



Service Year Impact Community FAQ

What is a service year?

- A service year is a paid full-time opportunity to develop real-world skills through hands-on service while building change from the ground up.
- Young adults may participate in a service year after high school, during or after college, or when they are searching for an opportunity to find a new path, looking to gain skills and experience for a job, or wanting a career change.
- Service year corps members develop workplace skills through their service -- things like teamwork, problem solving, communications, leadership, and customer service. They may also receive specialized training that relates to specific workforce fields.
- Service year programs meet unmet needs in communities, such as education, youth recreation, environmental conservation, disaster relief, health and wellness, aging, and many more. You can see examples of many different types of service programs on the Service Year Exchange, serviceyear.org.
- Some of the most popular service year programs have names that may be familiar: AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Teach for America, Habitat for Humanity, YouthBuild, and City Year to name a few. There are hundreds of additional programs as well that host service year opportunities that may be less well known.
- It's an extraordinary year that transforms young people, communities, and our society.

What needs to be in the Service Year Impact Community Plan?

A Service Year Impact Community must develop and implement strategies to meet the goal of making service years a common expectation and opportunity for all young Americans in their community.

The plan should:

- Provide a clear vision of success.
- Define specific community need(s) and measurable goals to be addressed by scaling service year positions. The plan should design service year positions that align with city, region, and/or state priorities.
- Identify collective goals and delineate plans for building a collaborative effort aimed at meeting the identified collective goals.
- Outline clear systems for accountability and measurement of progress towards the plan such as measurable goals, specific actions, and milestones.
- Define the roles for each partner and who is accountable for aspects of the plan.
- Set growth target for the number of service year positions.
- Sketch out plan to build systems and infrastructure for sharing resources, strategies, data and best practices.
- Outline expected sources of funding for corps member living allowances and other program cost to ensure sustainability of the effort.
- Include a timetable.



What type of actions might a Service Year Impact Community take as part of their Service Year Impact Community Plan?

Examples of actions that a Service Year Impact Community might take could include but are not limited to:

- Hire a designated member to lead the effort.
- Convene service year corps members across programs for orientation, training, joint projects, national days of service and graduation.
- Foster a shared identity and common experiences across all service year corps members in the community.
- Secure a lead funder to offer a challenge grant to inspire other funders to invest or organize fundraising events.
- Create an “accelerator fund” - a common pool of funding - to support the initiative.
- Create new local funding models to support service year positions.
- Launch a region-wide recruitment campaign to recruit diverse young residents to serve.
- Build infrastructure to support a network for service year organizations in the community to share best practices.
- Develop strategies that will advance service year corps member careers and education goals.
- Recruit local employers that would offer all corps members who complete their term of service a guaranteed interview or other incentives such as an internship.
- Build a network of residents and landlords who can offer housing to corps members.

Is the program limited to cities?

No. Counties, towns, tribal lands or even multi-jurisdictional regions can participate.

Should initiatives cover the whole city or can they focus on a neighborhood?

In the case of a large city, it might make sense to pilot the initiative in one neighborhood, a housing project, a set of schools that form a feeder pattern, or another specific community. The initiative could grow from there.

Is the support of the Chief Executive of the City or County Required?

No, but is strongly encouraged.

What is the duration?

The period of designation is 24 months. It is during this time that the communities will be eligible for Service Year Alliance assistance. The communities may still refer to themselves as a Service Year Impact Community beyond the formal period noted above.