

# Recruitment Toolkit



**AmeriCorps**  
California

**CALIFORNIA**  
**VOLUNTEERS**

Office of the Governor





# Introduction

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With more than 60 AmeriCorps California programs in the state, thousands of members are needed to serve in unique ways each year. Recruiting people to dedicate a year or more to AmeriCorps California service is an effort that requires the vision, dedication, and expertise of AmeriCorps California Program Staff focused on recruitment efforts.

This toolkit highlights the best practices that have been gained from efforts across all state regions so that they can be shared, implemented, and improved in years to

come. We hope you find the resources in this toolkit useful and that you return to it as a guide as you begin or advance recruitment efforts for your program, site, or region.

The creation of this toolkit would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of California Volunteers, with a special thanks to Jourdan Ringgold, Eddie Aguero, the Marketing & Member Engagement team, our program partners, and each person who played a role in creating or providing feedback on content.

## Thank you!



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# ARC OF THE YEAR

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## PURPOSE:

The Arc of the Year provides an outline of activities throughout the year for carrying out the recruitment process. It provides a birds'-eye-view of trends across organizations to help streamline workstreams and offer alternative methods and timelines for organizations to consider. This section also describes how to create a recruitment timeline of specific actions to strategically plan for an entire year, allowing for less reactivity and a more thoughtful approach year-over-year.



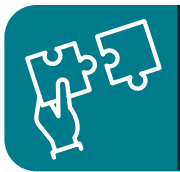


# AmeriCorps California Recruitment Arc of the Year

This arc of the year outlines the major phases in the recruitment cycle progression.







## 10 Recommended Recruitment Activities Throughout the Year

Below is a list of activities to plan and execute for a robust recruitment campaign.

1. Maintain a system for collecting contact information for potential applicants year-round so that they can be notified once the application opens.
2. Raise awareness continually through posts on social media and program website, and sending a quarterly e-newsletter, as well as in-person events when possible. Consider including active and alumni members in carrying out some of these tasks.
3. Utilize online opportunity boards. Ensure your opportunity posts are attractive and descriptive. (Details in "How to create an attractive opportunity post" exercise.)
4. Create and print flyers and posters with a QR code to your website and display in community centers, libraries, at service sites and elsewhere.
5. Make time to expand your contact lists to reach retirees, high school students and college students with skills/interest relating to your program. (Details in "Build & leverage your contacts" exercise.)
6. Leverage contacts through email and beyond. Email application link and messages they can copy and paste into email or social media. Offer to give presentations, either live or virtually to their group. Provide materials for them to display.
7. Email application link to contacts 1 week prior to application opening, mid-way between opening and deadline, and 1 week before application deadline.
8. Conduct outreach to both high school and college students in the fall. Prioritize outreach to college students in the spring.
  - » High school students in the fall: email guidance counselors and table at career fairs.
  - » College students in the fall: attend welcome week tabling events and college club recruitment fairs to network and distribute recruitment flyers.

- » College students in the spring: table at career fairs, email department chairs, academic advisors and campus club contacts, and present in classes and at meetings as permitted.

### 9. Engage your applicants to retain them:

- » Encourage them to follow you on social media
- » Add them to your listserv
- » Provide space to connect: visit a host site, hold a virtual information session with current or alumni members or service site staff talking about the program or invite them to a service activity.

10. If funds permit, promote opportunities through a social media ad campaign (ideally between 2 weeks and 1 month), or boosted posts. Depending on target audience, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn can be effective for raising greater awareness of your program. Those websites of those platforms will include information and instructions for those activities.



## Readiness and Selection Tasks

In creating a detailed and specific recruitment timeline, it may be helpful to include the necessary recruitment readiness tasks and application review and selection items. Examples include:

- Program start and end dates and dates for onboarding and training.
- Target deadline to detail new cohort selection criteria and position announcement.
- Target deadline to create a plan for recruitment outreach for next cohort with activities and timeline decided.
- Tentative dates for social media posts of application opening (2 weeks prior, on date, weekly thereafter, include member highlights in posts).
- Applications open and posted on grantee website and online job boards.
- Timeframe for application tracking, candidate review and member selection, and background checks.



# AmeriCorps California Recruitment Timeline\*

\* The timeline expressed below is most common in education organizations, and not all AmeriCorps organizations in CA recruit on this cycle.

## 01 | JULY

Recruitment outreach during the summer includes connecting with community organizations, partner organizations, retired professionals, and service-oriented associations.

## 02 | AUGUST

Recruitment continues and orientations generally begin. Member enrollment begins.

## 03 | SEPTEMBER

Recruitment for full-time positions wraps up and shifts to pipeline building. Recruitment activities will continue for part-time positions as member enrollment continues. Some organizations have a second start date option in October, while others are beginning to plan for halftime member recruitment over the winter. Prime time for pipeline building by tabling on college campuses at back to school events and fairs.

## 04 | OCTOBER

Final orientation occurs. Final member enrollment is completed and later start date (1200 and 900 hour) AmeriCorps California member recruitment continues. Welcome back to school events and fairs continue on college campuses.

## 05 | NOVEMBER

Recruitment for the following fiscal year begins in some fashion, whether by planning, soft launch, or the beginning of passive postings. Halftime AmeriCorps California member recruitment continues.

## 06 | DECEMBER

Interviewing halftime members with some beginning service this month.

## 07 | JANUARY

More active recruitment for the following fiscal year's cohort begins. Partnership meetings are scheduled. Career fairs ramp up and spring planning begins.

## 08 | FEBRUARY

Final enrollment of halftime members. If not already started, paid and other passive postings often begin for full-time AmeriCorps California members and so does a more intentional recruitment approach. February through April is the prime time for recruitment on college campuses.

## 09 | MARCH

Host recruitment activities on college campuses: career fairs, campus tabling, partner events and panels. Phone screens and interviews are ongoing. If not done already, some organizations are now having conversations with members they'd like to invite back for another year of service.

## 10 | APRIL

Peak time for recruitment on campuses including partner recruitment events and career panels. Partner AmeriCorps California organizations can leverage each other when discussing their respective Life After AmeriCorps trainings. Application reviews, phone screens, and in-person interviews are ongoing.

## 11 | MAY

Passive postings begin to be refreshed more frequently and application numbers typically increase. Final efforts on college campuses are made prior to graduation.

## 12 | JUNE

Preparation for exiting AmeriCorps California members and their graduation. Recruitment and interviewing continues, as passive postings (often at a more frequent rate).





## Create Your Own Recruitment Timeline

Add items from the recommended outreach activities list to the “action” field next to each month. The goal of this timeline is to create an outline of specific recruitment activities and goals, to help keep you on track. Activities should correspond to your application start/closing dates and your program launch date.

Year	Action
JULY	
AUGUST	
SEPTEMBER	
OCTOBER	
NOVEMBER	
DECEMBER	
JANUARY	
FEBRUARY	
MARCH	
APRIL	
MAY	
JUNE	



# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

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## PURPOSE:

As many of our sites serve diverse communities, it is important for our members to reflect this diversity. To do so, we must practice diverse recruitment strategies and focus our recruitment efforts in the communities we serve. We should be aware of intentionally recruiting diverse members throughout the recruitment process, from recruiting and interviewing to engaging and onboarding our members. Finally, we must set protocols at our organizations to ensure discriminatory practices are not being used.





## Inclusive Recruitment Practices

- Ensure position postings are inclusive by emphasizing training and transferrable skills and highlighting policies that appeal to people of various backgrounds, such as childcare benefits and an open-door policy.
- Build partnerships and relationships with organizations that work with people who more closely fit the demographic of your community. Examples include student organizing groups, ethnic-specific community or student organizations, job placement organizations, and more.
- High-touch recruitment or, in other words, personal contact with potential applicants by meeting candidates at career fairs, doing classroom or organization presentations, and tabling at community events.
- Utilize AmeriCorps California alumni networks to assist in getting the word out.
- Share opportunities on a multitude of online platforms, including partner websites, community organization newsletters, and social media where a wide audience can be reached.
- Network at events hosted by our various programs.

## Gauge Diversity During Interview Process

- Ask questions during your interviews to get candidates to reflect on diversity and working within diverse communities or groups. This will support the program staff in assessing a candidate's cultural competency.
- Sample questions to ask during interviews to address diversity:
  - » Are you familiar with the local community?
  - » Do you speak another language? How comfortable are you having a conversation in this language with someone who doesn't speak English?
  - » What is an issue that you feel passionate about and why?

- » Please define diversity and what it means to you. What are the most rewarding and most challenging parts of working in diverse environments?
- » Have folks respond to scenario situations that might arise during their term of service.

## Avoid Discriminatory Practices

- Revisit your organization's recruitment practices, from position description all the way up to the onboarding phase to check for inclusive language.
  - » Review your organization's interview procedures, including the specific questions asked, and look for ways to reduce unintentional bias in the procedure.
- Include, and actively engage/enforce, a notice of non-discrimination and civil rights within your organization. Actively review that content with your team.
- Support a diverse array of perspectives by inviting colleagues from various backgrounds, experience levels, ages, and genders to your candidate review panel.
- Include language and user-friendly forms regarding your organization's reasonable accommodation policy. Actively review that content with your HR and recruitment team(s) to be sure there are no unintended barriers for your candidates.
- Include language in your organization's handbook around inclusion and inclusive practices and review it explicitly during onboarding and/or training.

## LINKS / RESOURCES

There are plenty of places to meet people, virtually or in-person. These are just a few examples of sites you can visit to learn more about what is happening in the community:

- [Young Nonprofit Professional Network](#)
- [Handshake](#) for college postings and career fairs
- [HBCU Connect](#)
- [Eventbrite](#) for community events
- Find your city's Chamber of Commerce website to find events in your community



# PARTNERSHIPS

## PURPOSE:

While our AmeriCorps California organizations might currently be leveraging partners for purposes such as fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and more, not all partners are leveraged for AmeriCorps California recruitment support. Partners can be a great asset for sharing AmeriCorps California opportunities and driving additional referrals and awareness to your organization.

## PARTNER TYPES

### CORPORATE PARTNERS

These types of partnerships help give our programs more visibility and recognition. They also have the financial resources to assist the programs in their recruitment efforts.

### FAITH-BASED PARTNERS

These partners have a strong community presence. Religious institutions are usually heavily involved in community activities and issues, such as addressing homelessness and poverty by organizing events like food drives, and often take part in community service that aligns with many of our programs' missions.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Community partners are valuable assets in our recruitment efforts as they work with people who can be potential candidates for our programs. These include organizations that may be outside of your immediate network. New connections can be made at local community events, by asking for introductions from your current partners, or by connecting online, via email or social media.

### EDUCATION PARTNERS

These partners are typically community institutions of higher education (universities, four-year and community colleges, law schools, etc.), as well as high schools. Depending on your organization, these partners might benefit both AmeriCorps California recruitment and any volunteer needs. When focusing on college and university campuses, relevant academic departments, sororities and fraternities, and other service-minded campus organizations are an excellent starting point to build relationships and to help spread the word.

# Identify Your Audience

Effective outreach to potential candidates through your partner and contact network starts with identifying the audience you want to reach.

Create a profile of your ideal candidate, including their interests and the basic skills required for the program.

Here is an example of an ideal candidate for a literacy tutor for elementary school students:

*Applicants must be patient, empathetic, and interested in making a difference in the lives of children by helping them learn to read. Must be 18 years old or older, a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and be able to pass a criminal background check. Must be comfortable using public transportation or provide their own transportation. Experience working with children is ideal, but not required.*

## Practice: Candidate Profile

With your candidate profile in mind, name three to five types of spaces where individuals with those interests and traits may be found.

Examples include high schools, colleges, professional associations, retiree organizations, faith-based groups, community centers and more.

# Where to Find Your Ideal Candidates.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Now, find contacts and partners in your established network that match the types of spaces you identified with access to your target audience. For example, the community outreach chair of the local library, the director of the local Rotary Club, etc.

In the table below, add those established contact names, organization names, and a description of why the audience this contact has access to would be a good fit for your program. Complete the table below (an example is provided in the first row).



## Your Current Connections with This Audience:

Org. Type	Org. Name/Contact	Connection
Senior Center	Central Valley Senior & Activity Community Center, Juan Doe, Dir. Of Volunteer Programs	Seniors come here to meet new people, leverage their wealth of skills and knowledge, help their community. Seniors are mostly retired and may be available to serve right away.

## Identify New Contacts

Expand your contact network and partnerships to increase public messaging of your program opportunities. Tried and true methods of making new connections include:

- To find new contacts through an online search, enter the desired organization type + the name of your city. (Example: "community colleges in Stockton".)
- Look in the about us, staff, or contact us sections of the organizations' websites for the name and email address of an individual you can contact to promote your opening to their members.
- Try to look for the person who would be in direct touch with your target audience.

Use these tips to complete the exercise below and identify ten new contacts that can assist you in your recruitment efforts.

### TIP!

Tip! Find a specific email address of an individual at each organization. Messaging a general [info@example.org](mailto:info@example.org) email address is much less likely to result in a reply.

### TIP!

If you are considering colleges/universities, find contact information for specific departments with access to the skills you need, such as the Career Center, service-oriented student clubs, departments of the majors related to your program like education, child development, etc.





## New Recruitment Contacts

[illegible]



## Reach Out

Send these new contacts a brief email with a description of your program (including a link to your website), stating when applications will be open. Include why their audience is a good fit and close with specific requests for their help, such as the following. Always include a sincere thank you and your contact information.

### Ways partners can help promote:

- Post on their social media (you send them message/image to post).
- Include your opportunity in their newsletter or share via email list serve to volunteers, etc.
- Allow you to give a brief announcement at the start or end of a meeting or class with that audience (in-person or via Zoom/online).
- Post the opportunity on their website or class board (many colleges use Canvas and Blackboard as online student communication tools).

Here is a template email message for initial outreach to a new contact. Replace the bracketed text with your organization details.

### TIP!

Hyperlink "Applications are open now" to your program application.

Hello [contact name], [organization name] is recruiting for AmeriCorps California [program or member title] and your [members or students] would be a great fit! [Expand on why they are a good fit - service-minded, interests align with focus areas, etc.] Would you be open to sharing the unique opportunity post below with your group on your [edit as appropriate: social media channels, website, next newsletter, on-line class board, etc.]?

Get paid, gain unique skills and make a lasting impact in your community! Become an AmeriCorps California [insert program or member title] with [organization name]! Members earn a living stipend, become eligible to obtain the Segal and California For All Education Awards which can be used for an array of educational expenses. These members will make a difference by leading projects in [insert relevant focus area(s)].

[Applications are open now!](#)

### REMEMBER: Track your contacts and potential applicants!

Whether on an Excel spreadsheet or an application tracking system, ensure you have a central location where you record organizations and contacts for promotional efforts. Save the organization name,

organization type, contact name, title, phone, email, organization's social media handles, and notes about interactions. This information will help you stay organized and be a great reference for repeating what worked well in the next recruitment cycle.



# CREATING AN ATTRACTIVE OPPORTUNITY POST

## PURPOSE:

Creating attractive opportunity posts on online posting boards is an essential requirement and a key part of the AmeriCorps California recruitment process. Attractive opportunity posts should include basic information about the service opportunity but tailored in a way that appeals to the target audience. In this section, you will see what should be included in an opportunity post as well as samples.





## How to Create an Attractive Opportunity Post

### 1. Provide key position details such as:

- » Application deadline.
- » Start and end dates.
- » Classification: identify whether the service opportunity is full-time or part-time and include the service hours requirement.
- » Location: provide the address of the service opportunity.
- » Direct report: identify the staff member to whom the AmeriCorps California member will report.

### 2. Create a targeted position title.

Use targeted position titles that applicants can easily search. Include a key phrase that indicates what the opportunity entails. Search engines and career search websites use algorithms to help choose the most relevant search results.

#### Position title examples:

Garden Educator, Community Engagement Fellow, Sustainability Associate, Youth Education Mentor, State & County Park Environment Preservation Member, Under-served Youth & Family Supporter.

### 3. Specify the city where the position is located.

Position location is a critical piece in the decision-making process for potential candidates. If this posting is to fill multiple positions across many cities, the main location should say "multiple locations available" and list the cities in the position description, or link to where they can see specific locations. If funds allow, provide a transportation pass for AmeriCorps California members with unreliable transportation.

### 4. Create a concise and accurate position description.

A position description needs to be thorough and include the following elements:



a. **Position overview:** open with an attention-grabbing statement that provides a brief and concise overview of the organization and expectations for the position. Be sure to list the staff to whom the AmeriCorps California member will report.

b. **Primary duties:** provide a concise list of high-level responsibilities using appealing language that speaks directly to the reader. Use action words such as "be," "do," or "make." Try to keep the list of high-level responsibilities to a minimum, as day-to-day tasks can be discussed during the interview.

**Examples:** "You can preserve our parks for generations to come" or "be a change-maker for former foster youth."

c. **Qualifications and skills:** describe the essential skills/traits (minimum AmeriCorps requirements) and preferred skills/traits (related experience). Keep in mind that the preferred skills list should be kept at a minimum, understanding that a candidate with a suitable personality and leadership skills can be trained.

#### Essential skills/traits examples:

- » U.S. citizen, U.S. National, or legal permanent resident of the U.S.
- » Pass state and FBI background checks.
- » Reside in the area of the service location.
- » Be willing and able to commit to full term of service.
- » At least 17 years of age or older.
- » Strong interpersonal, written, and verbal communication skills.
- » Commitment to the mission and vision of the organization.
- » Empathetic and ready to grow leadership skills.
- » Quick learner, resourceful, flexible.

#### Preferred skills examples:

- » College degree or equivalent experience (2–3 years working in a related field).
- » Any experience related to the mission of the organization.



- d. **Pay and benefits:** include living allowance amount, other financial benefits, and highlight non-financial benefits of AmeriCorps California service. This section is also a good place to share a testimonial from a current or alumni member, so candidates get a clear understanding of what the role entails.



**Non-financial benefit examples:**

- » Networking opportunities to meet like-minded individuals in the field of interest.
- » Opportunity to explore different career paths and gain experience.
- » Expand professional development skills such as: project management, public speaking, community engagement, etc.
- » Build confidence and gain a strong sense of accomplishment.
- » Help an organization expand its capacity, while making an impact in the community.

**Testimonial from Alumni Example:**

“My experience as an AmeriCorps member gave me the opportunity to learn new skills and connect with like-minded individuals aimed to make a difference in their community. As the project coordinator of the community-wide volunteer program, I had the opportunity to support change-makers with their volunteer recruitment needs from the Antelope Valley. Coming on 11 years working in the nonprofit sector, I am grateful for my experience and recommend it to anyone that is starting out their career and want hands-on experience!”

**Shelby, AmeriCorps Alumna**



**General Opportunity Post Tips**

- Avoid using words like “job” or “work” when speaking about your service opportunities.
- Ensure the living allowance is not confused with a salary.
- Be sure to list your organization's point of contact so that candidates can get in touch for more information.
- Avoid using specific words related to Prohibited & Unallowable Activities, as that may lead to a disapproved service opportunity listing. For example, if members will support clients, do not use the word “advocacy” unless there is context as to what type of advocacy. Similarly, if members provide health referrals, include language such as, “AmeriCorps California members do not provide health services related to prohibited items” in the description.



## Opportunity Post Sample

**Position Title:**

Garden Educator Fellow

**Name of Organization:**

Somerville Community Garden

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**Position Information**

**Application Deadline:** May 4

**Program Start/End Dates:** August 28 – August 14

**Classification:** Full-Time; AmeriCorps California members to complete 1700 hours by (Month-Year)

**Location:** 1234 Hudson Ave., Fresno, CA 93719

**Reports to:** Volunteer Coordinator, Betsy Loki

**Service Environment:** 50% in the garden and 50% in office

**About (name of organization):**

Since 2000, Somerville Community Garden has served residents and eight different community food banks across the valley. Somerville Community Garden sources out their crops and provides certified training for students and community members interested in sustainable food practices through the Garden Pro program. The mission of Somerville Community Garden is to educate community members and students the fundamentals of sustainable gardening practices, so that trained Garden Leaders can inform their communities and together, reduce greenhouse gases one compost bucket at a time.

**Position Overview:**

Are you passionate about organic gardening? Are you interested in using the garden as a platform to teach the community about environmental education? Somerville Community Garden is seeking to fill the Garden Educator Fellow role. This role is essential to ensure all volunteer Garden Leaders receive robust training to provide educational workshops to students and community members. This role will serve about 50% indoors assisting in the development of training materials for volunteers and the other 50% out in the garden. This person will also assist the Volunteer Coordinator with recruitment by tabling at local community events, facilitate off-site volunteer orientations, and assist the Communications Fellow with social media campaigns and a monthly newsletter.

The ideal candidate is people-oriented with strong attention to detail. They can juggle multiple tasks and enjoy a fast-paced work environment in the garden and office. They are empathetic, good listeners, and can quickly and clearly understand the needs of volunteers. The Garden Educator Fellow is energetic and shows their passion for sustainable food systems through the delivery of training sessions and volunteer recruitment efforts. The individual will enjoy being part of a dynamic team of very hardworking people that are passionate about social equity and sustainable food systems.

**Primary Service Activities and Responsibilities:**

- Develop and deliver volunteer training sessions for Garden Leaders.
- Track volunteer engagement.
- Build strong relationships with community members and students.
- Assist with developing content for monthly newsletter and social media campaigns.

- Perform garden maintenance tasks such as weeding, watering, planting, harvesting, and pest control.
- Public education outreach at local events.

#### **Qualifications:**

- Must be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident of the United States.
- Ability to pass FBI, CA Department of Justice, out-of-state (if applicable), and National Sex Offender Public Registry background checks prior to service.
- At least 18 years of age.
- Live in California.
- Empathetic, resourceful, and ready to grow leadership skills.
- Strong verbal and written communication and teamwork skills.
- Commitment to the full term of service (1700+ hours and 11 months).
- Commitment to Somerville Community Garden mission.
- Some past volunteer experience (community service, etc.).
- Local to the community being served.

#### **Education/Experience:**

- High school diploma.

#### **Compensation:**

- \$30,000 Living Allowance (before taxes) spread evenly over 11 months.
- \$10,000 combined Segal Education Award and California for All Education Award (upon completion of 11-month term of service).

#### **Other Benefits:**

- A sense of accomplishment in making a lasting impact in their communities.
- Build confidence and learn new skills.
- Explore different career paths and gain experience.
- Opportunity to meet like-minded individuals in the field of interest.
- Health Insurance.
- Forbearance on existing qualifying student loans and payment of interest accrued during service.
- Childcare assistance for qualifying Fellows, paid to an eligible provider of their choice.
- CalFresh—for those eligible.

#### **Testimonial**

"My experience working with Somerville Community Garden has been so rewarding. I get the opportunity to teach students and community members about the importance of composting, ground cover, and various sustainable gardening practices. Getting the experience has helped me become more confident in my presentation and project management skills."

Alyssa Sanchez, Garden Educator Fellow

## Passive Service Posting Potential

In addition to leveraging internal and alumni networks and referrals for recruitment, passive posting to multiple websites and/or opportunity boards can help programs recruit a diverse pool of candidates large enough to fill all open member slots. In this section, you will find some common platforms that can be used to recruit AmeriCorps California members. Opportunity boards that have been found useful and cost-effective are marked as highly recommended in the chart.



## Online Boards for Posting Opportunities

Website	Cost	Notes
Program website	Free	Highly recommend
<a href="#">MyAmeriCorps portal</a>	Free	Highly recommend
<a href="#">Indeed</a>	Free option available (see details below)	Highly recommend
<a href="#">Handshake</a> (to reach college students)	Free	Highly recommend
<a href="#">AmeriCorps Alumni</a>	Free	Highly recommend
<a href="#">Volunteermatch.org</a>	Cost	Highly recommend
<a href="#">Zoho Recruit</a>	Free for basic	
<a href="#">Idealist.org</a>	Cost	
<a href="#">Simplyhired.com</a>	Cost	
<a href="#">Ziprecruiter.com</a>	Cost after free trial	
<a href="#">Conservationjobboard.com</a>	Free basic listing	
<a href="#">Greenjobsearch.org</a>	Cost	
<a href="#">LinkedIn</a>	Cost	
<a href="#">Craigslist</a>	Cost	
<a href="#">America's Service Commission</a>	Cost	
<a href="#">Green Jobs Board</a>	Cost	



For any job platform with a user profile, it's important to maintain accurate and engaging information on the profile itself. Many applicants, prior to applying, will research the company profile to determine whether the opportunity is legitimate or of interest. It's also worth researching your presence on [Glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com) to get a sense for what resonates most with past applicants, service members, and employees. To enrich your company profile, have current or former employees or members post reviews of the organization.

**Note:** Because audiences for jobs sites can differ, it can be beneficial to differentiate messaging for each posting to tailor your outreach to specific audiences.

### Free Postings

- **Handshake:** Is a recruiting platform where employers, early talent, and colleges connect in one place. This tool is widely used by several college campuses across the state. The benefit of Handshake is that you can post to virtually as many college boards as you'd like for free and direct applicants to either apply to a separate URL or manage applicants in the Handshake platform itself. If your organization has several branches or regions, Handshake checks for duplicate or similar accounts. It is highly recommended that one person in the organization manage the entirety of a single organizational Handshake account.
- **Indeed:** You can post for free without optimization or pay to sponsor your job for improved results. Simply sign up for an Indeed employer account and click on "Post a Job" button. Free postings disappear within 30 days, and only appear towards the top of a search for the first 14 days of listing. You can repost positions if you want it up longer than 14 days with high visibility. Key tips here are to create a company page on Indeed, complete with photos and details, and ask current and former employees and members to submit reviews of their experience with your organization. Ensure your post is keyword-rich, listing terms for popular searches such as project coordinator, community organizer, etc. While you must pay to access applications submitted, you can message applicants directly with a request to apply via a web address you include at no additional cost.

- **My AmeriCorps Portal:** To post to the My AmeriCorps Portal, you must first have access to eGrants. Connect with your Program Officer about posting timelines, but otherwise it is a straightforward process. After submitting an opportunity listing, the Program Officer will review, approve, then post the listing. It will then be visible to all those searching for AmeriCorps positions on the portal and will be live until the date you set it to expire.
- **Returned Peace Corps Volunteers Career Site:** The Returned Peace Corps Volunteer career link is a free opportunity posting service provided by the Peace Corps Office, the Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services. Positions posted on this site are viewable to the public. Learn more about [the guidelines](#).

### Paid Postings

- **AmeriCorps Alums:** AmeriCorps Alums is a career planning portal to prepare alums for their next opportunity. Posting on the AmeriCorps Alums job board platform entails a cost. There are [three options](#) to choose from, starting at \$99 for a 60-day job posting. With a conservative budget, there is the option to purchase single resumes for \$25. Recruiters can view all resumes and select and reach out to those of interest. If the candidate is interested, the charge is only \$25 and if not interested, there is no fee.
- **VolunteerMatch:** VolunteerMatch is a robust volunteer network that consists of over 145,000 organizations. The platform provides simple and cost-effective service to help nonprofit organizations with their recruitment needs. The basic service is free and offers standard network access. Learn about [pricing and associated features](#).

# CANDIDATE SOURCING AND ENGAGEMENT

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## PURPOSE:

The purpose of lead generation, or candidate pipeline development, is to create a list of potential service candidates to contact and engage in the application process.





Generating leads throughout the year develops brand awareness and creates an enthusiastic pool of potential candidates ready to apply when applications open. Building and engaging this pool of potential candidates throughout the year mitigates the risks of a reduced recruitment budget or fewer applications from other recruitment methods.

#### **Information / Sign-Up lists at career fairs, panels, and other public events**

- It's often the case that at career fairs, panels, and information sessions, recruiters are attempting to drive awareness to the organization, but not necessarily generating applications right then and there. To continually gain these potential applicants, either post a printed QR code people can scan to reach an online interest form or carry a simple information sign-up sheet with you to events. Using that information, recruiters can engage interested potential candidates by sending program highlights, successes, invitations to events, and updates as applications become available.
- Follow-up emails are important to personalize, so any detail recruiters can recall about the applicant, the date and location could be a useful means of reintroduction and driving them back to the organization's application.
- Use a recordkeeping system to track and engage leads. Add leads to your newsletter or other communications listserv to keep them interested and informed.



### **Examples of Lead Generation Supports**

#### **Referrals from Partner Organizations**

- If recruiters have active partnerships with other service organizations which share a list of candidates that did not secure a position with their organization, these are an excellent source of potential candidates. It's highly recommended to immediately point out in conversation with these candidates how you received their information and why they might be a great fit for service in your organization. It's also recommended to reach

out within two weeks of receiving their contact information in order to limit the potential for losing them to another job or service opportunity.

#### **eGrants**

- The eGrants system allows users to "Search Potential Applicants" and to filter by fields like availability, region of interest, education, language(s) spoken, and skills. Recruiters can then create a list of contacts to call and/or email to engage them in the process and provide more information about the organization.

#### **Service Year Alliance**

- Service Year is expanding the data analytics section on the organization's dashboard. For each listing an organization has on ServiceYear.org, organizations can see how many candidates have applied to a specific listing and the number of applications received throughout the month or year.





## Candidate Engagement Strategy

**PURPOSE:** Because AmeriCorps California members are often hired many months in advance of their start date and, for a variety of other reasons (housing and stipend amount being crucial ones), candidates with signed offer letters can often withdraw prior to their orientation start date. While this may be expected, all programs try to avoid candidate withdrawals before their start date. The time and resources spent recruiting and admitting each candidate is immense. To ensure as many candidates as possible show up prepared on Day 1 of their orientation, a variety of strategies can be implemented between their offer acceptance date and their orientation date.

### Potential Candidate Engagement/Retention Strategies

1. Send members an email with links to your social media channels and encourage them to follow the organization there. Post at least once per week with a quick photo, program success, highlight or just funny meme related to your work.
2. Create and send out a monthly or bi-monthly candidate engagement newsletter to keep folks engaged and excited about their upcoming year of service.
  - » Potential content could include tips on living/planning on an AmeriCorps stipend, announcing upcoming events or trainings, or linking to internal or external service-related blog content.
3. Send members a postcard or card with a personalized message and, if applicable, information about next steps, event, or meeting. Mailed letters are a rarity, so this unique touch would stand out.
4. Selfie challenge: Ask them to send in a picture of themselves with a bio (either professional or wacky), compile, and share as a newsletter, PowerPoint, or an upcoming event with other incoming members. If the member is willing, highlight them on your social media.
5. Have your current exiting cohort create or support the creation of a welcome video to share via email or in a presentation during orientation.
6. Invite them to an optional get-together over the summer (budget-dependent): Pizza party, a service project, a potluck picnic, a hike, etc.
7. Engage your current members (particularly second-year members) in sharing wins, reflections, and stories via social media and/or a shared folder. Occasionally compile and share those snippets via email to your incoming members or in more formal newsletters.
8. Invite your incoming members to attend any regional events (fundraisers, meet-and-greets, end-of-year celebrations, volunteer appreciation nights, etc.).
9. Send members a welcome packet (with or without "homework" or next steps), either in print or electronically.
10. Provide incoming members with a current member ambassador's personal email address.  
**Note:** this should only be done with the current member's consent and with a member you trust to be professional and an excellent ambassador for service and for your organization.





# INTERVIEW RESOURCES

## PURPOSE:

Now that you have applications from candidates, interviewing them brings to life what they wrote about in their applications. Interviewing isn't just another item in your hiring checklist, but is critical to identifying the experience, interests, and diversity of your candidate pool and how potential members might work with each other and impact your program. The interview process is also your chance to get candidates invested in your programs and have a deeper understanding of what it means to commit to a year of service.







## Interview Structure

In many of our AmeriCorps California programs, it may be helpful to conduct both one-on-one interviews and group interviews. Programs may also include former or current members to participate in the interview process, as they know the program the best, having experienced firsthand what it means to be an AmeriCorps California member. They will also be able to provide their feedback and insights into candidates and help to assess whether candidates are qualified for the programs. In the end, every program will arrive at an interview structure that makes sense for their team based on capacity and the nature of the role being filled, but every interview process should be collaborative in order to include as many perspectives as possible. The following is a general framework for an interview sequence that can be modified as needed.

## Interview Framework



### 01 | SCREENING INTERVIEW

Big picture questions about interest in the organization, interest in the role and how it aligns with career goals or next steps mission and values alignment and role-oriented experience.



### 02 | SCREENING INTERVIEW DEBRIEF

Interviewer shares their screening interview notes including highlights, strengths, flags or gaps, and candidate questions with the hiring manager or hiring committee to share their recommendation and determine next steps.



### 03 | IN PERSON OR VIDEO INTERVIEW

Questions are focused on role specific and scenario-based situations to gain a deeper understanding of candidate experience skills and beliefs as they relate to the responsibilities and competencies outlined in the job description. This is also an opportunity for the candidate to ask clarifying questions, or for the interviewer to ask any follow up questions based on the screening interview.





## 04 | IN PERSON OR VIDEO INTERVIEW DEBRIEF

Interviewer shares their in-person or video interview notes including highlights, strengths, flags or gaps, and candidate questions with the hiring manager or hiring committee to share their recommendation and determine next steps.



## 05 | SITE VISIT (OPTIONAL)

Depending on program capacity, you may want to consider the option of inviting candidates who are advanced beyond the in-person or video stage to participate in an opt-in site visit which could include a program tour or info session at the office. This is another way to gauge candidate commitment, get to know them better, answer further questions they might have, and retain candidates as you approach the end of the interview process.



## 06 | REFERENCE CHECKS

Once a candidate has been interviewed in person or by video and they're being considered for an offer, it's a best practice to ask them for their references soon thereafter. Typically, two to three professional references are requested for individuals who have either managed or worked closely with the candidate.



## 07 | APPLICANT REVIEW AND SELECTION

Generally, candidate review should take place in a group setting with members of the hiring committee (see below). Applicant review and selection can take place multiple times throughout the hiring window, after a deadline has passed, and there is a pool of candidates moved from the reference stage to the offer review stage. These are candidates who have positive references overall and who appeared to be a strong fit for the role. The hiring committee should discuss candidate strengths and growth areas as they relate to program and site requirements and needs, and compare candidates accordingly as offer decisions are made.



## 08 | OFFER STAGE

Candidate is sent an offer letter via email detailing the nature of the role, start date, compensation, and contingent offer requirements such as background check and citizenship verification information. A date by which the candidate is asked to respond with an answer should be included. Typically, this stage is managed by a recruitment manager or HR manager in order to efficiently manage and track the process.

Another strategy that is employed for the interview process is matching, in which different programs establish relationships with each other for candidate interviewing and placement. With this strategy, programs can collectively interview candidates initially, then direct them to specific programs for the next stage in the interview process or redirect candidates who are further along in the process to a program that may be a better fit for them as more is learned about their interest and experience. Below are some suggestions on how you might structure your interview matching process to finalize your member cohorts.

## Interview Content

Thinking about what to include in your interview questions, think of your organizational values and how you can identify if a candidate's values align. It's also important to include questions that highlight the nature of the role or that focus on certain skill sets, such as project management, working within low-income communities, or prior experience in a service-oriented position. Scenario-based questions ("Tell me about a time when...", "Imagine you are...") are often helpful in identifying role-related



### 01 | INTERVIEWS

General individual/panel interviews to gauge candidate interest, experience and fit.



### 02 | APPROPRIATE PROGRAMS

If, after interviewing, you feel that the candidate will be a good fit for specific programs, set up interviews with host sites.



### 03 | BEST MATCH

Once Interviews have been conducted, make matches based on feedback from host sites and candidate profiles.



experience, patterns of behavior, and growth areas. An interview will also help to illuminate candidate professionalism, such as communication, presentation, and punctuality. Because all the information gained from an interview is so critical in making candidate placement decisions, it's important to take detailed notes after every interview. Finally, it's critical to use the same script for each interview stage for each candidate in order to ensure an equitable process.

## Interview Committees

In order to include varying perspectives throughout the interview process, interview committees should include staff members and stakeholders across roles and levels of the organization. A few practices to consider in creating an interview committee are:

- Ensuring that staff members from different departments are included for varied organizational insights.
- Ensuring that the committee is a diverse group of individuals to eliminate bias and include different perspectives.
- Ensuring that all members of the hiring committee have an opportunity to review interview materials ahead of time, and are trained in interviewing best practices with special attention paid to eliminating bias, cultural sensitivity, and protected classes.
- Ensuring that candidates are interviewed by a different person for each stage of the interview process to include as many perspectives as possible.
- Ensuring that there are designated roles within the hiring committee (i.e., reference checks, candidate tracking, interview debrief, and candidate selection meeting coordination).
- Ensuring that there are points throughout the hiring cycle for the committee to check in on what is going well and what isn't going well in order to make adjustments as necessary.



# COLLATERAL RESOURCES

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## PURPOSE:

Collateral is very important for recruitment and branding. It is something tangible that a person can walk away with and learn more of the details about your organization. Your brochures may be one of many that they pick up at a career fair or at a resource table at a library or community center. Building your collateral is more than just having your content on paper—you also want it to stand out from the other stacks of paper people may have

accumulated. If your materials stand out to potential applicants, especially if it's connected to a positive personal interaction with someone who gave it to them, it's more likely that they will review it more in depth and learn more about the details of your program. This section will explore best practices and additional ideas for creating outreach materials for your organization.





## Sample Recruitment Flyer



# Now Recruiting!



### Gain skills. Earn money. Build Community.

#### State Parks Trail Maintenance Member

Some Benefits Include

- \$28,000 Living Stipend
- \$10,000 Education Award
- Professional Training
- Healthcare Coverage

Must be 18+ years old, a U.S. citizen, national or permanent legal resident, and enjoy protecting our natural resources.



#### Learn More & Apply Today

## Tips & Best Practices

Below are some tips and best practices for outreach materials. This is not all-inclusive, but is meant to give you an idea of what kinds of things you should be mindful of:

- [AmeriCorps California logos](#) you can add to your recruitment flyers and other content. Please remember all promotional material must include the AmeriCorps California logo.
- AmeriCorps California recruitment [flyer template](#) and [social media graphic template](#) for you to download and personalize.
- Include a form of contact on your materials, such as a contact person, phone number, email address and/or QR code that is linked to your website.
- List the application link prominently on your website, along with a clear description of the opportunity. If you accept paper applications, make sure the form is easily downloadable from your website. Make the application process or next steps clear on your collateral.
- Get your audience emotionally invested in the work that you do and excited about joining your program by describing the opportunity to make an impact on their community, youth, or the environment. Highlight program impacts and member photos on your materials. Share member stories via social media and on your website.
- Have visuals to represent what you do as an organization, such as pictures of your members working with youth, planting trees, or rebuilding houses. Visuals are very powerful and can have more of an impact on people than words can.

- Include the benefits of the program, such as the Education Award and loan forbearance, stipend amount, and free healthcare and childcare, if eligible.
- Be sure to include the appropriate logos, such as logos for AmeriCorps California, your organization, and California Volunteers.
- Don't make your flyer or brochure too text- or content-heavy. Applicants can always contact you or visit your website if they want more information. Remember, this is a way to get their initial interest in your program and get them to take further action.
- Always have a stack of brochures or flyers with you. You never know who you will meet and where. It might even be somewhere you wouldn't expect it, such as standing in a store's checkout line or at the farmers' market.
- What kind of collateral you use and how you use it can vary depending on the situation you are in.
- **Giveaways**—These include pens and other items with your logo on it, or just candy. Giveaways help bring folks to the table so that you can provide them with information.
- **Brochures/Flyers**—People who visited your table can take these away with them so they can learn more about your organization at their own time and pace.

## Outreach Through Other Organizations

- Leave a stack of brochures or flyers with them that they can leave on their resource table for other people to take.
- Put a brochure or flyer on their bulletin board.
- Email them a sample message to share with their audiences (via their newsletter and social media) and attach a copy of your flyer.

## Digital Marketing

- Use this to spread your message across social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn).
- You can also use digital flyers to share on email listservs.

## Marketing Materials

- [Canva](#) is great free online resource to use to create stunning outreach materials.



## Career or Community Fair Collateral:

- **Banner**—Having a large banner behind your booth allows folks from across the room to see your logo and organization.





# SOCIAL MEDIA

## PURPOSE:

Social media platforms provide a means of sharing memorable and engaging content that connects followers to your mission. Leverage social media throughout the year to continually grow and engage your audience and grow general brand awareness of your organization and AmeriCorps California. Also, use these channels for targeted, time-bound recruitment efforts to promote your service opportunities. Social media enables you to connect with a wider, potentially more diverse audience and applicant pool. While not everyone uses social media to find a job, many jobs and service positions are found on social media!





## AmeriCorps California Awareness & Branding

Awareness and branding best practices on social media include:

- Continual co-branding with your organization's logo and the AmeriCorps California logo.
- Linking to relevant and recent content on your organization's page or to another reputable online resource.
- Targeted use of service and organization hashtags, depending on the purpose of the post (i.e., is your post meant to engage advocates, enlist recruits, or be shared amongst parents, etc.?).
- Use engaging photographs, attempting not to re-post the same image twice. Note: Ensure that all people in the photo have given their prior social media consent.
- If asking others to post on your organization's behalf, make their job easier by providing sample (and adaptable) language and direct application links to share.

## Sample Social Media Language

### Instagram

#AmeriCorpsCalifornia provides a chance to explore how you can make a positive difference in the lives of others while earning money. For details on how to apply, visit [hyperlink your program website].

Where can service take you? #AmeriCorpsCalifornia will help you develop professional skills while earning money, education awards and making a difference in the community. Learn more at [hyperlink your program website].

### Instagram Stories

Build Skills. Help Others. Earn Money. Learn how: [hyperlink your program website].

Help your community while earning a living stipend and money for college. Learn more: [hyperlink your program website].

Want to make a difference in the lives of others and earn a living stipend and education awards? Learn more at [hyperlink your program website].

## X (formerly Twitter)

Step up to serve your community and California will invest in you and help pay for college or trade school expenses. Learn more about #AmeriCorpsCalifornia at [hyperlink your program website].

Make a change in the world, join #AmeriCorpsCalifornia—it's an opportunity to uplift yourself, your community, and gain tools and resources to help you in the future. Apply at [hyperlink your program website].

## Facebook

Make a change in your community and yourself with #AmeriCorpsCalifornia. Build your confidence and professional network while earning a living stipend and money for school. Learn more at [hyperlink your program website].

Be part of something bigger while earning money, contributing to your community and solving big problems. Learn more at [hyperlink your program website]. #AmeriCorpsCalifornia

## LinkedIn

Great jobs aren't always listed online—they're found through the networks you build and the value you bring to your professional community. #AmeriCorpsCalifornia is a great way to gain work experience and make new connections while helping others and earning money. Learn how at [hyperlink your program website].

Being an #AmeriCorpsCalifornia member will show you how small actions can have a big impact—on your community and your future. Learn more about the program and eligibility requirements at [hyperlink your program website].

## AmeriCorps Photos

Need photos of members in action to include on a flyer or other materials? Download photos from [AmeriCorps - Bringing out the Best of America | Flickr](#).

# APPENDIX/ RESOURCES

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The links below lead to reference documents, templates, samples and articles to learn more and build your skills in each subject area.

- [Arc of the Year](#)
- [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#)
- [Partnerships](#)
- [Creating an Attractive Opportunity Post](#)
- [Candidate Sourcing](#)
- [Interview Resources](#)
- [Collateral Resources](#)
- [Social Media](#)



# MISSION

TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF YOUNG MEN  
OF COLOR TO ATTEND AND GRADUATE FROM  
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.



## Recruitment Toolkit

1400 10th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 323-7646

[californiavolunteers.ca.gov](http://californiavolunteers.ca.gov)