

Grant Continuation Report from Task Force

Recommendation: Authorize positions requested and funding after required minimum match is met.

Legal Applicant: Greater Portland Council of Governments

Program Name: AmeriCorps Resilience Corps

Category: AC Formula
 AC Competitive
 Other Competition

Type: Planning
 Operating
 Fixed Price
 Ed Award Only

Year in Grant Cycle: Year 1 Year 2 Year 3

Continuation Dates: Start: 10/10/2022
End: 10/09/2022

New Resources for Continuation: Funds and Slots

	CNCS	Local Share	% change from prior year				
Operating	9,652	27,833					
Member Support	334,317	54,473					
Indirect (Admin)	18,177	42,438					
% sharing proposed	74%	26%					
% share required	70%	30%					
Cost-per-member proposed (max allowed)	\$25,868						
Total AmeriCorps Member Service Years: 14 MSY							
		Slot Types Requested					
		FT	HT	RHT	QT	MT	Total
Slots With living allowance							
Slots with only ed award							

Program Description (executive summary from grant application):

CONTINUATION CONDITION – Executive summary must be updated to correctly state year 3 funding.
 The Greater Portland Council of Government proposes to have 14 AmeriCorps members who will enable increased capacity and impact of the municipalities and agencies throughout the greater Portland and Lakes region of Cumberland County. The AmeriCorps Resilience Corps members will be responsible for increased local and regional capacity for community resilience by directly adding capacity and support to Resilience work in municipalities and local non-profits. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will be engaged in program activities including data collection, planning, outreach, engagement, and project implementation. This program will concentrate on the CNCS focus area(s) of capacity building. *The total federal award is \$363,746. The CNCS investment of \$252,000 will be matched with \$121,244, \$121,244 in public funding and estimated \$0 in private funding. The remaining portion of the budget, \$111,746, funded by ARPA funds is not required to have a match.

Service locations (new sites are italicized):

Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP), City of Portland Office of Economic Opportunity, City of South Portland Sustainability Office, Greater Portland Council of Governments, New England Environmental Finance Center, Portland Trails, Town of Falmouth Sustainability Office, Wild Seed Project

Performance measures (targets and achievement for prior years; targets proposed for new year):

Performance Measure: Communities lack the capacity to effectively recruit and support

Output: Number of organizations that received capacity building services

Target = 12

Actual = 6

New target = 12

Outcome: Number of organizations that increase efficiency, effectiveness and/or program reach

Target = 9

Actual = 0 (Number will be reported in later quarters)

New target = 9

Performance Measure: Member Development

Output: # of AmeriCorps members trained

Target = 14

Actual = 9

New target = 14

Outcome: # of AC members that have increased knowledge and skills

Target = 11

Actual = 0 (measure will be reported in later quarters)

New target = 11

Performance Measure: Capacity Building

Output: Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were managed by AmeriCorps members or program

Target = 15

Actual = 0 (measure will be reported in later quarters)

New target = 15

Outcome: New Volunteer Management Practices

Target = 2

Actual = 0 (measure will be reported in later quarters)

New target = 2

Output: Number of community volunteers recruited and managed by AmeriCorps members or program

Target = 5

Actual = 0 (measure will be reported in later quarters)

New target = 5

Operating performance summary:

GPCOG was only able to enroll 9 Full-Time Corps Members (out of 14 FT MSY positions). They interviewed and made over 14 offers, but ultimately had several individuals turn down the position, primarily due to the availability of higher-paying job opportunities. To rectify this, they submitted a slot change requests to create several Reduced-Full-Time and Half-Time positions to fill in February and March 2022.

RECRUITMENT/ENROLLMENT – use of positions awarded to program for the program year

Service Term	Awarded slots	Used Slots	% of enrollment
1700	9	9	100%
1200	3	2	66.7%
900	5	1	20%
675			
450			
300			
<i>Overall</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>70.60%</i>

RETENTION – keeping members engaged once they are enrolled.

Service Term	Filled slots	Left early	Successfully completed	% retained
1700	9	1	8	88.9%
1200	1	0	1	100%
900	2	0	2	100%
675				
450				
300				
<i>Overall</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>91.7%</i>

Operating performance summary:

» Program operation

GPCOG’s demonstrates their program’s impact on capacity within their Host Sites, the added support of a full-time Resilience Corps member adds 20-100% additional capacity to their teams for one year to advance regional resilience. The members are having an impact on environmental resilience and climate action. 5 out of 9 Resilience Corps Members are placed in positions in which they are focusing on these issues. The Climate Action Planning Fellow is doing community outreach and data collection to create a Climate Action Plan for the Town of Falmouth. The Sustainability Fellow has written two publications (Amjambo Africa and the South Portland Sentry) to educate and engage the public with their Climate Action Plan. The Climate Resilience Finance Fellow wrote a finance guidance document for municipalities looking for ways to finance climate work, while the Active Transportation Fellow is helping to make Portland’s trail network more inclusive and accessible to people of all backgrounds by collecting data on usage and barriers to use.

During the past two quarters, and prior to the term start for new members, all hosts participated in a host site orientation and training with the Program Manager. This training covered AmeriCorps terminology (i.e. serve vs work, enroll vs hire, living stipend vs salary), prohibited activities, program history, OnCorps timesheets, host site requirements and management expectations, and more. In addition, all 6 external hosts had one on one meetings with the Program Manager to review any outstanding questions and to talk about the Corps Member’s projects and projected bandwidth. Because all Fellows are serving partially remote (and at most go into an office 2-3 days per week), check ins and monitoring has been done remotely.

Regarding program management, the Program Manager, Julia Breul, began the Institute for Civic Leadership. This is a 9-month leadership development program operated by MDF that trains and empowers individuals to be empathetic, collaborative, inclusive, and effective leaders, managers, and change-makers. One significant staffing change is that Andrew Butcher, formally the main point of contact for this program, no longer works at GPCOG. The main point of contact is now Julia Breul.

» Member management

GPCOG takes great pride in making their program a positive, meaningful, and satisfying opportunity for members. One of the ways they do this is by building community amongst the members. Even though they’re

doing totally different things on a day-to-day basis, they bring them together twice per week to connect and share out about what they're working on, what successes or exciting things have happened, what they're interested in, what they hope to do in the future, and more. In orientation, they created a team charter to summarize how they would interact with one another.

Corps Members participated in many trainings, including how to work with and in local government, facilitation, remote work tips and tricks, ergonomics, the history of national service in the US, and more. They also heard backgrounds on GPCOG's work in economic development, sustainability, transit and transportation, housing accessibility, data and mapping, and community engagement. After orientation, Corps Members began a six-week Foundations of Project Management graduate-level course via Northeastern University's Roux Institute. This course met once per week for 90 minutes and introduced, reviewed, and discussed the foundations of project initiation, planning, monitoring, and controlling, and closing processes within the context of nonprofits. The course also introduced the emerging concepts of Agile and business analysis in project management.

The Resilience Corps Members all participated in a racial equity challenge which consisted of 21 days of reading or videos on the topic of racial equity and three debrief conversations with the full group and breakout sessions. The goal of this challenge is to increase their understanding of the topic and to get members to think about they can try to center equity in the service they'll be doing as part of the Resilience Corps.

Other things GPCOG does to check in on members and make sure they're doing well are quarterly 1 on 1 meetings with Program Manager to review their goals, successes, challenges, needs, bandwidth, and more. Often, every single member has an additional, ad hoc 1 on 1 meeting with the Program Manager each quarter to check in one issue or another. The goal is to ensure they feel supported by their supervisor (who they have a 1 on 1 check in with every week) in addition to the Program Manager – together creating a web of support for them.

» Program Finances and Agency Fiscal Issues

For the first time, GPCOG collected host site fees from external host sites. In Q1, they collected \$27,750.00 in host site fees to help ensure the financial sustainability of the program and offset the costs GPCOG otherwise incurs while running this program

Task Force Review Summary:

- With minor staff comments, the budget is appropriate for the program.
- While the program did not fully meet this year's recruitment goals, it came relatively close and did make slot adjustments during the year to allow for continued recruitment. They have propose some recruitment changes that may address this issue, although I recognize the recruitment environment remains challenging.
- Continue to monitor the program to ensure that it meets the member direct service requirements.
- Have some concern that portions of this program are more oriented at building the capacity of partner organizations than the capacity of the community.
- Improve timeliness of reports.