

## **FINAL DRAFT December 2022**

### **Maine Climate Corps Network**

The Climate Corps is a strategy in *Maine Won't Wait*, the state's climate action plan, to engage Maine's people and communities in responding to climate change. The Maine Climate Corps Network (MCCN) is a group of service corps programs contributing to the goals of *Maine Won't Wait*. MCCN programs demonstrate the attributes of high-quality service corps programs and fulfill the statutory requirements of the Climate Corps (see checklist of attributes below).

#### **Objectives:**

The purpose of the Network is to grow, strengthen, and coordinate Climate Corps programs and service activities in Maine.

Baseline criteria for participation will ensure programs are consistent in their quality; the brand will be meaningful to prospective participants, policymakers, and funders.

The network will ensure the Maine Climate Corps reflects the triple bottom line of service: action addressing the problem; training and experience for the Corps member; and increased resiliency in the community.

Programs in the network will be able to access resources from Volunteer Maine and from their peers.

The network will enable programs to communicate as a unified voice to potential participants, partners, funders, and policymakers. This will include recruitment strategies, reporting of results, and fundraising.

#### **Enrollment Process**

Programs funded by the Commission and that are focused on Climate Action will be part of MCCN.

Independently-funded service programs may complete an application (see checklist below), meet with the Climate Corps coordinator to discuss mutual expectations and needs, and confirm enrollment through a signed MOU.

#### **Maine Climate Corps Network Benefits and Expectations**

Upon enrollment in the Maine Climate Corps Network, programs will:

- participate in a community of practice with other organizations (likely with meetings remote and/or in-person on a quarterly basis);
- access resources, technical assistance, and professional development from the Volunteer Maine Climate Corps Coordinator;
- have access to a Climate Corps training program for members;
- have access to Maine Climate Corps branding and marketing resources and be invited to identify as, "Program Name, a Maine Climate Corps Program;"
- Shared participation in public events/service projects such as Earth Month.

Opportunities to gather (virtually or in-person) as a community of practice will be coordinated by the Climate Corps Coordinator. Program staff and leaders will have the opportunity to gain support, share best practices, and troubleshoot program development and implementation. Program staff will have the

opportunity to coordinate service delivery, collaborate, and coordinate growth and expansion. Participation in the Maine Climate Corps Network may make programs eligible for future grant funding or score higher in grant competitions (as funds are allocated). Reporting to Volunteer Maine may be required to convey to funders successes and challenges.

Minimum participation/engagement parameters will be set for the programs to remain in the Network.

### **Eligibility to be a Climate Corps Network Program**

To qualify as a member of the Maine Climate Corps Network, Programs must meet the following criteria:

- Externally focused on service delivery
- Contributes directly to the goals of Maine’s Climate Action Plan (and/or other climate mitigation and resilience goals as revised or updated)
- In one of eight areas of climate action: transportation, energy, housing, coastal zone, public health, land and fresh water preservation, community resilience, climate education
- Activities aligned with current, generally accepted science
- Solutions developed through community collaboration, including Indigenous collaboration
- Recruitment of Corps members is equitable, inclusive, and accessible with a goal to recruit members that reflect the local diversity of the community (though members are not required to be residing in the community at the time of application)
- Prioritizes activities that benefit communities disproportionately harmed by climate change
- Defined terms of service for Corps members
- Benefits provided to full-time members so they can fulfill their service commitment. This must include a living allowance and insurance.
- Will provide training, meaningful certifications/credentials, and professional networking to prepare the Member for successful service delivery and a post-service career pathway in climate action
- Will have a minimum of 2 members to qualify as a program
- Dedicated program manager/leader

To maintain status in the Maine Climate Corps Network, the program will meet or actively progress in the following criteria:

- Collaborate with other mission-aligned organizations or agencies, via a coalition or other model
- Offer a living wage (\$17.88/hour equivalent<sup>1</sup>) to participants
- Engage in service activities with Corps members and community volunteers (community volunteerism may take many different forms from direct, hands-on participation to volunteer advisory councils).
- Member experience fosters life-long civic engagement
- Empowers beneficiaries, especially those who have been underrepresented, under resourced, and/or previously excluded, to set priorities, and design and implement solutions to the challenges they face.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator: <https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/23> This is a high bar given current resources for AmeriCorps and other service programs. It’s understood that programs may only be able to demonstrate incremental progress on this goal.

- Organizational investment in program manager/leader

The following types of programs are NOT eligible for Maine Climate Corps Network participation:

- programs that lobby or engage in political advocacy
- programs that have no community volunteer service (service-learning is sufficient)
- programs that primarily conduct research

*Note: It is Ok for the program sponsor to engage in the above activities separate from the Climate Corps program.*

The following organizations are NOT eligible for Maine Climate Corps Network participation:

- for-profits
- organizations that discriminate based on race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation
- organizations that are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including accessibility and reasonable accommodations for employees, volunteers, and clients.