

- support or enhance the program delivery model;
- respond to the organization’s goal of increasing, expanding or enhancing services in order to address the most pressing needs identified in the community; and
- enable the organization to provide a sustained level of more or better direct services after the member’s term of service has ended.
Capacity Building (Cont.)

Required Performance Measures:

- Number of community volunteers recruited and/or managed by projects/members.
- Number of hours of service contributed by community volunteers recruited and/or managed by projects/members.
- Dollar value of cash and/or in-kind support leveraged by members, including member-managed volunteers. (DO NOT include value of CC members.)
- Number of unique individuals who have been directly impacted by/benefitted from your members’ service/projects.
- Number of member projects aimed at increasing sustainability /documentation of program, with at least 1 example of specific activities.

Additional Performance Measures (select at least ONE):

- # new beneficiaries that received service as a result of project/member activities.
- # additional activities completed and/or program outputs produced by program as a result of project/member activities (apart from sustainability/documentation projects listed above).
- # existing beneficiaries reporting improved program services as a result of project/member activities.

See p. 22 of RFP (Performance Measure Worksheet)
Goal: To improve economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged individuals, with emphases including the chronically and long term unemployed. Projects will facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved employability.

Min. 2 Performance Measures

See p. 23 of RFP (Performance Measure Worksheet)
Goal: To improve school readiness and success for children and youth. Projects will facilitate access to and participation in quality educational programs for children and youth.

Two Sub-Areas
Early childhood education
General education (K-12)

3 Required & min. 1 Additional Performance Measure
(see worksheet)

See p. 24 of RFP
(Performance Measure Worksheet)
**Goal**: To improve the physical and mental health of communities and individuals, with emphases including substance abuse prevention and treatment. Projects will improve access to and utilization of primary and preventive health care, which could include a focus on those impacted by trauma and the promotion of healthy relationships.

**Min. 2 Performance Measures**

See p. 26 of RFP
(Performance Measure Worksheet)
**Goal**: To support or improve the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of veterans and military families. Projects will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength by increasing the number of veterans served and the number of veterans engaged in service. MSA is particularly interested in seeing projects that engage veterans to serve other veterans.

**3 Required & min. 2**

Additional Performance Measures

See p. 27 of RFP (Performance Measure Worksheet)
**Goal**: To increase access to positive youth development opportunities and decrease youth involvement in risky behaviors including violent behaviors, gang membership, and substance abuse. Projects will support positive engagement and development services for teens and young adults, which might include promotion of healthy relationships.

**3 Required & min. 1 Additional Performance Measure**

**UPDATE 2021-2022:**
Increased age to persons under 24 years or under.

See p. 28 of RFP (Performance Measure Worksheet)
Focus Area and Performance Measure Questions?
Application Instructions and Tips
ONLINE SUBMISSION ONLY: Email, hard copy, or fax submissions not accepted. Any application that is not complete and/or does not comply with all requirements may not be reviewed.

Online system details:

- Applicants can save their applications and come back to edit them later IF you chose the option to create a password and save your progress.
- Applicants can put in text as a place holder to move between pages.
- Applicants will need to share their login information if collaborating.
- May find it helpful to draft in Word document and then cut and paste it into system.

** After you enter your information with “submit,” the system will display it for your review, and you must then also click “confirm” for the submission to be finalized. **

Make sure to leave a spaces between paragraphs and answer the questions as outlined in the instructions. System does not allow for text formatting.

Character limits are maximums.
Submission Deadlines

- January 8, 2021 - Online intent to apply can be found here (brief; strongly encouraged)
- January 29, 2021 by 5p.m. EST* – Online submission of application here (including all attachments)

*Applications submitted after this time will not be reviewed.
Selection Process
- Review includes MSA Staff/Board & community reviewers; Final approval by MSA Board
- Previous performance will be taken into account

Selection Criteria
- Preference will be given to projects that:
  - address a well-documented community and/or organizational need;
  - will produce measurable outcomes;
  - have a robust and thoughtful recruitment plan in place to find members that will best meet the needs of their organization and the community they serve;
  - build a sense of team/community across their members;
  - show an appropriate balance between the importance of service impact and member development and support;
  - provide geographic or programmatic diversity to MSA's program portfolio;
  - can demonstrate meaningful impact within one year; and
  - (for returning sites) show a history of successfully engaging Commonwealth Corps members and partnering with MSA.

RFP: p. 16
MSA particularly encourages applications that focus on the following areas emphasized by Governor Baker:

- Substance abuse prevention/treatment
- Employment and workforce development for populations experiencing chronically high rates of unemployment

MSA also encourages proposals in which member roles address the immediate and ongoing impacts of Covid-19 on Massachusetts communities (see note on Covid-19 on p. 4 of the RFP)

Projects engaging members in unallowable activities (prohibited activities or engaging members in primarily administrative and/or office support roles) will not be considered.

RFP: p. 16
Restrictions

MSA will not support projects that:

- Provide religious instruction, conduct worship services or engage in any form of proselytization;
- Assist, promote, or deter union organizing;
- Finance, directly or indirectly, any activity designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- Impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
- Advocate to impact public funding or for a change in public policy as part of members’ service; or
- *Use corps members to replace staff positions or reduce overtime, hours of work, or opportunities for advancement.*
Please follow these guidelines when writing your proposal:

- Complete all sections and include all required attachments.
- If applying for members to serve with different projects/different orgs.:
  - Complete a single application that includes some common goals/activities and addresses how a sense of team will be built and maintained across members.
  - Reflect differences in roles on position descriptions
  - Agencies collaborating on an application should select one entity to serve as the lead applicant.
- If requesting more than one member to serve on the same project:
  - Complete a single application and specify the number of members requested.
- Attachments outside of what has been requested will not be accepted.
A Solid Proposal

Includes:

- All staff who would be involved in member supervision/projects
- Every section answered fully and in order
- A narrative that is...
  - Clear and well thought out
  - Pays attention to both service impact and member development
  - Includes executive summary according to template
- All required attachments
The Narrative

- Four Main Sections
  1. Executive Summary (template)
  2. Organizational Background
  3. Project Overview
  4. Member Support

- Additional section 5 for current/past Commonwealth Corps sites
Narrative Section 1: Executive Summary

One-paragraph summary (fill in blanks, max. of 850 characters):
- “[One sentence mission of agency, phrased as ‘The mission of AGENCY NAME is to…’ or ‘AGENCY NAME seeks to/empowers/builds/etc....’]. [AGENCY NAME] will host [#] of [full- time or half-time] Commonwealth Corps members [in PROGRAM NAME, if applicable] who will serve as [position title and brief summary of member roles] in [geographic area(s) served]. Through their service, members will [brief summary of anticipated outcomes, both capacity building and focus area related]. In addition, they will leverage [# of volunteers recruited/managed] volunteers that will be engaged in [what volunteers will be doing].”

- We use this in all our materials!

RFP: p. 17
Executive Summary - Example

The mission of More Than Words (MTW) is to empower system-involved youth to take charge of their lives by taking charge of a business. MTW will host two full-time members who will serve as Commonwealth Corps Employment and Partnership Coordinators in Boston and Waltham. Through their service, members will provide direct support to Graduates and members of our youth team, develop relationships with key employment partners, complete projects to increase the efficiency of the department to support larger staff caseloads, evaluate the effectiveness of new programming, and document and institutionalize processes created by their predecessors. In addition, they will leverage 10 volunteers that will be engaged in 1:1 support of our youth through individualized coaching and mock interviewing.
Narrative Section 2: Organizational Background

- Introduction to who you are, what you do, who you serve.
- Don’t assume readers know your organization or the communities you serve, even if you are an existing partner.
- Make sure service member roles from other programs are different than what you’re requesting, not duplicative.
- Sets the stage for the rest of the narrative: Why do you want to host Commonwealth Corps members?
- To consider throughout: Why are service members uniquely positioned to accomplish this project?

20% of Proposal Score

RFP: p. 17
Community and Organizational Need:
  - Within your selected focus area

Project Details:
  - Core of the proposal, what are you proposing?
  - Choosing how many and what type (full-time/half-time) of members you will host
  - Help reviewers imagine what members service will be like through typical week and timeline

Outreach, Recruitment, and Selection
  - Try to think outside of your traditional recruitment/selection strategies – who are you trying to reach that would be a good fit for this unique opportunity?

50% of Proposal Score

RFP: p. 17 - 19
Project Impact/Outcomes:
- Overall anticipated impact
- Monitoring and evaluating success

Sustainability:
- Must be a part of members roles to build your organization’s capacity
- Creating a “lasting impact” – Who will take over projects? How will learnings be transferred? Cannot rely on continued service members.

50% of Proposal Score (continued)

RFP: p. 17 - 19
This is a **professional development opportunity**: members often need significant training, support and guidance to be successful in their service.

**Member Training & Benefits:**
- Consider what orientation and training is needed specifically for this service member role.
- Additional host site benefits are not required but encouraged - can be training opportunities!

**Member Supervision:**
- Ensuring supervisors have the capacity in their role to provide the needed support and supervision to members.
- Members need at minimum a computer and phone from their host site, even if serving remotely.

30% of Proposal Score

**RFP: p. 19**
Narrative Section 5: Current/Past Host Sites

- Commonwealth Corps Model:
  - Ok to continue with the same projects, but how have you incorporated this year’s learnings/accomplishments into your plans for next year?

- Past Performance and Lessons Learned
  - Important to be honest and refer to real experiences
  - Impact of Covid-19 on performance measures is expected, encourage sites to review the data evaluation webinar

Section 5 will be considered in the scoring of the above sections, as appropriate.
Attachments

- *Performance Measure Worksheet (A)
- *Member Position Description(s) (B)
- Organizational Documents:
  - Organizational Chart
  - Organizational Audit
  - Verification of Eligibility

(*Use template provided with application.)

Include agency name and attachment type in each title.

See instructions on p. 21 of RFP
Attachment A:
Performance Measures

- All applicants must:
  - Complete capacity-building section AND the section appropriate to their ONE selected focus area.
  - Provide appropriate targets (actual numbers) you expect as direct result of proposed Commonwealth Corps project/members’ service.
  - Provide detail on the instruments/tools you will use to measure changes and describe overall impact you expect to realize as a result of your Commonwealth Corps project(s).

- This attachment should be submitted as a Word document. Make sure to delete the sections for the four focus areas for which you are not proposing measures.
Make sure to use this year’s template!

- Fill in sections in yellow and add your agency’s logo in allotted space.
- Applicants should complete a single narrative and Attachment A but **submit multiple position descriptions if proposing very different roles.**
- Must include “Commonwealth Corps” in overall position title.
- Expectations and requirements should be reasonable for a program that is focused on **member development**
- Specify which functions are marginal versus essential
- Include a clear sense of **required schedule** and specify if a framework for time of day or days per week. Be clear about any expectations for scheduling or responsibilities that go beyond MSA-specific guidelines
- Only include details for your slot type (full or half); delete other’s info)
- **Submit as ONE Word document (even if there are multiple positions)**
1. You only need or only can support 1 service member.
   - The Commonwealth Corps has a focus on building a sense of team and requires a minimum of 2 full- or 3 half-time members.

2. You do not have the time to orient, supervise, and support the number of service members you are requesting or to fulfill the partnership and reporting requirements.

3. The needs/programming of your organization do not match with the focus area goals/ performance measures of the Commonwealth Corps program or the program structure.

4. The team members who will help you implement this partnership and host site experience are not yet on board or committed to this project.

5. You don’t have a clear vision for how you will recruit the type/# of members.
Questions?
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