



# AmeriCorps Staff Development

## April 26, 2018

### *How to Review Data Collection Plans*



# **Welcome!** **AmeriCorps Staff Development**



*We'll get started in just  
a couple of minutes.*

*Please be sure to  
access the Audio link in  
Adobe Connect.*

# Technology Check

- Check the Connect Web Links to access today's PPT, handout, and training evaluation.
- Today's presentation is being recorded, and it will be posted on the Knowledge Network in May:  
[www.nationalservice.gov/resources/americorps](http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/americorps)
- We will use the Chat box throughout today's presentation. Let's test the Chat feature; please type a short greeting to your colleagues now.

# Purpose of the Staff Development Webinars

- In general, the 2018 AmeriCorps Staff Development Series is designed to build knowledge in core program and grant management areas to support strong service across the network.
- The webinars are intended to give commission and program staff a break from the day-to-day demands of grant management and focus on broader, longer-term issues.

# AmeriCorps Staff Development Series

The 2018 webinar series includes:

- Continuity Planning
- **How to Review Data Collection Plans**
- Orientations for New Commission and Program Staff
  - Financial Management
  - Criminal History Check Management
  - AmeriCorps Member Orientation and Training
- Member and Site Monitoring and Reporting Requirements
  - Submitting Grantee Progress Reports
  - Data Quality Monitoring

# Target Audience

- State Service Commission staff who are directly involved in assessing commission and/or subgrantee data collection plans, providing technical assistance on those plans, and supporting strong data management.

*National/multi-state and Tribal program staff who create, review, and/or support data collection plans for their subgrantees or sites may also find this session useful.*

# Who is on the webinar today?

- Please take a minute to answer these questions:
  - What is your role at the commission?
  - How long have you worked with CNCS grants?
  - What is your level of experience with data collection?

# What are we doing today?

- During today's webinar, we will focus on tools and strategies to review subgrantee data collection plans and to provide feedback to subgrantees on strengths/areas for improvement.
- The goal of the webinar is to build participants' capacity to assess existing data collection plans, including plans submitted by new AmeriCorps subgrantees in response to the 2018 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

# CNCS Staff Presenters

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# Pre-work for Today's Session

- Participants were asked to review the previously-recorded “Building Effective Data Collection Plans” webinar prior to joining today’s webinar:  
<https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/ameri-corps/building-effective-data-collection-plans-presented-october-12-2017>
- This webinar presented a sample outline for a high-quality data collection plan and described the elements that should be part of the plan.

# Data Collection Plan Outline

- A Data Collection Plan Outline is available on the Knowledge Network.
- This document was created by ASN Program Officers in April 2018.



## Data Collection Plan Outline

Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** For each data point collected by the program, fill in the requested information in the relevant column. Note that the “logic” of the document flows from top to bottom, so the information entered builds upon the data / information that was entered in the cell directly above.

	<i>Example data point</i>	<b>Data point #1</b>	<b>Data point #2</b>	<b>Data point #3</b>
<b>Data to be collected</b>	<p><i>Outcome: number of beneficiaries who demonstrate improved knowledge of [X]</i></p> <p><i>Improved knowledge: score increase of 10% or more from beginning to end of program</i></p>			
<b>Source of data</b>	<p><i>Beneficiaries: economically disadvantaged residents of community [Y]</i></p>			
<b>Instrument type and description</b>	<p><i>Pre-post-test: a 25-question multiple-choice assessment created and field-tested by researchers at ABC University</i></p>			

# Session Outline



- Data collection plan expectations
- Review process and key elements
- Example data collection plan review
- Resources
- Questions

# Data Collection Plan Expectations

- All AmeriCorps grantees/subgrantees need to have a plan for collecting high-quality programmatic data
  - Performance measure outputs and outcomes
  - Demographic data
  - Other information to inform continuous improvement and help programs tell their story effectively
- Plan should be in place prior to program implementation

# Data Collection Plan Expectations

- Under the 2018 Notice of Funding Opportunity, new AmeriCorps applicants were required to submit a data collection plan as part of the application, including:
  - A description of the applicant's data collection system and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data
  - A description of how the applicant will use performance data (including CNCS performance measures and other process and outcome measures if applicable) to improve its program

# Data Collection Plan Review Process

- Commission staff are expected to review and provide feedback on data collection plans submitted by new competitive subgrantees, plus formula subgrantees if desired
  - NOT a formal approval process; does not require revisions in eGrants application
  - Starting point for on-going discussions and TTA
  - Goal: to have an effective data collection plan in place by the start of the program year
- CNCS Program Officers will be doing the same for new National Direct/Tribal grantees

# Data Collection Plan Review Process

Steps to follow:

1. Read the data collection plan submitted in the Evaluation Summary or Plan section of the application.
2. Using a Review Tool that follows the format of the Data Collection Plan Outline, mark each component of the plan as “Satisfactory” or “Needs Further Development.” Provide comments as appropriate/necessary to explain the rating.

# Data Collection Plan Review Process

Steps to follow (continued):

3. Provide the completed Review Tool to the grantee. Schedule a call to talk through the feedback.
4. Through on-going program management, work with the grantee to strengthen and implement their data collection plan during the program year.

*Note: You can use reviewers' feedback on the grantee's 2018 application to further inform the discussion.*

# Key Elements of Data Collection Plans

## 1. Data to be collected

- Performance measure (PM) outputs and outcomes from the approved application
  - At least one aligned PM connected to primary service activity
- Demographic indicators
  - Number of episodic and on-going volunteers
  - Number of AmeriCorps applicants
  - Other indicators if relevant
- Other programmatic data
  - Clearly connected to program's Theory of Change
  - Tell compelling story of program impact
  - Inform continuous improvement

# Key Elements of Data Collection Plans

## 2. Source of data

- Appropriate for type of information collected
- Valid/authentic source
- Objective (avoids slant or bias)

# Key Elements of Data Collection Plans

## 3. Instrument type and description

### – Output instrument

- Ensures unduplicated count
- Tracks amount of service provided (dosage)

### – Outcome instrument

- Valid for type of change
- Can assess before and after intervention, if appropriate
- Works for all beneficiaries

# Key Elements of Data Collection Plans

4. Person(s) responsible for data collection
  - Access to data sources and instruments
  - Qualifications/experience in collecting programmatic data
  - Ability to be objective

# Key Elements of Data Collection Plans

## 5. Data collection schedule

- Provides timely and meaningful results
- Achieves reasonable response rate

## 6. Data storage plan, including source documentation

- Ensures verifiability of reported data
- User-friendly format
- Protects sensitive information

# Key Elements of Data Collection Plans

## 7. Training for data collectors

- Purpose and importance of data collection
- Process and timeline
- How to ensure high quality data

## 8. Pilot-testing strategies

- Prior to program start
- Similar beneficiaries and settings

# Key Elements of Data Collection Plans

## 9. Data analysis strategies

- Assess quality of program implementation
- Determine progress toward achieving desired outputs/outcomes
- Provide insights about program effectiveness
- Reveal potential variation within program activities or results

# Key Elements of Data Collection Plans

10. How data will be used for program improvement
  - Extend program reach
  - Increase program effectiveness in achieving outputs/outcomes
  - Build the evidence base for the program

# Data Collection Plan Review Tool



## Data Collection Plan Review Tool

Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Data to be collected			
Source of data			
Instrument type and description			
Person(s) responsible for data collection			

# Example Program Description

The Safer Cities AmeriCorps program is designed to help increase public safety and improve police officer-community relations in five medium-sized U.S. cities. During the 10-month program year, 20 half-time AmeriCorps members will develop activities to connect police officers with community members, including school presentations and informal sports events at neighborhood parks. Members will also work with local civic and community organizations to share information about home and car safety tips, setting up neighborhood watch programs, and other potential strategies to reduce local crime rates.

# Example Data Collection Plan, Part 1

The Safer Cities AmeriCorps program will collect data to assess progress towards meeting performance measures and identify opportunities to improve the program. We will count how many people attend the trainings and events led by members. We will also assess pre/post surveys to assess improvements in public safety and police officer-community relations in order to measure performance indicators. We will develop our survey and tracking tools over the summer of 2018. Members will input data about their service activities and impact into a secure and robust database called SafeCityBase. Staff will also use this database to track program compliance with AmeriCorps requirements.

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

“We will count how many people attend the trainings and events led by members. We will also assess pre/post surveys to assess improvements in public safety and police officer-community relations in order to measure performance indicators.”

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Data to be collected			

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Data to be collected			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Please include the required demographic indicators;</li><li>• Please specify what dimension(s) of public safety and police-community relations will be assessed as part of the outcome, and define "improvement."</li></ul>

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

“We will count how many people attend the trainings and events led by members. We will also assess pre/post surveys to assess improvements in public safety and police officer-community relations in order to measure performance indicators.”

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Source of data			

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Source of data			Please specify who will be surveyed to assess improvements in public safety and police officer-community relations. Describe how that source will be appropriate for gathering valid and authentic information about this topic.

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

“We will develop our survey and tracking tools over the summer of 2018.”

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Instrument type and description			

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Instrument type and description			Please work with your Commission Program Officer to develop instruments that provide high-quality output, outcome, and demographic data. Program activities should not begin until these instruments are in place.

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

“Members will input data about their service activities and impact into a secure and robust database called SafeCityBase. Staff will also use this database to track program compliance with AmeriCorps requirements.”

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Person(s) responsible for data collection			

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Person(s) responsible for data collection			<p>Please specify who will actually collect the data: for example, who will record attendance during trainings/events, who will administer and gather the pre- and post-surveys, and who will track demographic indicators such as episodic and ongoing volunteers.</p>

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

“Members will input data about their service activities and impact into a secure and robust database called SafeCityBase. Staff will also use this database to track program compliance with AmeriCorps requirements.”

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Data collection schedule			

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Data collection schedule			Please describe the timelines for administering the pre- and post-surveys, for collecting output data (i.e. participant attendance), and for collecting demographic indicator data.

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

“Members will input data about their service activities and impact into a secure and robust database called SafeCityBase. Staff will also use this database to track program compliance with AmeriCorps requirements.”

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Data storage plan, including source documentation			

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Data storage plan, including source documentation			Please describe how source documentation such as attendance logs, pre- and post-surveys, and volunteer sign-in sheets will be stored.

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

“Members will input data about their service activities and impact into a secure and robust database called SafeCityBase. Staff will also use this database to track program compliance with AmeriCorps requirements.”

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Training for data collectors			

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Training for data collectors			Please describe how the data collectors will be trained about the purpose and importance of data collection; the process and timeline for collecting data on each output/ outcome/demographic indicator; and methods to ensure high quality data.

# Example Data Collection Plan, Part 2

Staff will generate reports from the database in order to compile the information for grantee progress reports and to identify areas for improvement on both the individual and programmatic level. Staff will analyze the data to determine whether performance measures were met and look for trends for which sites and activities are most successful in order to drive replication and deeper impact. Any risks or opportunities for improvement will be addressed by program staff to ensure that the program is operationalized effectively and efficiently.

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

“Staff will generate reports from the database in order to compile the information for grantee progress reports and to identify areas for improvement on both the individual and programmatic level.”

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Pilot-testing strategies			

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Pilot-testing strategies			Please describe how the program will pilot-test its data collection instruments and protocols before implementing them.

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

“Staff will analyze the data to determine whether performance measures were met and look for trends for which sites and activities are most successful in order to drive replication and deeper impact.”

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Data analysis strategies			

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
Data analysis strategies			To further clarify the data analysis strategies mentioned in your plan, please add more details about the specific calculations/comparisons you will make, including how you will determine the output and outcome actuals.

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

“Any risks or opportunities for improvement will be addressed by program staff to ensure that the program is operationalized effectively and efficiently.”

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
How data will be used for program improvement			

# Example Data Collection Plan Review

	Satisfactory	Needs Further Development	Comments
How data will be used for program improvement			Please describe specific approaches for using the results of data collection and analysis to improve the effectiveness of the program.

# Summary: Data Collection Plan Review

- Plans are unlikely to be satisfactory as-is; that's OK. Think of them as a starting point.
- Phrase feedback as areas for improvement rather than weaknesses.
- Continue the conversation about data collection throughout program implementation.

# Resources

Building Effective Data Collection Plans Course:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/amicorps/building-effective-data-collection-plans-presented-october-12-2017>

Performance Measurement Core Curriculum:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/training-resources>

- Collecting High Quality Outcome Data courses (Part 1 and Part 2)
- Data Collection and Instruments resources

Evaluation Core Curriculum:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/all-evaluation-resources>

- Data Collection course
- Reporting and Using Evaluation Results course

# Resources

Other Performance Measurement Resources:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/other-amicorps-performance-measurement-resources>

- Data Quality Review Best Practices course

2018 National Performance Measure Instructions:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/2017/2018-amicorps-state-and-national-performance-measures-instructions>

- Lists required data sources and instruments for national performance measures

# What questions do you have?



# Wrap-up for Today

- Please share feedback on today's webinar:  
[www.surveymonkey.com/r/datacollectionplans](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/datacollectionplans)
- The recording of today's presentation will be posted on the Knowledge Network in early May:  
[www.nationalservice.gov/resources/americorps](http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/americorps)

# Next Staff Development Webinar

- Next AmeriCorps Staff Development Webinar:

*May 24, 3:00 – 4:30 pm Eastern*

*Topic:*

*CNCS Orientation for New Commission Staff –  
For State Commissions*

# Thank you!

