



Annual Performance Report in Brief

A Message from CEO Michael Smith

I am pleased to present AmeriCorps' inaugural Annual Performance Report (APR) in Brief to our many partners who support our mission to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. We are delighted to kick off this new annual tradition with a report overflowing with goals met, good news, and inspiration. As we build upon this practice in the years to come, we know we will enjoy looking back at these archives of our progress over time.

Since the first AmeriCorps members were sworn in thirty years ago, AmeriCorps has represented a bipartisan, unifying American expression of our strongest ideals. The National Service movement brings together people of all backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs to work towards common goals and serve missions greater than themselves.

In 2022, in the wake of a historic pandemic, a global reckoning on race, and a significant economic upheaval, the need for national service and the opportunity to meet President Biden's call for unity was more apparent than ever. AmeriCorps established a four-year strategic plan in direct response to these factors. Our 2022-2026 strategic plan outlined AmeriCorps' vision to modernize our work, further tell our story, and expand our impact. This report summarizes the achievements we have made in each of the five goals of the strategic plan to date.

There is a lot to celebrate! In FY23 alone, we granted over \$1B to organizations providing critical services in their communities. We established key partnerships with other federal agencies and the private sector to strengthen the benefits offered to our service participants and expand our reach. Since the start of the Biden-Harris Administration AmeriCorps' partnership efforts have engaged more than

\$465 million

to support AmeriCorps and its programs. And we improved the lives of over five million Americans who needed a helping hand.

AmeriCorps staff, partners, and especially members and volunteers, work tirelessly to lead

our national legacy of service to others. More than ever, our National Service movement represents a bridge between growing divides, a light during dark times, and hope when the path is unclear. We hope you will share our successes and join us on our path forward.



Our Mission & Vision

AmeriCorps' mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Our purpose is to bring out the best of America.

Every day in communities across the country, AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers work directly with national, regional, or local nonprofit organizations to meet critical community needs.

This Annual Performance Report (APR) in Brief provides performance results that enable the President, Congress, and the public to assess AmeriCorps accomplishments against the goals and objectives outlined in [AmeriCorps' 2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#).

AmeriCorps' 2022-2026 Strategic Plan

AmeriCorps' 2022-2026 Strategic Plan defines the agency's goals, objectives, and strategies to meet and exceed our mission. Our goals are to:

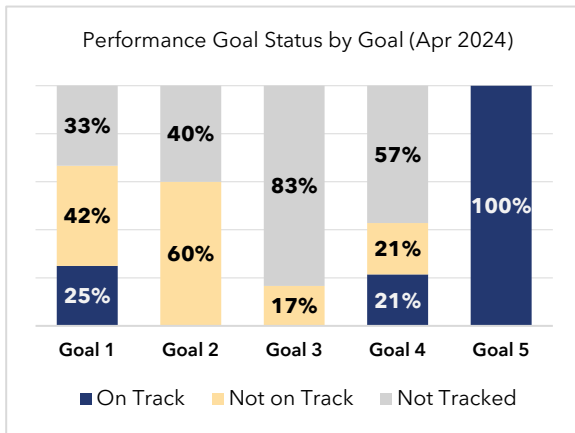


1. Partner with communities to alleviate poverty and advance racial equity;
2. Enhance the experience for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers;
3. Unite Americans by bringing them together in service;
4. Effectively steward federal resources; and
5. Make AmeriCorps one of the best and most equitable places to work in the federal government.

AmeriCorps has leveraged the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan to connect local organizations with

people to meet pressing challenges, including building a more inclusive and equitable future for all.

As AmeriCorps has implemented this work, we have made significant progress toward achieving our strategic plan goals. At the same time, we identified the need to prioritize aspects of our strategic plan. The reasons for this range from operational best practices to internal and external factors—including our funding environment, the global pandemic, evolving agency maturity, and capacity constraints of individual offices. We are focused on achieving as many of our goals as possible, and our strategic vision remains unchanged.



This chart demonstrates progress to date on AmeriCorps' performance goals¹. On a scale of ambitious to achievable, AmeriCorps' goals skew ambitious. While challenging, the agency has improved and matured its performance mechanisms in critical areas, including data collection, governance, documentation, reporting, and accountability. As AmeriCorps strives to achieve its goals, the agency is on track to produce highly reliable results and will continue to improve its performance, reporting, and transparency year over year.

Agency Performance Commitment

AmeriCorps' 2022-2026 Strategic Plan establishes a national framework to achieve the agency's mission. In addition to progressing toward our strategic goals, AmeriCorps has

¹ AmeriCorps' key performance indicators (KPIs or other indicators) do not have targets & are not represented.

consistently made decisions that demonstrate our commitment to enhanced performance management. These decisions have resulted in:

- materially improving our FISMA² audit scores over the past three years;
- rightsizing agency internal functions under a recently redesigned structure, including human capital functionality, rebuilding capacity from the ground up;
- significantly improving FEVS³ scores and providing supervisors with tools and training for managing a remote workforce.

At AmeriCorps, we hold ourselves accountable for our strategic goals and act on critical management issues identified as challenges across the government.⁴

Achieving our goals and empowering a continuous improvement and learning culture does not happen in a vacuum. At AmeriCorps, challenges and limitations in our grantmaking and performance implementation have necessitated hard choices and yielded learning opportunities that we will explore as we develop our next 2026-2030 Strategic Plan. Some of these challenges and limitations are:

- improving participant benefits like the living allowance and eligible AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers' stipend while seeking to maintain a consistent footprint of program participants across our country;
- increasing the diversity of our applicant organizations while managing finite resources;
- reducing the administrative burden on our grantees and awarded organizations while safeguarding federal resources and ensuring participant safety and compliance; and
- providing superior customer experience and achieving performance gains while modernizing legacy technology with a stable, iterative approach.

Despite the obstacles inherent in some of these examples, AmeriCorps' performance continues to

² [Public Law 113 - 283 - Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 - Content Details](#)

³ [Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey - OPM.gov](#)

⁴ [Top Management and Performance Challenges Facing Multiple Federal Agencies \(ignet.gov\)](#)

improve and mature. Each day, we take steps to resolve pressure points and identify credible, creative, sustainable solutions informed by data and evidence.

We are substantially improving and strengthening our overall agency alignment across budget, risk, performance, evaluation and learning, and governance. AmeriCorps is implementing OMB best practices and collaborates across agency partners to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

Our efforts have helped us achieve recognition as one of only four federal agencies with de facto spending of more than 1% of the program budget on evaluation-related activities⁵. We can only strengthen our agency business functions and performance through critical management investments in agency-wide evidence building. AmeriCorps continues to target and will identify 1% of the agency operating budget to support Evidence Act-related agency research and evaluation to inform decision-making. AmeriCorps is committed to achieving our mission within our resources and informed by our best learning.

The agency looks forward to ensuring that, as we expand our community impact, we also increase our operational accountability and assist underserved individuals and communities nationwide. To paraphrase the AmeriCorps pledge: We are AmeriCorps, and we get things done.

Goal Performance Highlights

AmeriCorps reports on the following strategic goals, key metrics, and objectives from our 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. These highlights include a cross-section of overall performance and fiscal year-specific results. They showcase AmeriCorps' targeted grantmaking, emphasis on participants, commitment to federal resource stewardship, and championing our internal agency culture.

Goal 1

Grantmaking and service are what we do, and every day, AmeriCorps participants work hard in

⁵ [Federal Agencies Recognized for Progress in Building Evidence and Data to Improve Results](#), Results for America.

communities across the country. AmeriCorps' grants, members, and volunteers are addressing public health needs, improving the natural environment, responding to disasters, and creating educational and economic opportunities for the most vulnerable.

In support of these activities, AmeriCorps awarded and supported:

\$1.05 billion⁶
funding to communities (FY 2023)

5.57 million
people helped (FY 2022)

AmeriCorps' accomplishments are the accomplishments of our grantees, members, and volunteers. Last year, more than:

- **13,000** AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers served to improve the economic well-being and security of underserved individuals.
- **55,000** AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers provided cost-effective, high-impact services to address schools' most pressing needs and ensure students are ready for college, careers, and full participation in civic life.
- **35,000** AmeriCorps members and volunteers worked to address hunger and food security for **2.2 million** people across the country.
- AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers treated more than **880,000** acres of parks and public land, provided environmental stewardship education and training to more than **510,000** individuals, and more.

AmeriCorps is mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and other public health crises through a tremendously successful partnership with CDC. In FY 2022, the agency launched Public Health AmeriCorps (PHA), which has enrolled more than 5,000 members and awarded:

⁶ Reflects grants and programmatic investments in the [AmeriCorps focus areas](#) included in Goal 1 of the strategic plan: Healthy Futures, Environment, Disaster, Economic Opportunity, and Education. Includes supplemental ARP funding.

\$261.9 million

funding to our Healthy Futures focus area with (including Public Health AmeriCorps) (FY 2023)

3.21 million

people helped (FY 2022)

AmeriCorps identified and engaged in a learning opportunity to improve strategic planning⁷ and data quality for Goal 1 through the research and design of an enterprise-wide Partner Survey we will deploy in 2025. This survey will capture sponsor and grantee satisfaction, challenges, and barriers in the grantmaking lifecycle. It will include customer service questions to inform the quality of technical assistance provided by AmeriCorps to partners, user experience, and use and access to grantmaking resources. This work aims to produce an enterprise-wide annual assessment of our strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to improve grantmaking and program model evidence.

Goal 2

AmeriCorps is dedicated to improving the member and volunteer experience.

The agency has invested in member benefits, including increasing the living allowance for members in all AmeriCorps programs—a significant step toward the Administration’s goal of \$15 per hour as President Biden stated at the United We Stand Summit⁸.

In FY 2024⁹, AmeriCorps increased the living allowance moving our member programs closer to our steadfast commitment to a living wage¹⁰.

⁷ [Strategic Learning and Evidence Building Plan: Fiscal Years 2022-2026 \(V2.0\)](#)

⁸ [FACT SHEET: The United We Stand Summit: Taking Action to Prevent and Address Hate-Motivated Violence and Foster Unity | The White House](#)

⁹ FY24 living allowance \$12/hr for VISTA. NCCC already at \$12.60 equivalent. ASN will increase to \$12/hr in FY25 NOFO. AmeriCorps Seniors NOFO specifies the stipend is 4\$/hr for eligible volunteers in Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions programs. Some awards in the Senior Demonstration Programs are stipend eligible &, in some cases, the stipend is slightly higher.

¹⁰ Analysis of the agency’s RFI on Reducing Barriers to National Service suggests that barriers to participating in AmeriCorps programs are compensation (living allowance & stipend), the ability to access & utilize benefits, & issues related to the Education Award. AmeriCorps’ Office of

This progress is paired with stipend increases for eligible AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers.

Significant enhancements to the member and volunteer portal will present a more user-friendly and efficient environment for participants to search and apply for service opportunities, as discussed in Goal 4.

The agency is strengthening pathways to education, employment, and other opportunities for program participants. Noteworthy progress includes:

- **AmeriCorps Seniors Demonstration Program.** We set out to develop a formal competition/demonstration grant for projects that use service as a re-entry point for older adults to stay in or return to the workforce.

\$11.6 million granted in total

- A [rule change](#) from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) now includes AmeriCorps alums in its Pathways Program – expanding access to federal internships and potential federal careers. This rule is effective June 11, 2024.

[Read more](#) about how AmeriCorps provides its members and volunteers with career growth opportunities.

The agency continues to build evidence on short- and long-term member motivations and outcomes.¹¹ While we have consistently built knowledge on the member experience, AmeriCorps has also identified the need to adjust data collection to capture broader enterprise-wide participant populations and include the “applicant-to-alumni” path. In FY 2025, AmeriCorps will release a redesigned pre/post-participant survey to help build data and

Research & Evaluation will use RFI responses & findings to inform more systematic data collection efforts for the agency.

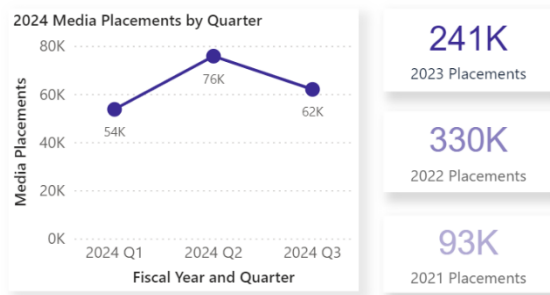
¹¹ [Highlights from the AmeriCorps Member Exit Survey Dataset](#)
https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/all_dissertations/2139/
<https://circle.tufts.edu/latest-research/study-does-national-service-experience-improve-young-persons-job-prospects>
<https://americorps.gov/evidence-exchange/AmeriCorps-Alumni-Outcomes-Study>
<https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/content/americorps-experience-transformation-through-service>

evidence on the impact of service, inform strategic priorities, and help AmeriCorps map out a participant’s journey.

Goal 3

Increasing awareness of our agency is one way AmeriCorps brings Americans together in service. FY 2024 has shown a 21% increase in engagement generated across AmeriCorps’ communication and media channels,¹² directly attributed to the contract dollars and staff dedicated to the strategic plan.

We have built increased awareness of AmeriCorps and favorability toward national service among the American public through our comprehensive media landscape approach.



AmeriCorps has increased our communication¹³ to key audiences, including prospective members and volunteer applicants, about the power of AmeriCorps.

Understanding the broader field of volunteering and its implications for the civic life of America is another way AmeriCorps leads and unites through service.¹⁴ Promoting volunteerism and engaging individuals to serve in local nonprofit organizations facilitates a civically engaged nation.¹⁵ Communities with strong civic engagement have better academic, economic, and health outcomes.¹⁶ The Civic Engagement and Volunteering Supplement, a 20+ year partnership with AmeriCorps and the US Census Bureau, continues to drive the agency research

¹² Engagement = leads defined as email subscribers, Handshake engagement, event RSVPs

¹³ Data source: Meltwater. Complete FY data available after FY ends. Data last refreshed: July 3, 2024

¹⁴ [2023 State of the Evidence Report | AmeriCorps](#)

¹⁵ [Volunteering and Civic Life in America](#), AmeriCorps.

¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70NnzORilKw>

and supports our actionable insights and data-driven decisions to promote community well-being through grantmaking.

Goal 4

AmeriCorps’ stewardship of federal resources is a critical priority and is fundamental to mission delivery.

Modernization

During AmeriCorps’ stakeholder engagement to develop our current strategic plan, we heard one suggestion loud and clear: update our legacy IT systems. AmeriCorps’ grant management system, eGrants, has been the backbone of agency operations since 2002. Grantees use the portal to apply for and manage their grants; agency staff conduct thousands of transactions in the portal each year. In 2022, AmeriCorps initiated a comprehensive effort known as “Modernization.” With funding from the American Rescue Plan,¹⁷ the agency hired its first-ever Chief Modernization Officer and dedicated staff to the effort.

The project’s scope is more extensive than just grants. The agency will also upgrade the member portal, so prospective national service participants can search for and apply to service opportunities. This upgrade will dramatically improve the agency’s ability to provide a superior customer experience and reduce the barriers for prospective members. Every American should be able to find their best fit among our many program offerings.

Some of the most significant work may never be visible but is equally important. Extensive effort is underway to migrate data and integrate these complex systems. The grants and member portals must interface and link to the agency’s financial system, which we are also upgrading.

Funding and Performance

Six contracts support Modernization. In addition, AmeriCorps was selected over other applicants to receive funding from the [Technology Modernization Fund](#) (TMF).

\$14 million TMF investment

¹⁷ [American Rescue Plan | The White House](#)

TMF is a revolving fund from the General Services Administration that provides up-front funding for promising technology projects. The fund operates like a loan; agencies repay the TMF over time with the cost savings achieved through new, more efficient technology and business processes. As of 2024, AmeriCorps has repaid the TMF 86%.¹⁸

The dual facets of our technology modernization leverage a milestone tracking approach, reinforcing agile delivery of a secure, modern, accessible digital experience that underpins our agency’s operational performance and compliance.

The grants management system (Grantee and Sponsor Portal) is only one key milestone away from system launch. The member and volunteer portal (our application, enrollment, and service management system) has completed or made progress on all but two key milestones required before launch.

Modernization is critical to improving access for program participants and awardees, and it is also essential to the agency’s financial infrastructure.

Financial and Operational Reform (FOR)

AmeriCorps launched FOR in January of 2023 as a multi-year optimization effort committed to making permanent and sustainable financial and operational reform. We are investing in our financial infrastructure, modernizing IT systems, and standardizing and automating processes to improve mission delivery.

The agency’s operational infrastructure has suffered from a lack of sustained investment. FOR aims to strengthen our financial and resource management through continuous process improvement, internal controls remediation, enhanced governance, and cross-agency communication.

FOR is laser-focused on enhancing agency-wide financial and resources management. The roadmap to achieve FOR is summarized here:

¹⁸ AmeriCorps has repaid 100%. At time of publication, however, the [Technology Modernization Fund \(cio.gov\)](https://cio.gov) has not yet been updated to reflect this result.

FOR Roadmap

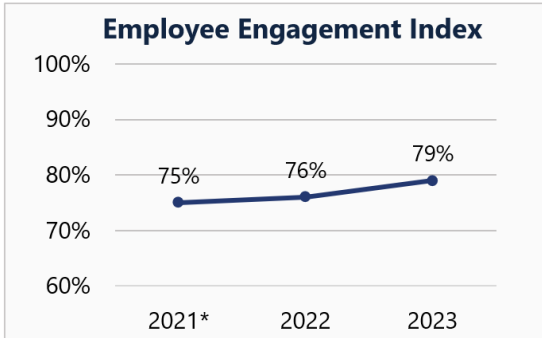
| | |
|------------------|--|
| Plan | Share our reform path. Our goal is to strengthen our financial and operational environment |
| Gap ID | Recognize & categorize inefficiencies & risks to internal controls, current systems processes, & policies & procedures |
| Remediate | Perform a risk assessment to identify remediation strategies for the identified gaps |
| Perform | Implement remediation strategies to enhance program effectiveness |
| Monitor | Repeatedly test remediation strategies against federal requirements and industry standards |

The agency is currently at the **Remediation** stage, performing risk assessments to identify remediation strategies to address the identified gaps from the previous stage. At the time of publication, AmeriCorps is nearing the Perform stage, having moved efficiently through gap identification and remediation.

Goal 5

AmeriCorps set out to be one of the best places to work in the federal government. That goal is ever closer to reality. In the 2023 Partnership for Public Service “Best Places to Work” analysis¹⁹, AmeriCorps jumped eight spots from its prior year, now ranking #14 out of 30 small agencies. AmeriCorps continues to drive year-over-year improvements on key employee feedback indices, like Employee Engagement. Full performance results are available through OPM’s [Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey](#).

¹⁹ See [Best Places to Work in the Federal Government](#)



* 2021's statistic serves as a baseline for the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

Summary

As AmeriCorps invests in community impact, the agency commits to continuous improvement and high-performance standards. AmeriCorps prioritizes operational accountability to ensure that we use resources appropriately to assist underserved individuals and communities nationwide.

Our efforts to increase the maturity associated with our processes, implement the strategic plan, and integrate with the agency's performance management framework are of the utmost priority and will continue to drive our commitment and our practice to "get things done" for America.

| Balanced Scorecard²⁰ | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| Partners & Participants | Operational & Fiscal Health | Learning & Growth | Culture & Commitment |
| Our mission to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering is at our core. In FY 2022, AmeriCorps exceeded its performance goals for beneficiaries served in the Healthy Futures, Economic Opportunity, and Education focus areas. | AmeriCorps is improving audit readiness and operational efficiencies through enhanced internal controls, data quality, and staff training. The agency has completed 22 Financial Statement Audit Corrective Actions, and auditors have closed 7. In addition, we have completed 26 FISMA corrective actions, and 18 have been closed by auditors. AmeriCorps is on a pathway to comprehensive fiscal health. | AmeriCorps will target 1% of the agency operating budget to investments in Evidence Act-related agency research and evaluation to inform decision-making. AmeriCorps continues to invest in programs that make a measurable impact in the communities we serve and the challenges we address. Our efforts ensure that national service is triple win - for communities, individuals who serve and are served, and our nation's economic and social well-being. | AmeriCorps continues to drive year-over-year improvements in staff engagement and key indices, like the Global Satisfaction Index, a comprehensive measure of employee satisfaction. From a low water mark of 54% in FY 2020, AmeriCorps is on track to meet our target of 72% of all employees reporting satisfaction with their jobs by 2026. |

²⁰ The [Balanced scorecard](#) approach is a set of measures that gives top management and leadership a fast and holistic view of the organization. AmeriCorps defines the scorecard categories as:

- (1) Partners & Participants (Our Customers) defined as our primary business of grantmaking – funding partners and the participants they recruit [Goals 1 & 2]
- (2) Operational Health (Business processes or fiscal health) defined as effectively stewarding federal resources [Goal 4]
- (3) Learning and Growth (Innovation, Evidence, Improvement) defined as AmeriCorps' evidence-building activities and culture of organizational learning [Inclusive of aspects in Goals 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5]
- (4) Culture and Commitment (shares a perspective on employee training, development, satisfaction, skill gaps, retention) [Goal 5]