



FACT SHEET

Evaluation of AmeriCorps' Work in Climate Change



BUNDLED EVALUATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT

Evaluation Study Fact Sheet

Why is AmeriCorps evaluating programs that focus on climate change? AmeriCorps has partnered with ICF, a research firm, to evaluate AmeriCorps' programming in climate change as part of the Life Cycle Evaluation project. Through the Life Cycle Evaluation project, AmeriCorps seeks to build evidence in high-priority areas where there is a gap in evidence. The evaluations under this project both develop evidence by using a bundling approach to pool together programs that have similar outcomes, while at the same building capacity in data and measurement in those areas.

AmeriCorps has long sought to address climate-related issues by funding national service programs that specifically target extreme weather events and other disasters, sustainability and energy efficiency initiatives, and disaster recovery programming. The evaluation being conducted by ICF seeks to help AmeriCorps better understand its programs and projects that explicitly connect their work to climate change.

What is the purpose of the climate change evaluation? This evaluation—the first ever for AmeriCorps that synthesizes information about climate change approaches and models across funding streams—will provide insights on the implementation and outcomes of a range of program activities related to education and training, disaster response, conservation, wildfire mitigation, and energy efficiency. Other areas to be explored include the ways in which the programs influence community resilience, changes in attitudes and behaviors toward civic engagement among national service members, and the development of job skills, including skills for green jobs. Programs and projects across AmeriCorps with similar program models and outcomes will be “bundled” together to better understand their work, but also to encourage knowledge sharing and capacity building around issues such as data collection, measurement, and evaluation.

The definition of climate change is broad; how is it being defined for this evaluation? In the initial stages of this project, ICF focused on some of the big areas of climate change based on AmeriCorps performance measures (e.g., disaster response, conservation, wildfire mitigation, energy efficiency) as well as areas of interest and recommendations from AmeriCorps (i.e., preparation for green jobs, direct reference to climate change or related terms such as climate shift).

How were projects selected for inclusion in the study? Many AmeriCorps grantees and sponsors perform activities that can fall under the scope of climate change-related work. However, this evaluation will not be a census of all climate change-related programs and activities, but rather a sample. ICF reviewed AmeriCorps State and National grantee applications and AmeriCorps VISTA project applications from fiscal year FY2020 and FY2021. AmeriCorps Seniors and AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) were excluded due to the differing length and scope of service projects. Applications that made an explicit reference to climate change in the project narrative or theory of change/logic model were included in the sampling pool. Applications that focused on conservation activities with no reference to climate change (e.g., tourism goal) were excluded. AmeriCorps and ICF contacted the project directors and sponsors for all identified projects to invite their participation. The evaluation includes 13 AmeriCorps State and National grantees and 2 AmeriCorps VISTA sponsors.

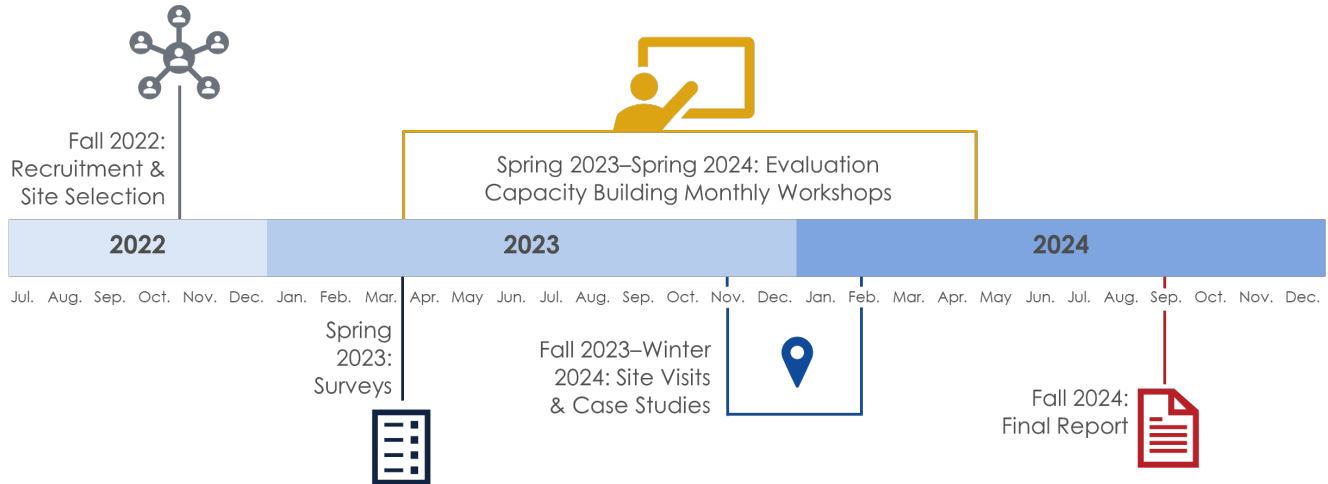
How are data being collected? The evaluation includes three data collection methods:

- **Surveys:** All stakeholders (i.e., grantees/sponsors, community partners, and national service members) were asked to complete one 20-minute survey to understand program models and strategies and assess program implementation and respective outcomes. Online surveying occurred in spring 2023.
- **Interviews/Focus Groups:** A smaller group of grantees/sponsors were selected for a more in-depth evaluation consisting of interviews/focus groups. In fall 2023–winter 2024, 60-minute interviews and 60–90-minute focus groups were conducted during in-person or virtual site visits. Findings will be written up as case studies.
- **Document review:** Grant applications, program progress reports, and tracking data are being collected and systematically reviewed. Grant applications were reviewed as part of the study sample selection. These documents will help to better understand the activities and status of each program’s work and provide a basis for corroboration with stakeholder perspectives gleaned through other forms of data collection.

What will be the benefits of the evaluation? A final technical report will help AmeriCorps and the field better understand the efficacy and best practices of the programs. Each grantee/sponsor will receive a project-specific data profile that may be helpful in supporting their continuous quality improvement. Deliverables will be completed in fall 2024. In addition to the evaluation, ICF is also providing monthly evaluation capacity building webinars to projects’ program managers or those in the organization who have a role in evaluation.

The yearlong webinar series provides a valuable opportunity for participants to learn how to strengthen evaluation in their organizations and deepen their understanding of the work of their peers and measurement practices.

What is the timeline for the study?



Participating Organizations	
California GRID Alternatives SolarCorps (AmeriCorps State and National) GRID Alternatives	Minnesota GreenCorps (AmeriCorps State and National) Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Colorado Youth Corps (AmeriCorps State and National) Colorado Youth Corps Association	Missouri AmeriCorps St. Louis (AmeriCorps State and National) Partnership for Youth, Inc.
Colorado Climate Corps (AmeriCorps State and National) Colorado Youth Corps Association	North Carolina Project Conserve (AmeriCorps State and National) Conserving Carolina
DC Opportunity Youth Service Initiative (AmeriCorps State and National) The Corps Network	Virginia Service and Conservation Corps (AmeriCorps State and National) Virginia State Department of Conservation and Recreation
Hawaii Conservation Leadership Development Program (AmeriCorps State and National) Kupu	Washington Conservation Corps (AmeriCorps State and National) Washington State Department of Ecology
Hawaii Office of Climate Change, Sustainability, and Resiliency program (VISTA) Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency	Washington Service Corps (AmeriCorps State and National) Washington State Department of Employment Security

Participating Organizations	
Hawaii Office of Coastal and Conservation Lands (VISTA) Department of Land and Natural Resources	Washington Vets Work Environment and Land Stewards program (AmeriCorps State and National) Mt. Adams Institute, Inc.
Minnesota Climate Change Mitigation Corps (AmeriCorps State and National) Reading and Math Inc. (AMPACT)	

Acknowledgements

The ICF evaluation team would like to acknowledge the many members of the AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) and the participating AmeriCorps-supported organizations, as well as the AmeriCorps members and VISTAs and community partners who are contributing to this study. They have provided valuable information and feedback to ensure the evaluation team is able to fully capture varied approaches to tackling climate change and how programs are able to leverage AmeriCorps national service models to address this critical priority. The evaluation team looks forward to continued collaboration with ORE on high-quality evaluation work that can inform policy and practice regarding how national service may be used to address national priorities. Finally, we would like to thank the esteemed members of the Technical Working Group—Rachel Bruns, Dr. Leslie Goodyear, Dr. Kathryn Newcomer, Gabriel Rhoads, Dr. Herbert Turner, Dr. Abraham Wandersman—who advise and provide feedback to improve the quality and clarity of this evaluation.

About AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps, the federal agency for national service and volunteerism, provides opportunities for Americans to serve their country domestically, address the nation's most pressing challenges, improve lives and communities, and strengthen civic engagement. Each year, the agency places more than 200,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in intensive service roles and empowers millions more to serve as long-term, short-term, or one-time volunteers. Learn more at [AmeriCorps.gov](https://www.americorps.gov).

About the Office of Research and Evaluation

The [AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation](https://www.americorps.gov/office-of-research-and-evaluation) assists AmeriCorps and its partners in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating data and insights about AmeriCorps programs and civic life in America.

This report was commissioned by AmeriCorps' Office of Research and Evaluation under Contract #GS00Q14OADU209 and Order #95332A20F0075. Information in this report is in the public domain.

Suggested Citation

Good, K. & Rakes, E. (2024). *Fact sheet: An evaluation of AmeriCorps' work in climate change*. ICF.

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About ICF

ICF (NASDAQ:ICFI) is a global consulting and digital services company with over 9,000 full- and part-time employees, but we are not your typical consultants. At ICF, business analysts and policy specialists work together with digital strategists, data scientists and creatives. We combine unmatched industry expertise with cutting-edge engagement capabilities to help organizations solve their most complex challenges. Since 1969, public and private sector clients have worked with ICF to navigate change and shape the future. Learn more at [icf.com](https://www.icf.com). For additional information about ICF, please contact:

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