



List of Certifications Offered to AmeriCorps Members Serving in Projects Addressing Climate Change – 2024

Resources Shared by AmeriCorps State and National Grant Recipients



BUNDLED EVALUATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT

Background

AmeriCorps,¹ 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. As an independent federal agency, AmeriCorps plays a vital role in supporting the American culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility, and is the nation's largest grantmaker in support of many forms of service and volunteering. AmeriCorps engages more than 5 million Americans in service through its AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Seniors, and Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) programs.

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. To help AmeriCorps better understand its programs and projects that

¹ AmeriCorps is the operating name of the Corporation for National and Community Service, or CNCS.

explicitly connect their work to climate change, the AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation contracted with ICF to conduct an evaluation of selected AmeriCorps State and National projects and AmeriCorps VISTA sponsors that received awards in fiscal years 2020–22. The evaluation included 13 AmeriCorps State and National grantees and 2 AmeriCorps VISTA sponsors and focused on some of the big areas of climate change based on AmeriCorps performance measures (e.g., conservation, disaster response, energy efficiency, wildfire mitigation). More information about the evaluation and its findings may be found at the [AmeriCorps Evidence Exchange](#).

Over the course of the evaluation, several participating AmeriCorps State and National grantees referenced certificates that members may earn when serving in their project. These certifications provide members an opportunity to receive credentials that are highly regarded by employers and, in addition to the valuable experiences provided through their service, increase member opportunities for future employment. The costs for training and testing associated with the certificate are covered by the AmeriCorps-funded organization. A guide was developed in response to a field request from climate change projects and a desire to know what certifications were being offered to members across the nation.

This guide shares an overview of a sample of those certificates. The guide is not meant to be an exhaustive compilation of certificates that a member may earn when serving in an AmeriCorps funded project focused on climate change solutions.

Certifications included in this guide are presented according to climate change key topic areas (click each topic below to go to each area).

- [Conservation, Environmental Compliance, and Sustainability](#)
- [Disaster Response](#)
- [Energy Efficiency](#)
- [Wildland Firefighting](#)
- [Other](#)

Certification Areas²

Conservation, Environmental Compliance, and Sustainability

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
Fundamentals of Geographic Information System (GIS)	Online, 26 hours	The Fundamentals of GIS course covers the basics of GIS, including core geospatial concepts, data analysis, and map creation as well as learning how to use ArcGIS software.	Coursera
GIS Foundations	Online, 3 courses, each course 3-5 hours/week for 4 weeks	GIS Foundations covers the foundations of GIS concepts and geospatial technology including viewing, understanding, querying, visualizing, and interpreting geospatial data to reveal patterns and relationships for effective problem-solving and decision-making.	EdX and University of Alaska
Minnesota Tree Inspector Certification	Online or in person, 6-8 hours	The Tree Inspector Certification Course is designed to train individuals in identifying and managing tree health issues. Candidates must pass an exam demonstrating proficiency in areas such as Dutch elm disease, oak wilt management, emerald ash borer, tree identification, firewood identification, best planting practices, and shade tree management.	University of Minnesota
Certified Environmental Specialist Training	Online, 24 hours	The Certified Environmental Specialist course provides a thorough overview of Environmental Protection Agency regulations. The information provided in this course is essential for professionals in safety and environmental work fields.	360 Training

² The organizations/institutions listed in each of the tables are not the only providers offering these certification courses and this document should not be considered an endorsement for any specific providers.

Disaster Response

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
S-100 Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS)	Online, 2-4 hours	The S-100 Introduction to ICS is a foundational course designed to introduce the principles and structure of the Incident Command System. The course covers the history, features, principles, and organizational structure of ICS and explains the relationship between ICFS and the National Incident Management System.	FEMA/The National Disaster & Emergency Management University
IS-200 Incident Command System (ICS) for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents	Online, 4 hours	The IS-200 ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents course is designed to provide training on the ICS framework, focusing on managing single resources and initial response activities. This course builds on the IS-100 course, providing more advanced training on the ICS structure and its application to single resources and initial action incidents. It covers the ICS organization appropriate to the complexity of the incident or event and the management of single resources.	FEMA/The National Disaster & Emergency Management University
IS-700 National Incident Management System (NIMS) An Introduction	Online, 4 hours	The IS-700 NIMS introductory course provides a comprehensive overview of the NIMS framework. The course introduces the principles, concepts, and components of NIMS, which provides a consistent nationwide template to enable all government, private-sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work together during domestic incidents.	FEMA/The National Disaster & Emergency Management University
IS-800 National Response Framework, An Introduction	Online, 3-4 hours	The IS-800 National Response Framework, An Introduction course provides an overview of the National Response Framework, which guides how the nation responds to all types of disasters and emergencies. The course introduces the principles, concepts, and components of the NRF, which provides a consistent nationwide template to enable all government, private-sector, and	FEMA/The National Disaster & Emergency Management University

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
		nongovernmental organizations to work together during domestic incidents.	
ICS-300, Intermediate Incident Command System (ICS) or Expanding Incidents	Online or in person, 18–24 hours	The ICS-300 Intermediate Incident Command System or Expanding Incidents course is designed to provide advanced training for personnel who require a deeper understanding of the ICS framework, particularly for managing expanding incidents. Here are the key details: This course builds on the foundational knowledge from ICS-100 and ICS-200 courses. It focuses on the management of expanding incidents and the application of ICS in more complex situations.	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)/The National Disaster & Emergency Management University

Energy Efficiency

Green Building Certificates

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Associate	Requires 1–3 months study time to prepare for the 2-hour exam	The LEED Green Associate is a professional credential offered by the U.S. Green Building Council. It signifies a foundational understanding of green building principles and practices.	U.S. Green Building Council
Healthy Housing Principles Certificate	Self-study to pass 100-item certification exam	The Healthy Housing Principles Certificate is offered by the Building Performance Institute and is designed for professionals who want to understand the connection between home environments and occupant health. Topics covered include indoor air quality, moisture control, pest management, and other factors that contribute to a healthy living environment.	Building Performance Institute
Total Building Performance Certificate	Self-study to prepare for 2.5-hour exam	The Total Building Performance Certificate is offered by the Building Performance Institute and is designed to prepare professionals with the knowledge to plan, manage, and deliver deep energy retrofit projects.	Building Performance Institute

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
Building Science Principles (BSP) Certificate of Knowledge	Online, 9 hours	The BSP Certificate of Knowledge is offered by the Building Performance Institute and provides foundational knowledge about how various systems in a home (such as HVAC, insulation, and appliances) affect its overall energy efficiency, health, comfort, and safety. The BSP certification is designed to introduce individuals to the fundamental concepts of building science.	Building Performance Institute
Building Analyst Technical (BA-T) certification	Training beyond the BSP (above row) is optional, although most BPI Test Centers offer training; the required component is a 4-hour in-person field exam to include oral questions and field observations	The Building Analyst Technician (BA-T) certification is an early-career credential for professionals in the home performance industry. The BA-T certification focuses on data collection and diagnostic testing for whole-home assessments.	Building Performance Institute

Renewable Energy Certificates

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
Energy Storage Associate Boot Camp	Online, 18–24 hours	The Energy Storage Associate Boot Camp covers various aspects of energy storage, focusing on lithium batteries, electric vehicles, and the latest best practices for energy storage system.	HeatSpring (accredited training provider)
North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Associate (PVA) Credential	Courses offered by accredited training providers, online and in-person, 66 hours for Solar Photovoltaic associate credential	The entry-level NABCEP Solar PVA Credential is designed for individuals starting their careers in the renewable energy industry. The program provides foundational knowledge in renewable energy, helping individuals understand the basic principles and concepts of the industry.	North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners HeatSpring (accredited training provider)

Water and Waste Certificates

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
Colorado Wastewater Treatment and Collection	Requires passing written exam	The Colorado Wastewater Treatment and Collection certification ensures that operators of wastewater treatment plants and collection systems are qualified to manage and maintain these facilities, which are crucial for public health and environmental protection. Certification levels are Class D (entry-level) to Class A (most advanced).	Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
Grade 1 Water Treatment Operator	Online, self-paced	The entry-level Water Treatment Grade 1 Operator Certification is offered by American Water College and is designed to prepare individuals for a career in water treatment.	American Water College
Grade 1 Wastewater Treatment Operator	Online, self-paced	The entry-level Wastewater Treatment Grade 1 Operator Certification is offered by American Water College and is designed to prepare individuals for a career in water treatment.	American Water College
Grade 1 Distribution Operator	Online, self-paced	The entry-level Distribution System Grade 1 Operator Certification is offered by American Water College and is designed to prepare individuals for a career in water distribution.	American Water College
Grade 1 Collections System Operator	Online, self-paced	The Collections System Grade 1 Operator Certification is offered by American Water College and is designed to prepare individuals for a career in wastewater collections system operations.	American Water College
Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER 24)	In person or online, 24 hours	The HAZWOPER 24 training covers basic safety and health hazards, emergency procedures, and protective measures. The training is designed for those who will occasionally be exposed to hazardous substances but not at levels above the permissible exposure limits (PELs).	U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER 40)	In person or online, 40 hours	The HAZWOPER 40 training covers topics such as hazard recognition, use of personal protective equipment, decontamination procedures, emergency response, and health and safety	OSHA

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
		protocols. The training is designed for those who will be regularly working with hazardous materials or involved in the storage, treatment, or cleanup operations of such materials.	

Other

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
Installation Basics Training	In person, 200 hours over 5 weeks	The Installation Basics Training (IBT) program is designed to provide individuals with the skills needed for entry-level solar installation jobs. The IBT program is a competency-based certificate program that focuses on skills-based assessments and hands-on training. It aims to develop the necessary skills for solar installation and related construction pathways. Upon completion, trainees receive certificates for IBT, OSHA 10, and CPR/First Aid.	GRID Alternatives
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 30	30-hour training	GRID Alternatives makes available OSHA 30 certification , which is a training program designed for workers with supervisory responsibilities. It covers a wide range of occupational safety and health topics to help supervisors recognize, avoid, prevent, and address workplace hazards.	GRID Alternatives (Course offered through Click Safety, which is an approved provider for the OSHA 30 courses). GRID Alternatives has staff who are OSHA Outreach trainers who are authorized to teach both the OSHA 10 and 30 courses.)
Forklift Certifications	8–16 hours for both classroom and hands-on components	GRID Alternatives makes available OSHA's forklift certification training programs , which comprise the following: 1) Classroom Instruction: Covers operating procedures, safety protocols, and equipment maintenance. This part typically includes lectures, videos, and written materials.	GRID Alternatives

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
		2) Hands-On Training: Practical training where you practice operating the forklift under the supervision of a certified trainer.	
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10	Online or in person through OSHA-authorized training providers	The 10-hour OSHA training course provides entry-level workers with essential knowledge about workplace safety and health hazards. The training is intended for entry-level workers in construction and general industry.	OSHA Education Center (OSHA-authorized company)

Wildland Firefighting

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
Missouri Level 1 Fire Training	In person, generally 40–80 hours	The Missouri Level 1 Fire Training is designed to provide foundational knowledge and skills for individuals starting their careers in firefighting. Topics covered include fire suppression, search and rescue, hazardous materials awareness, and basic emergency medical care.	University of Missouri Extension, Fire and Rescue Training Institute
S-212 Wildland Fire Chainsaws	In person, 24–36 hours	The S-212 Wildland Fire Chainsaws course is designed to provide training on the use, maintenance, and tactical application of chainsaws in wildland fire operations. It introduces the function, maintenance, and use of internal combustion engine-powered chainsaws, focusing on their application in wildland fire scenarios.	National Wildfire Coordinating Group
S-130 Firefighter Training	Online modules and instructor-led field exercise, 37–41 hours	The S-130 Firefighter course is a foundational training program for wildland firefighters. This course addresses the basic skills required for wildland firefighting.	National Wildfire Coordinating Group
S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior	Online modules and instructor-led training, 6–9 hours	The S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior course provides foundational knowledge on the primary factors affecting the start and spread of wildfires. This course introduces the basic concepts of wildland fire behavior, including the	National Wildfire Coordinating Group

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
		primary wildland fire environment components: fuels, weather, and topography.	
L-180 Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service	Online modules, 4–6 hours	The L-180 Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service course introduces students to human performance concepts as part of basic wildland firefighter training. The course focuses on the human factors that affect decision-making and performance in high-stress environments, such as wildland firefighting.	National Wildfire Coordinating Group
Incident Command System (ICS)-300, Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents	In person, 18–24 hours	The ICS-300 Intermediate Incident Command System (ICS) for Expanding Incidents course provides advanced training for personnel who require a deeper understanding of the ICS framework, particularly for managing expanding incidents. It focuses on the management of expanding incidents and the application of ICS in more complex situations.	National Wildfire Coordinating Group

Other

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
First Aid/Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	In person or online, 4–8 hours	The First Aid certification is a comprehensive training program designed to equip participants with the skills needed to respond to various medical emergencies. The course covers essential first aid techniques, CPR, and automated external defibrillator (AED) use.	American Red Cross
Mental Health First Aid	In person and/or online, 8 hours	The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course is an evidence-based training program designed to teach participants how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges. The goal of the MHFA course is to equip individuals with the knowledge and confidence to support someone in need and connect them with appropriate professional help.	National Council for Mental Wellbeing

Certification	Course Length/Type	Description	Organization/Institution
Wilderness First Aid	In person or online, 16 hours	The Wilderness First Aid certification is a specialized training program designed to equip participants with the skills and knowledge needed to handle medical emergencies in remote and outdoor settings.	American Red Cross
Project Management Professional (PMP)®	In person or online; additional prerequisites: For those with a bachelor's degree, 36 months of project management experience is required. For those without a bachelor's degree, 60 months of experience is needed.	The PMP certification demonstrates that one has the skills and knowledge to manage the people, processes, and business priorities of professional projects.	Project Management Institute

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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.

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ICF

1902 Reston Metro Plaza, Reston, VA 20190

Phone: 703-934-3603 or 1-800-532-4783

Fax: 703-934-3740 Email: info@icf.com



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