

BECOMING A SERVICE YEAR IMPACT COMMUNITY



Service Year Impact Communities are local collaboratives utilizing service years as a strategy to address community needs. By coordinating local efforts, impact communities work to create the conditions for universal national service – service that is impactful, equitable, offers career, education, and civic opportunity, and exists at scale – on the local level.

[Learn more about our Impact Communities](#)

Applicant Eligibility

Due to the nature of the initiative, activities are likely to be carried out by a variety of organizations and organization types. Eligible applicants to become a Service Year Impact Community include, but are not limited to: units of general local government, nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, or community foundations. Applicants will be responsible to Service Year Alliance for fulfilling the responsibilities of a Service Year Impact Community in collaboration with community partners.

Benefits of Being an Impact Community

Undertaking the work of an Impact Community has a variety of benefits for programs, corps members, and communities. Impact Communities double the return on investment of national service, help connect corps members to the broader work happening around them, and help to make service years more effective and resilient.

Additional benefits of being a member of the Service Year Impact Community network include:

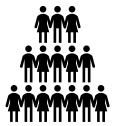
- Access to a network of practitioners working to make universal national service a reality in their communities, including in-person convenings
- Monthly coaching and technical support from Service Year Alliance to advance the collaborative work in your community/region
- Preferential consideration for Service Year Alliance grant-funded projects and programs
- A web presence on the Service Year Alliance's website and frequent promotions of work through conversations, conferences, and public-facing communications
- Opportunities to be featured in Service Year Alliance's monthly newsletter, *The Connector*, to over two thousand service year program contacts and partners
- Creation of a network page on ServiceYear.org to promote open service year opportunities in your community/region

Selection Criteria

Successful applicants will have:

Demonstrated interest, ambition, and capacity to work towards universal national service (UNS) principles by making service years a strategy for community needs and a common opportunity and expectation for Americans at the local level. Applicants should demonstrate a commitment to the principles of universal national service and a plan to tackle at least one principle in their community for the first two years of becoming an Impact Community. The principles of UNS are:

Service Year Alliance considers universal national service to mean that approximately a quarter of all young people participate in a service year between the ages of 18-28 so that over the course of many years, a quarter of the US population will have served. More information on the conditions for universal national service can be found [here](#).



Exist at **scale**



Meet the demand our nation has to address unmet **needs**, which may evolve and change over time



Be an **opportunity** for all (including through pay)



Build **pathways** to long-term success for individuals



Fuel **civic renewal**

Exhibited strong relationships with and commitment from community stakeholders and leaders to work towards the Service Year Impact Community effort.

A coalition committed to the Service Year Impact Community effort. While all stakeholders listed below are not required to become a Service Year Impact Community, the existing coalition should have at least three types of the stakeholders groups represented in the partnership, with plans to engage other stakeholders as part of the coalition in the future. Coalition partners could include:

- A local leader or organization with a history of convening others around shared challenges and opportunities
- Existing local service year programs
- A local government agency
- State service commission
- Higher education institutions
- Managing partner(s) willing to staff the effort beyond the lead organization (coordinate meetings, collect data, manage communications, etc.)
- A lead funder willing to contribute and engage other funders
- Employment partners
- Other key stakeholders as identified

Expectations of Impact Community Network Members

Once accepted, applicants should plan to commit to the following:

- Participate in monthly Impact Community Network calls (currently 3rd Thursday at 2pm EST) and regular check-ins with Service Year Alliance team
- Attend annual conference (travel scholarships are often available)
- Work to develop a community plan that incorporates service years as a strategy
- Commit to working with Service Year Alliance to collect data and evidence that can be utilized by other communities and/or highlight the impact of service years in communities
- Develop service year growth benchmarks and understand the growth potential of your community – growth benchmarks are the act of increasing the number and opportunity of service year positions in a location
- Identify annual activities tied to advancing UNS principles in your community and building more champions and funding resources for service years

Application



Please provide the following information about your potential Impact Community:

Note: Service Year Alliance recognizes that some demographic data points may be difficult to collect. If one or two demographic data points are significantly holding up your application, please connect with your Service Year Alliance contact and we will likely waive the need for you to include that information with a commitment to work towards collecting that information in the future.

Name of entity applying:

Entity type (local government, nonprofit, higher education institution, etc.):

Point(s) of contact (name, title, and email address):

Target community or region:

If applicable, description of boundaries comprising the region (i.e. counties and major cities):

Coalition members and partnership structure (roles and responsibilities):

Note if there is a regular meeting structure or structure to the coalition, any specific roles organizations/staff are playing, and/or organizations involved.

Demographics of your target community or region

Total population:

Race and ethnicity breakdown:

Estimated number of young people ages 18-28:

Major non-English languages, if applicable:

Major industries or employers, if known:

Major higher education institutions:

High school drop-out rate:

Other key data, if applicable:

Approximate number of service year programs

Federally funded through AmeriCorps, YouthBuild, etc.

Non-federally funded

Approximate number of service year positions (member serving year, or break downs of full-time and part-time)

Federally funded through AmeriCorps, YouthBuild, etc.

Non-federally funded

Demographic information can be found using resources like [City-Data](#), [DataUSA](#), and [Census.gov](#). Information about AmeriCorps positions can be found on the AmeriCorps [Website](#). If you are unable to find a particular statistic for your region after due diligence, you may leave that section blank.

Application Narrative

The narrative should respond to the following questions, in no particular order. While there is no minimum or maximum length for the narrative, clarity and brevity are preferred.

Briefly, what is your vision for your Impact Community? How would UNS principles align with your community's needs?

Why is/are the lead organization(s) well-positioned to steer this initiative and represent the Impact Community, and how with this effort be staffed?

In short, how do you imagine your Impact Community working towards each of the five UNS principles – existing at scale, addressing unmet needs, opportunity for all, career pathways, and civic renewal?

Which principle(s) will be your primary focus in the beginning, and how long do you expect that to be your primary focus? What is your plan for achieving your primary focus(es) in that timeline? What do you need in order to achieve it in your community?

What stakeholders have you identified as necessary but not currently part of your coalition? How do you plan to engage them as a member of or partner to your Impact Community?

Letter(s) of Support

Please include as part of your application a letter or letters that demonstrate support from key local leader(s). This should ideally be from a mayor, county executive, or governor's office/state service commission, a major higher education institution or employment partner, a critical community leader, or a key funder.

How to Apply:

Please submit your application and letter(s) of support in PDF format to partnerships@serviceyear.org, cc'ing Brooke Bohnet bbohnet@serviceyear.org. Include the subject line: *[COMMUNITY NAME] Impact Community Application*

Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt of their application. Service Year Alliance will review incoming applications periodically. Notification of decision will be sent via email within 45 days of receipt of the application.

