

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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The [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#) invests approximately \$1 billion above FY 2021 fiscal year appropriations in AmeriCorps to remain available through September 30, 2024. This funding in federal resources will be used to increase and support the agency's core programming of grants and resources to communities over an approximate three-year period and allow for the agency to offer more national service and volunteer opportunities to the American public through AmeriCorps programs.

ARP is an unprecedented effort to stop the spread of COVID-19 and respond to the public health, education, and economic crisis caused by the pandemic. This funding will position AmeriCorps to make significant, targeted investments, with a specific focus on support for underserved and disproportionately impacted communities.

The American Rescue Plan mandates the agency direct programming in the following ways:

- Increase the living allowance for AmeriCorps State and National and AmeriCorps VISTA members;
- Make service more accessible and inclusive by:
  - Prioritizing entities serving communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and utilizing culturally competent and multi-lingual strategies in the provision of services
  - Taking into account the diversity of communities and participants served by such entities, including racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic or geographic diversity.
- Help stabilize existing national service programs

Three of the four AmeriCorps signature programs are receiving funding from ARP.

**AmeriCorps State and National (\$645M)****Increase the minimum living allowance**

- New minimum living allowance of \$16,000 for fulltime AmeriCorps State and National members, effective Summer 2021.
- Steady increases to the living allowance are anticipated for each year of ARP funding.

**Offer match replacement funds**

- Provide matching funds to grantees unable to raise required cash match. Priority will be given to grantees whose AmeriCorps investment is \$500,000 or less. ASN will determine the match replacement pool as a portion of the ARP competitive funding and a portion to be determined by formula funds issued to State Commissions.



### **New planning grants**

- Provide local elected leadership access to planning grant funds earmarked for community-based organizations who focus on low representation of AmeriCorps members and in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID using culturally competent and multilingual strategies. Priority on community diversity; spanning racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic and geographic diversity.

### **State Service Commissions**

- New grant funds will be eligible to be used to support staff salaries, localized grantmaking, monitoring and oversight initiatives, and training/technical assistance. Additional ARP funds will be distributed to State Commissions to manage additional ARP AmeriCorps resources in their states.

## **AmeriCorps VISTA (\$80M)**

### **Increase the living stipend for eligible members**

- New minimum living allowance of \$15,002 for fulltime AmeriCorps VISTA members, effective Summer 2021

### **Summer Associate growth to address urgent COVID issues**

- Add 1,000 Summer Associate positions in Summer 2021

### **Additional VISTA Members**

- Focus on community needs and will prioritize COVID 19 vaccine education and outreach, food insecurity; learning loss

## **AmeriCorps Seniors (\$30M)**

### **Increase in volunteers**

- RSVP, the Foster Grandparent Program, and Senior Companion Program will add more than 7,500 new older adult volunteers across the country through expansion competitions and demonstration program grants.

### **Immediate funding for highest priority COVID response opportunities**

- Programs to focus on vaccinations, vaccine outreach and education, and summer learning loss and enrichment programs for our nation's students.

### **Subsequent funding opportunities for longer term recovery efforts**

- Programs that support continued education efforts, health and wellness recovery, and critical needs identified by communities.

### **Targeted Populations**

- Projects that serve Veterans and military families, populations that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, such as Tribal nations and African Americans, and communities that have been hard to reach, including rural communities.
- Programs for senior volunteers in communities that have not previously received AmeriCorps Seniors resources.



### **Innovation**

- Implement innovative and research-based programs designed to meet community specific needs as they reopen. AmeriCorps Seniors will support grantees in exploring the Evidence Exchange for evidenced-based programming models.

### **Volunteer Generation Fund (\$20M)**

- The agency seeks to fund effective approaches that expand volunteering, strengthen the capacity of volunteer connector organizations to recruit and retain skill-based volunteers, and develop strategies to use volunteers effectively to solve problems
- This opportunity will expand eligibility to community-based organization and help drive an increase in the diversity of applicants.
- Separate Notice of Funding Opportunity to be released at same time as FY22 annual notice.

### **National Service Trust (\$148M)**

- AmeriCorps continues to assess the number of additional individuals who may be eligible for an education award because of expanded agency activities under ARP.
- Following this assessment, the agency will continue discussions with OMB regarding flexibilities allowed for Trust funding under ARP. AmeriCorps does not seek allotment of the ARP trust funds in FY21 and instead intends to seek the necessary allotment in FY 2022 when the scope of the agency's expanded activities becomes clearer.

### **Additional Agency ARP Decisions**

- AmeriCorps will use the remaining funding to support the agency workforce and technology enhancements to improve ease of access, expand applicant diversity, and drive improved engagement.
- ARP service will be evaluated with close collaboration with colleagues in the Office of Budget and Office of Research and Evaluation to ensure the agency measures and reports outputs and outcomes of-service funded with ARP dollars.
- AmeriCorps is prioritizing improvement or replacement of its antiquated grant-making system to reduce the barriers to equitable expansion of AmeriCorps' programming and national service participation and has directed eligible programs to allocate 2% of ARP funds (\$15M total) to this.