

OUTREACH & RECRUITMENT TIPS

- 1 Track your outreach.** Develop a tracking system using a spreadsheet or Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool like HubSpot or Salesforce for Nonprofits to manage applicants through the process.
- 2 Audit your applicant sources.** Determine where you are getting the most applicants – digital advertising, social media, in-person events – and let it guide your outreach efforts. We recommend doing a large audit once a year and checking back monthly, if feasible, because trends can change quickly.
- 3 Download or order recruitment materials.** Visit the CNCS Recruitment Resource Hub [add link], or order materials on the CNCS PUBS website [add link]. Use resources for digital outreach (email marketing and social media) or print posters and flyers to distribute to your community.
- 4 Prepare to personalize.** Collect information to use in personalized communications later and to track your progress. Collect:
 - Contact info: name, email, phone number
 - Student or community organizations they are involved in
 - Checkbox to indicate interest in being a member/volunteer for a day
 - Checkbox to indicate interest in talking to an AmeriCorps member/Senior Corps volunteer
 - Graduation date (if applicable, to tee up communications for the application cycle that directly follows)
 - University and major (if applicable, to track which ones are producing the most applicants and members)
- 5 Personalize your outreach.** While templates save time, the more you can tailor your message to specific audiences, the greater chance you have of making an impression.
- 6 Follow up quickly.** Follow up within 24 hours of initial contact via phone or email with application information. Use this as a model for how to communicate with applicants throughout the recruitment process. Responsive customer service is key.

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- 7** **Connect on social media.** Invite candidates to follow your program on social media to stay up to date on application deadlines, see your program's culture, get a sense of the day-to-day, and learn about other members and volunteers.
- 8** **Connect in person.** Reach out to a community organization, school, or church to schedule a presentation or host an open house. Then, use email, flyers, social media, and community boards to invite potential members and their families to learn more.
- 9** **Offer assistance with the application.** Share the Step-by-Step Application Guide (AmeriCorps)[add link] or walk through the application with them.
- 10** **Train members and volunteers to share their service story.** Word of mouth is a primary generator of applicants for AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. Ask your AmeriCorps members to go back to their colleges and high schools to educate students and faculty about service opportunities. Ask Senior Corps volunteers to share their experiences at church, clubs, or community gatherings.
 - Visit [NationalService.gov/Alumni](https://www.nationalservice.gov/Alumni) for a general recruitment presentation
 - AmeriCorps VISTA Ambassador – encourage VISTA alumni to sign up after their service
- 11** **Collaborate and ask for help.** Check with other AmeriCorps or Senior Corps programs recruiting in your area. Find out how you can combine mailings or share space at events with them. They may even have a list of people they were unable to place who might be the right fit for your program.
- 12** **Get social.** Social media is a tremendous tool for reaching potential applicants. Post short and sweet content about your members and volunteers, or better yet, amplify user-generated content. Providing templates, writing prompts, hosting photo contests or story slams, can encourage members and volunteers to get engaged.

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- 13** **Build a web presence.** Build an AmeriCorps or Senior Corps webpage on your organization's website or leverage volunteer websites where you can post opportunities and recruit. Include prominent contact information on all posts and pages so interested applicants can easily connect with you.
- 14** **Put the "web" in webinar.** Choose a topic like *Why Join AmeriCorps*, *How to Get Involved in Senior Corps*, or *How to Maximize Your Benefits*. Track attendees and follow up within 24 hours. Record and post for those who are unable to attend.
- 15** **Network.** People often decide to do something because someone they respect or trust suggested it. Ask a caregiver, pastor, school counselor, professor, coach, or other community leader to share information about your program.
- 16** **Partner.** Leverage relationships you already have with local organizations or search for new ones and set up meetings. Share information about your AmeriCorps or Senior Corps program and consider how you can assist one another – applicants, social media sharing, recruitment events, service events – and keep building the relationship over time.
- 17** **Say thank you.** Send a thank-you letter to everyone who assisted you during your recruitment cycle. This will help generate goodwill and support that can help with future outreach.
- 18** **Remember recruitment is a journey.** The applicant journey begins with awareness, becomes consideration, turns into acceptance, is successful in retention, and continues by building champions. Talk to potential members and volunteers about this journey and plan ahead to keep them engaged throughout.