



Minnesota GreenCorps Host Site Application Guide

Program year 2022-2023

Minnesota GreenCorps (MN GreenCorps) is an AmeriCorps program coordinated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). For the 2022-2023 program year, Minnesota GreenCorps anticipates selecting up to 46 host site organizations around the state through this solicitation. This document contains important information about applying to become a host site for the 2022-2023 MN GreenCorps program year. **Please review this document and all appendices carefully before submitting an application. Host site application instructions are outlined in section VII.**

Note: Operation of the 2022-2023 program year is contingent on receiving funds from ServeMinnesota and AmeriCorps. Confirmation of funds may not be available prior to the application deadline.

Applications are due electronically by 5:00 p.m., Central Time on Tuesday, March 22, 2022, to mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us.

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I. Program overview

AmeriCorps overview

AmeriCorps is a national service program that connects more than 270,000 individuals each year with organizations to strengthen communities across America. AmeriCorps members provide intensive service to meet our country's critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. There are over 900 AmeriCorps programs nationwide that provide service opportunities for Americans who want to give back to their communities. Visit www.americorps.gov/ to learn more about AmeriCorps.

Minnesota GreenCorps program overview

The goal of Minnesota GreenCorps is to preserve and protect Minnesota's environment while training a new generation of environmental professionals.

Minnesota GreenCorps is an AmeriCorps program coordinated by the MPCA. Minnesota GreenCorps positions are full-time; members serve 1,700 hours over 11 months, beginning in September 2022. The program places members with host organizations around the state to prepare communities for challenging climate and environmental circumstances by:

- Reducing solid waste and increase recycling.
- Reducing greenhouse gases (GHG) and other air pollutants.
- Reducing water runoff and improve water quality.
- Assisting community members in taking eco-friendly actions.
- Increasing individuals' knowledge and change their behaviors related to the environment.
- Training new environmental professionals.

Funding for Minnesota GreenCorps is provided by resources from AmeriCorps, ServeMinnesota, and the MPCA, along with local in-kind resources.

Program focus areas

The Minnesota GreenCorps program has identified four overarching focus areas to meet program goals.

1. Air pollutant reduction.
2. Green infrastructure improvements.
3. Waste reduction, recycling, and organics management.
4. Community readiness and outreach.

These focus areas have been selected because of their overall relevance to statewide environmental priorities, potential appeal to host sites and members, opportunity to draw involvement of community members, and ability to generate measurable outcomes. Full position descriptions for the focus areas are outlined on page 4.

Program outcomes and performance measures

Host site organizations will be selected in part for their commitment and ability to contribute to program outcomes and performance measures. The service project may address any of the performance measures in any of the categories. **Projects must align with at least one performance measure outlined below; alignment with two or more measures is encouraged.**

Air

- Improve air quality: members will implement measures and education aimed at reducing air pollutants by reducing vehicle miles traveled, supporting vehicle electrification, and/or promoting green transportation.
- Retrofit public structures: members will apply energy conservation measures to improve the performance of public buildings/structures. Retrofitted buildings will result in reduced energy consumption and/or reduced energy costs.

Land & water

- Reduce nutrient pollution: members will implement nutrient reduction efforts, resulting in pounds of phosphorus removed, pounds per year of total suspended solids removed, and/or chloride reduction.
- Improve public lands: members will implement best management practices to treat and improve acres of public lands through activities such as removing invasive species, planting native trees, seeding prairie, etc.

Waste reduction

- Reduce food waste through organics recycling: members will implement residential or institutional waste prevention or organics recycling resulting in pounds of organics prevented or diverted from the waste stream.
- Divert waste: members will integrate sustainable waste management practices into daily operations at host site and community facilities to recycle, compost, prevent, or otherwise divert material from the waste stream.

Outreach & education

- Educate or train individuals in environmental stewardship: members will educate and/or train individuals on environmental stewardship to improve land, air, and water quality.
- Motivate individuals to change behavior or promise to change behavior: members will provide education and training that will result in individuals changing behavior or making a promise or pledge to change behavior to lessen environmental impact.
- Mobilize and/or engage volunteers in community service projects: members will recruit, train, and/or engage community members in local service projects.

Other

- This project engages areas of environmental justice concern, per the [EJ Story map](#).
- This projects addresses chloride reduction (i.e. road salt and water softeners).

In addition to the above performance measures, Minnesota GreenCorps also has the goal of mobilizing volunteers on community service projects planned and carried out by Minnesota GreenCorps members, as well as preparing members for a career in the environmental field by providing valuable knowledge and skill-building opportunities, guidance, mentoring, and training.

II. Position descriptions

Full position descriptions for the air pollutant reduction, green infrastructure improvements, waste reduction, recycling, and organics management, and community readiness and outreach focus areas are found on the following pages. Responsibilities and activities will vary depending on the host site and the project focus area. Host sites must align with one or more of the essential functions listed. Position descriptions are subject to change based on information from our funders.

Air pollutant reduction member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to the impacts of climate change through energy conservation and green transportation. Decrease the overall energy use of buildings and vehicles through benchmarking, assessment, engagement, and implementation of conservation and efficiency measures. Conduct employee behavior change campaigns and provide community education on energy savings programs and environmentally-conscious practices. Encourage the transition to clean energy sources for building operations and vehicles.

Essential functions

- Assist with the collection, benchmarking, and reporting of data on energy use for public buildings using existing databases and tools such as the state of Minnesota Buildings, Benchmarks and Beyond (B3), WegoWise, ICLEI, and/or Energy Star.
- Retrofit public structures to improve energy efficiency by implementing energy conservation measures such as HVAC/lighting systems scheduling, upgrading to more efficient lighting, installing smart power strips/sensors, exploring plug load management strategies, etc.
- Identify and facilitate state/local government opportunities to finance energy audits, retrofit projects, and retro commissioning through the Guaranteed Energy Savings Program (GESP), Local Energy Efficiency Program (LEEP), Energy Savings Partnership, state master contracts, or other opportunities.
- Encourage employees and community members to adopt environmentally-conscious behaviors at work and home.
- Educate community members on residential energy-saving opportunities and energy assistance programs.
- Encourage reduction of vehicle miles traveled through safe routes to school, biking and walking initiatives, improved vehicle and fleet efficiency, complete streets planning and implementation, education about multi-modal transportation, and facilitation of safety and infrastructure improvements.
- Promote and encourage the use of hybrid and electric vehicles through education and outreach and assist with developing infrastructure for electric vehicles, including charging stations and workplace charging.
- Provide electric vehicle information to fleet managers to encourage use in public fleets, including operation and maintenance cost savings.
- Promote community educational campaigns that target practices and behaviors that alleviate air pollution (i.e., air alert education, carpooling, public transit, biking, car sharing), and those that contribute to air pollution (i.e., gas-powered lawn equipment, backyard fires, vehicle idling, single occupancy vehicles, and low-efficiency wood-burning boilers/stoves/fireplaces).
- Identify, engage, and assist partners in developing outreach on wood smoke reduction from recreational fires and/or wood heaters.
- Conduct surveys or collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on commitments to change and changes in behavior with energy conservation and transportation-related practices.
- Help institutionalize ongoing savings in energy and water usage and reductions in vehicle miles traveled and vehicle emissions through tracking and follow-up, revised building and vehicle operations and maintenance practices, program marketing, and continued employee engagement.
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.

Marginal functions

- Assist with additional sustainability-related projects as outlined in the green infrastructure improvements, waste reduction, recycling and organics management, and community readiness and outreach position descriptions within the host site community.

Green infrastructure improvements member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to impacts of climate change by implementing and improving green infrastructure practices related to stormwater management and community forestry. Assist in collecting, managing, and analyzing data by inventorying and assessing stormwater best management practices (BMPs), chloride sources and concentrations, and trees and forest health. Implement stormwater and forestry best practices to improve water quality and public lands through activities such as identifying opportunities for green infrastructure practices and conducting rain garden maintenance, erosion control, invasive species removal, and native plantings. Provide outreach opportunities to increase awareness and engage community members in stormwater and forestry initiatives.

Note: member activities cannot help organizations achieve or maintain compliance for stormwater permitting.

Essential functions

- Inventory existing stormwater BMPs and manage associated data.
- Assess existing stormwater BMPs and/or assist with the development or improvement of stormwater BMP assessment(s) and performance plan(s).
- Identify opportunities and implement green stormwater infrastructure practices, such as rain gardens, permeable pavement, green roofs, bioswales, etc.
- Provide community outreach, education, and guidance about the benefits of green stormwater infrastructure practices and pollution prevention.
- Conduct tree inventory and manage associated data.
- Develop or update community forest management plans, EAB/pest management plans, invasive species management plans, tree care ordinances, etc.
- Identify and implement community forestry best practices, such as erosion control, invasive species management, etc.
- Help facilitate the equitable distribution of tree canopy by conducting research, planning, and coordinating community tree plantings.
- Improve public land through activities such as clearing natural debris, planting resilient plants and trees, and removing invasive species.
- Identify local chloride sources and management strategies and provide outreach, education, and guidance on proper salt application.
- Incorporate best management practices for road and sidewalk salt prevention (i.e., improved snow removal), product storage, and application.
- Collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on commitments to change or changes in behavior.
- Use resources/calculators (e.g., Minnesota Stormwater Manual, minimal impact design standards (MIDS) calculator, i-Tree) to quantify the benefits of green infrastructure practices (greenhouse gas reduction, pollutant load reductions, water quality, etc.).
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.

Marginal functions

- Assist with additional sustainability-related projects as outlined in the air pollutant reduction, waste reduction, recycling and organics management, and community readiness and outreach position descriptions within the host site community.

Waste reduction, recycling, and organics management member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to impacts of climate change through waste prevention, recycling, prevention of wasted food, and composting/organics management. Increase knowledge about ways to prevent food from being wasted and track the amount of food that is rescued and sent to a food recovery organization or composted. Support efforts to incorporate the framework of sustainable materials management into programs. Educate community members, students, teachers, school administrators, and facility operations staff or members of the public on waste prevention and recycling issues.

Essential functions

- Implement or assist with initiatives to reduce or prevent waste generation, launch or improve organization-wide recycling, and/or launch or improve organization-wide organics management programs.
- Research, conduct, and analyze waste characteristics at a school or from a specific sector within the community to identify high priority opportunities and develop recommendations for improving reduction, recycling or organics management.
- Support recycling efforts in multi-family complexes by providing on-site assessments, gathering baseline data, and conducting initial waste sorts, supporting recycling system setup, delivering resident education, and conducting post implementation data collection to track project effectiveness.
- Increase the capture and distribution of reusable materials in service community (i.e. implement campus-wide move in/move out reuse system, textile or building material reuse, reusable dishware and utensils, swaps, fix-it clinics, etc.).
- Inform host site and served community of existing state, county or city resources that can improve waste prevention, recycling or organics programs.
- Work with local units of government or existing groups to set up pilots on educating people on preventing food from being wasted.
- Implement and/or expand community outreach and education efforts related to the production and consumption of locally produced food. Include education on proper storage of produce, expiration dates and ways to minimize food from being wasted.
- Capture food that would otherwise have been wasted and bring to food rescue organizations to be distributed.
- Conduct pre/post surveys on students and community members who receive education from Minnesota GreenCorps members to determine their increase in knowledge of ways to reduce waste and commitments to change behavior with waste reduction and organics management related practices.
- Establish a program to expand volunteer networks to support waste prevention, recycling and composting (similar to a Master Recycler & Composter or Green Warrior program).
- Document best practices through case studies and/or “how to” guides.
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.

Marginal functions

- Assist with additional sustainability-related projects as outlined in the green infrastructure improvements, waste reduction, recycling and organics management, and community readiness and outreach position descriptions within the host site community.

Community readiness and outreach member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to impacts of climate change by advancing sustainable practices, improving infrastructure, and increasing knowledge of residents and community-based organizations. Provide outreach, education, and assistance to raise understanding and increase best practices on air pollutant reduction, green infrastructure improvements, chloride reduction, and waste reduction, recycling, and organics management. Work with local government(s), school districts, nonprofit and community-based organizations, and their partners to adopt and implement sustainability best practices.

Essential functions and measures for project success

Provide community-based outreach, education, and assistance to individuals and community organizations through campaigns, presentations, events, trainings, workshops, social media, and other related activities. Outreach and assistance will focus on one or more of the topics listed below:

Air pollutant reduction:

- Promote energy conservation best practices that reduce energy usage at home, work, and school.
- Encourage reduction of vehicle miles traveled and improved air quality through complete streets planning, education and practices, safe routes to school initiatives, and education on multi-modal transportation, mobility options, and active living.
- Promote emission reductions to community members through educational campaigns targeting practices and behaviors that alleviate air pollution (i.e., air alert education, carpooling, public transit, biking, car-sharing), and those that contribute to air pollution (i.e., gas-powered lawn equipment, backyard fires, vehicle idling, single-occupancy vehicles, and low-efficiency wood-burning boilers/stoves/fireplaces).
- Promote opportunities for adopting and expanding electric vehicle usage and charging infrastructure within communities.

Green infrastructure improvements:

- Promote stormwater and community forestry best practices that prevent or reduce water pollution and improve public lands.
- Conduct outreach to increase awareness of stormwater and community forestry best practices and the associated ecosystem services they provide.
- Engage community members in community stormwater and forestry initiatives such as rain garden installation, tree planting, and invasive species removal volunteer events.

Waste reduction, recycling, and organics management:

- Promote resources to strengthen community resilience through waste prevention, recycling, composting/organics management, and food waste prevention.
- Provide community outreach and education on local food production, food waste prevention, increasing the capture and distribution of reusable materials, waste prevention, and recycling.
- Support recycling efforts in multi-family complexes by providing on-site assessments, gathering baseline data, and conducting initial waste sorts, supporting recycling system setup, delivering resident education, and conducting post implementation data collection to track project effectiveness.

Chloride reduction:

- Provide outreach to communities on the harmful effects of chloride (i.e., road salt and water softener discharge) on the environment, including water quality, plants, soil, wildlife, and infrastructure.
- Promote best management practices that reduce chloride application and discharge from water softening activities.
- Assist host organizations in offering Smart Salting trainings in their communities.

Community sustainability:

- Provide support to sustainability-related education activities. This could include the development and implementation of environmental events, fairs, or workshops to educate residents on an array of environmental and energy products, technologies, services, and actions.
- Support outreach activities, including dissemination of key messages via website and social networking tools.
- Ensure education strategies and materials are relevant, informative, and accurate. Distribute and, where appropriate, refine existing educational materials, including for school-age audiences.
- Conduct surveys or collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on commitments to change and changes in behavior to more sustainable environmental practices.
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.

III. Minnesota GreenCorps/MPCA responsibilities

The MPCA, is responsible for providing oversight to the Minnesota GreenCorps program on a statewide level, including member management, host site management, and compliance with AmeriCorps regulations. The Minnesota GreenCorps program coordinators are employees of the MPCA.

A. Member selection and termination process

- Interview: The MPCA will accept and screen all applications. The MPCA will sort and review applications, and select candidates for interviews.
- Selection: The MPCA will make selection decisions. The MPCA has the responsibility and authority to extend an offer for a position to an applicant and make the final selection decisions.
- Criminal history checks: The MPCA will conduct and pay for criminal history and driving checks on applicants prior to their official acceptance into the Minnesota GreenCorps program. Checks include: 1) national sex offender database search; 2) state criminal database search; 3) a fingerprint-based Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) check; and 4) driver's license and driving record verification. Member participation is contingent upon passing all relevant checks. Member eligibility to drive as a part of their service is contingent on passing the driver's license and driving record check.
- Termination: Only MPCA's designated staff has the authority to suspend or release a Minnesota GreenCorps member from service for disciplinary reasons. Site supervisors must actively work with the MPCA to address performance issues before termination is considered.

B. Member management

- Member training: The MPCA is responsible for coordinating the logistics and scheduling the member required orientation and quarterly trainings throughout the year. The MPCA will reimburse travel expenses for members to attend Minnesota GreenCorps required training if eligible.
- Oversight: While the host site will provide day-to-day supervision, MPCA will communicate regularly to ensure member project activities align with the position description and program goals. The MPCA will work with the member and host site to refine and report project measures.
- Mentors: The MPCA will work with host sites to provide each Minnesota GreenCorps member with a mentor that will provide additional assistance and support to the member throughout the program year.
- Site visits: The MPCA will conduct up to two site visits during the year with each member. The MPCA, Minnesota GreenCorps member, and site supervisor will schedule site visits.
- Monitoring program requirements: The Minnesota GreenCorps program coordinator will track and monitor each member's progress in completing program requirements.
- Member personnel file: The MPCA will maintain a personnel file for each member.
- Member benefits: The MPCA is responsible for administering/overseeing member benefits including: living allowance, health insurance, workers' compensation federal student loan forbearance, childcare assistance, and the AmeriCorps education.

- Grievance procedures: The MPCA will ensure that challenges are appropriately resolved, and, when necessary, ensure that Grievance Procedures are followed as outlined in the Member Service Agreement.
- Site partnership termination: In the event that a host site environment becomes unsuitable for a member to continue their service work, the MPCA reserves the right to terminate the site partnership.

C. Site management

- Training: The MPCA is responsible for coordinating the logistics and scheduling the required host site orientation training.
- In-kind: The MPCA will monitor in-kind reports submitted to OnCorps by the site supervisor, and will approve in-kind reports once proper documentation is received.
- Criminal history checks: The MPCA will conduct checks on host site supervisors prior to the start of the Minnesota GreenCorps program. Checks include: 1) national sex offender database search, and 2) state criminal database search 3) a fingerprint-based Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) check. Site participation in the Minnesota GreenCorps program is contingent upon passing these checks.

IV. Requirements of host sites

Host site responsibilities

Host sites, acting through a designated host site supervisor, are responsible for the following:

- Member identification: Minnesota GreenCorps members are not “employees,” “volunteers,” or “interns” of the host site.
- Supervision: Provide day-to-day professional supervision of the Minnesota GreenCorps member(s), equating to at least 4 hours per week (on average), per member. Set a daily schedule with the Minnesota GreenCorps member to ensure a full-time member is serving approximately 40 hours/week, and then hold the member accountable to this set schedule.
- Provide an on-site orientation for the Minnesota GreenCorps member. This will include a tour of the building(s), introductions to internal and external partners, explanation of site policies (including dress code and confidentiality), rules of conduct, site expectations, safety measures including right-to-know and emergency procedures, etc. Support members as necessary in their required activities with ongoing training and/or volunteer management.
- Workspace: Provide dedicated workspace at the host site, including a desk, phone, computer, and access to office supplies, a printer, copy machine, the internet, and projects materials. Members must have regular access to the internet for program-related purposes (i.e., completing timesheets, using the Minnesota GreenCorps website, checking email). The host site is required to provide the member with a host site email address and a name badge, if required. Host sites must provide members with necessary equipment to complete the tasks of their project from a remote location if teleservice is required.
- On-site training: Invite the Minnesota GreenCorps member to participate in relevant on-site training and/or staff meetings. Minnesota GreenCorps members will record this time toward their service hours.
- Work environment: Maintain a work environment that is welcoming, respectful, free of harassment and discrimination, and safe.
- Reasonable accommodation: Members with mental or physical disabilities have the right to request reasonable accommodations through their host site. The host site should work closely with the Minnesota GreenCorps program coordinator and the MPCA’s Human Resource Office to support and respond to such requests.
- Grievance procedures: Discuss work problems with members, engage in informal problem solving, and (if required) support the Grievance Procedures included in the Member Service Agreement.
- Attend supervisor training: Participate in a one-day site supervisor orientation at the start of the program year to learn roles and responsibilities. If a host site supervisor is unable to attend the

supervisor training, they must let the MPCA know in writing and they are required to have a representative from the host site attend the full training and share the content with the supervisor.

- Work with member to identify training opportunities relevant to their project and/or their career development: MN GreenCorps host sites must contribute \$300 for member professional development (trainings, conference registration, networking events, or other opportunities). The host site must register the member directly; the member cannot be reimbursed. The professional development contribution is required as in-kind match; sites must retain receipts as documentation.
- Approve timesheets: Verify the member's service hours by approving their timesheet online once every two weeks through the OnCorps Reports online system. Member timesheets must be approved by supervisors on time for the member to receive their living allowance.
- Participate in site visits: Participate in up to two site visits facilitated by the Minnesota GreenCorps program coordinator.
- Maintain open lines of communication: Maintain open lines of communication with the Minnesota GreenCorps member, Minnesota GreenCorps program coordinators, and MPCA professional staff in relation to the member's role and performance.
- Discipline: Ensure that members comply with the terms of the Member Service Agreement. Host sites must be involved with resolving problems and may be involved in the grievance procedures. The host site supervisor should work closely with the MPCA staff on disciplinary action. A site may not decide to terminate a member; only designated MPCA staff has the authority to suspend or release a Minnesota GreenCorps member from service for disciplinary reasons.
- Complete performance evaluations: Complete a mid-year and end-of-year member performance evaluation.
- Submit in-kind documentation: Submit bi-weekly in-kind reports through the OnCorps Reports online system, and provide hard copy documentation.
- Reportable and measurable outcomes: Review and approve the member's quarterly reports on project progress in OnCorps, and a final report that includes lessons learned and project measures for success.

Non-displacement policy

A Minnesota GreenCorps member, as an AmeriCorps participant, is not an employee or volunteer of the host site organization. A Minnesota GreenCorps member may not displace an employee of the host site, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits. A Minnesota GreenCorps member may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any:

- Currently employed worker.
- Employee who recently resigned or was discharged.
- Employee who is subject to a reduction in workforce or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
- Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick).
- Employee who is on strike or is being locked out.

In-kind contribution

The MPCA does not charge a fee for participation in the Minnesota GreenCorps program. Per AmeriCorps regulations, host sites cannot provide financial contributions to the member; supplementing the member stipend or other costs of living (e.g., housing) is prohibited. However, host sites are expected to provide in-kind contributions in the form of supervision (calculation based on hourly wage **excluding** fringe benefits), operating costs (office space, internet, telephone), and professional development costs associated with hosting a member. The expected contribution for hosting one member is \$6,800, broken down into the following categories:

Category	Estimated minimum contribution per member
Supervision (at least 4 hours per week)	\$5,000
Professional development (trainings, conference registration, networking events, or other opportunities)	\$300
Operating costs (office space, internet connection, phone connection, computer purchase or rental, office equipment)	\$1,500

Host sites will be required to provide written documentation verifying all in-kind contributions, including how expenses were calculated. Host site supervisors are required to report their in-kind supervision hours bi-weekly in OnCorps Reports, the online system for Minnesota AmeriCorps programs. In-kind contributions cannot be provided from a federal source of funds unless permission has been provided from the granting federal agency. Host sites are expected to maintain any source documentation for seven years.

V. Host site application information

Eligibility

Eligible host sites include:

- Government entities (city, county, regional, state, tribal).
- School districts.
- 501(c) (3) nonprofit organizations.
- Not for profit institutions of higher education.

For-profit entities are not eligible to serve as host sites. Qualified applicants must provide supervision and support to the Minnesota GreenCorps member, professional development opportunities, along with adequate workspace, computer, internet, email, telephone access, and accessibility for people with disabilities. Up to 46 different host sites will be selected for the 2022-2023 program year. Members will be placed individually.

Please submit one application for each member position request. *Note: In an effort to allocate Minnesota GreenCorps member positions and resources to various communities, organizations will not generally receive more than two member positions per year.*

Placement will be from September 2022 through August 2023. Members will carry out one of four specific positions as outlined in this document.

Current or past host sites wishing to participate in the 2022-2023 program year must submit a new application proposing a distinct member project that is either unique to or builds from past member positions. Past participation as a host site does not guarantee selection for subsequent years of the program. Previous site performance, including timeliness of in-kind and member reporting, site visit reviews, and communication with Minnesota GreenCorps program coordinators will be taken into consideration.

Grant agreement

Each host site must formally enter into a grant agreement. The agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation of the project. Once the agreement is signed, the recipient is expected to read and comply with all conditions of the agreement. Note: If selected, host sites are required to be a registered vendor in SWIFT and will sign the grant agreement using DocuSign. To register, go to the Supplier Portal webpage SWIFT and click on the Vendor Registration Link. See sample Host Site Agreement on the MN GreenCorps' website at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps>.

Instructions

If your organization is interested in hosting a Minnesota GreenCorps member, **please submit an application electronically to the MPCA by 5:00 p.m. Central time on Tuesday, March 22, 2022, to mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us**. (Letters of support and Board resolutions may follow later with explanation and expected timeline to receive them).

Application forms are available online at www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps.

Completed application checklist:

- Application questions completely answered, including a completed work plan
- Board resolution of governing board, if applicable¹
- Letters of support from any identified partners (either internal or external)²
- For nonprofits only: Proof of eligibility: 501(c) 3 status

Please review the host site requirement checklist in Appendix B to make sure your organization can meet the requirements for hosting a Minnesota GreenCorps member.

The MPCA and the Minnesota GreenCorps program do not discriminate with regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, familial status, gender identity, gender expression, or membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law. Reasonable accommodations provided upon request. This document is available in alternative formats.

The MPCA supports equal opportunity and affirmative action.

Criteria

Host site applications will be reviewed using the following established criteria.

<p>Project scope and outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project goals and member activities clearly defined. • Project aligns with Minnesota GreenCorps pre-scoped position description and program goals. • Ability of the proposed activities to meet program outputs and outcomes. 	35 points
<p>Community need/involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for broader community involvement. • Opportunities to serve under-represented/economically disadvantaged communities. • Project engages areas of environmental justice concern, per the EJ Story map. • Service activities target new communities that have not recently received Minnesota GreenCorps assistance. 	25 points
<p>Organizational capacity and commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified and available supervisor available for member training and support. • Site is able to provide transportation for any necessary member service activities. • Placement does not replace, displace, or duplicate existing position. 	25 points

<p>Current or past host sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How proposed member position is unique from past member positions. • Previous site performance, including timeliness of in-kind and member reporting, site visit reviews, member support, and communication with Minnesota GreenCorps program coordinators. <p><i>*New host sites automatically receive 15 points</i></p>	15 points
Total	100 points

¹ Board resolution may follow after the application deadline, with an expected timeline for submittal. This **must** be obtained from selected host sites prior to execution of an agreement. See Appendix C for a sample Board Resolution.

² Letters of support may follow after the application deadline.

As a statewide program, Minnesota GreenCorps seeks organizations from all areas of the State, especially those that will impact economically disadvantaged and underrepresented populations. The MPCA will consider the mix of organization type, geographic location, and other demographic factors in deciding the composition of host sites. The MPCA reserves the right to not award host sites in any or all of the project categories.

Host site selection process

1. After the application period closes, a committee of MPCA staff in each focus area will review and score applications using established criteria.
2. Host site semi-finalists will be selected for each project area and may be contacted for phone interviews with review teams in March and/or April 2022. **Host site staff identified as on-site supervisors are expected to participate in the phone interview.**
3. Based on application and phone interview, finalist host sites will be recommended to MPCA management for selection.
4. Applicants will be notified of their status anticipated in early May 2022, contingent on availability of funds.
5. Selection of host site projects may be contingent upon the applicant providing additional information or making revisions.
6. Once notified, a host site must sign an agreement with the MPCA, which will include rules of participation, roles, and responsibilities. A sample agreement can be found on the Minnesota GreenCorps website at www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps.
7. Estimated program start date is mid to late September 2022. Host sites must participate in a one-day orientation, which is anticipated to take place in September 2022. Members will be available for service at their host site location after an orientation by the MPCA. The member's first day on-site at their host site follows the orientation, which is anticipated to take place in September 2022.

VI. Program information

Minnesota GreenCorps service positions are for 11 months: beginning in September 2022 and concluding in August 2023. Full-time members must serve 1,700 hours during this term, which equates to around 40 hours a week, allowing for sick and vacation time. **The MPCA administers the recruitment, application, and selection process for Minnesota GreenCorps members.** However, potential host sites are strongly encouraged to promote member service opportunities to individuals familiar with their organization and the community in which the member would be serving. Encouraging a local candidate does not guarantee placement with an organization.

Member compensation and benefits

- Minnesota GreenCorps members will receive orientation and training from the MPCA and partnering organizations, as appropriate.
- Minnesota GreenCorps members will have the opportunity to devote up to 170 hours of their time to professional development opportunities (conferences and workshops) throughout their service.
- Full-time Minnesota GreenCorps members are provided with a taxable living allowance, which is disbursed bi-weekly.
- An offer of basic health insurance is provided by the MPCA.
- Upon completion of their term of service, members receive an AmeriCorps Education Award of up to \$6,395 for use on future higher education expenses or on existing qualified student loans.
- Members may be eligible for childcare assistance (depending on financial status).

Member code of conduct

Attendance

Members are expected to:

- Arrive and depart from their host site on time every day following their set schedule.
- Notify their site supervisor if they will be late or are sick; obtain approval from their site supervisor for scheduled absences; notify and receive approval from the Minnesota GreenCorps program coordinator for any absences longer than one (1) week. Approved time away from work is not counted as service.
- Arrive on time and fully participate in required Minnesota GreenCorps training.
- Attend required trainings and meetings at their host site.
- Abide by policy regarding breaks and lunch.
- Serve approximately 40 hours per week (full-time) as reported on the approved timesheet.

Program reporting

Members are expected to:

- Report service hours on timesheets daily. Submit timesheets into the OnCorps online system for supervisor approval at the end of each pay period (every two weeks).
- Submit quarterly updates on project progress and a final report that includes project measures and lessons learned. Program staff will work with the member and host site to refine project measures and provide tools for tracking and reporting data.

Provide additional information to program staff as requested, including the completion of required surveys.

Functions of the position

Members are expected to satisfactorily perform the functions of the position as described in the position description. Members may not displace an employee, volunteer, or position within their service site.

Policies and procedures

Members are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined by Minnesota GreenCorps. Members are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined by Minnesota GreenCorps and adhere to the policies, procedures, and code of conduct of their host site, including, but not limited to confidentiality policies, internet policies, dress code, and other behavior. Members may not displace an employee, volunteer, or position at their service site.

Training

Members are expected to arrive on time to Minnesota GreenCorps training sessions, including a required orientation at the start of the program year and required quarterly trainings throughout the program year. Members are asked to be respectful of trainers, turn their cell phones to silent, and be engaged and responsive as participants. Members may not bring their children to training.

Communication

Members are expected to check their email daily and respond in a timely manner. Members must communicate with Minnesota GreenCorps program staff regarding extended absences, name changes, address or phone changes, or site issues or concerns. The Minnesota GreenCorps Program coordinator will raise serious concerns and policy violations to MPCA Human Resources.

Professionalism

Members are representative of their host site organization, community, Minnesota GreenCorps, the MPCA, and AmeriCorps during their term of service and are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. This includes wearing appropriate attire, communicating professionally, responding to constructive criticism and feedback, limiting cell phone use to breaks, etc. Members' activity on the internet must also remain professional during their term of service.

- Members may not post inappropriate pictures or offensive images that reflect negatively on the MPCA, Minnesota GreenCorps program, or host site on the internet.
- Members should not send emails to anyone within the Minnesota GreenCorps network that are not work-related and/or may be offensive to others (i.e. political or religious emails).
- Members should follow the policy of their host site regarding the use of internet at the site (i.e. checking personal email).

Member prohibited activities

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities, members may not engage in prohibited service activities, CFR § 2520.65.

- A. Attempting to influence legislation.
- B. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes.
- C. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing.
- D. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
- E. Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office.
- F. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials.
- G. Engaging in religious instruction; conducting worship services; providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship; constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship; maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship; or engaging in any form of religious proselytization.
- H. Providing a direct benefit to: i. a business organized for profit, ii. a labor union, iii. a partisan political organization, iv. a non-profit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or v. an organization engaged in the religious activities described above.
- I. Conducting a voter registration drive or using Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS) funds to conduct a voter registration drive.
- J. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services.
- K. Clerical work or research unless such activities are incidental to the member's direct service activities.

L. Census activities. AmeriCorps members and volunteers associated with AmeriCorps grants may not engage in census activities during service hours. Being a census taker during service hours is categorically prohibited. Census-related activities (e.g., promotion of the Census, education about the importance of the Census) do not align with AmeriCorps State and National objectives. What members and volunteers do on their own time is up to them, consistent with program policies about outside employment and activities.

M. Election and polling activities. AmeriCorps members may not provide services for election or polling locations or in support of such activities.

N. Such other activities as CNCS may prohibit.

Fundraising restrictions

A. AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of program service activities.

B. Examples of fundraising activities AmeriCorps members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read.
2. Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers.
3. Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals.
4. Securing financial resources from the community to assist in launching or expanding a program that provides social services to the members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the members of a community-based organization.
5. Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current members.

C. AmeriCorps members may not:

1. Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment.
2. Write a grant application to the Corporation or to any other Federal agency.

An AmeriCorps member may spend no more than 10% of his/her/their originally agreed-upon term of service, as reflected in the member enrollment in the National Service Trust, performing fundraising activities, per CFR § 2520.40.

Nonduplication/nondisplacement

A. Nonduplication: Corporation assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless the requirements of the nondisplacement clause (below) are met, Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides, per CFR § 2540.100.

B. Nondisplacement:

1. An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
2. An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
3. A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.

4. A participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.

5. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that:

- i. Will supplant the hiring of employed workers.
- ii. Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall right pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.

6. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any:

- i. Presently employed worker.
- ii. Employee who recently resigned or was discharged.
- iii. Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
- iv. Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick).
- v. Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.
- vi. Member eligibility requirements and qualifications

Eligibility requirements

- Must be a minimum of 18 years or older.
- Must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. National, or a lawful permanent resident alien of the U.S.
- Must be eligible to serve an AmeriCorps service term.
- Must consent to, and pass, a criminal history check.

Travel

- Most positions require driving, a valid driver's license, and the ability to pass a driving record check administered by the MPCA.
- Some positions may require access to a personal vehicle for transportation.

Qualifications and skills

Education

A two-year Associate of Arts degree or completion of sophomore year in a four-year college program is required. A four-year college degree with a major or significant course work related to environmental protection, energy conservation and efficiency, urban planning, ecology or biology, or another relevant aspect of the Minnesota GreenCorps program is preferred.

Work skills

- Effective communication, presentation, and writing skills.
- Ability to build and maintain relationships.
- Ability to work well independently and on diverse teams.
- Ability to take initiative and effectively manage projects.
- Ability to research and organize information.
- Functional computer skills: word processing, spreadsheet, database management.

Interest/commitment

- Demonstrated interest in environmental topics, including energy and water conservation, active transportation, urban planning, local foods, recycling, environmental education, etc.
- Commitment to complete the 11 month (1,700 hour) AmeriCorps service term.

Physical requirements

- Most positions are primarily based in an office setting and require sitting, standing, and operating a computer and telephone.
- Some positions may require light to moderate lifting, bending, stooping, pulling, kneeling, carrying, and use of hand tools.
- Some positions may require the ability to work outdoors in adverse weather conditions, such as wind, rain, high or low temperatures on challenging terrain for up to 8 hours at a time.

Performance requirements and expectations

- Participation in orientation and quarterly trainings.
- Submission of an online timesheet to report service hours once every two weeks.
- Submission of quarterly and final project progress reports.
- Successful completion of 1,700 hours of service and the 11-month service term.

While Minnesota GreenCorps members will be selected for placement based on their qualifications and commitment to service, host sites must understand that members may not necessarily bring highly specialized skills to their position. The members are participating in the Minnesota GreenCorps program to give back to their communities and gain valuable skills and experience in the environmental field. Host sites will need to invest time in on-the-job training for the members.

Questions

Please thoroughly review this document, along with the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) in Appendix A. Questions may be directed to mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us. As questions arise, an updated FAQ will be available online at www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps. All questions received will be listed on the FAQ. Questions will not be answered individually.

Appendix A. Frequently asked questions

What if we want to apply for Minnesota GreenCorps members for projects other than the four position types?

Only the four position descriptions outlined in this document are eligible for placement of Minnesota GreenCorps members. There may be other opportunities for different projects in future years, should Minnesota GreenCorps be funded in the future.

What sort of reporting requirements will host site supervisors have?

Host site supervisors must review and approve all member project reports, including quarterly and final reports. Supervisors must also approve member timesheets in OnCorps Reports every two weeks, and submit their own supervision timesheets every two weeks. Supervisors must also submit in-kind documentation and report in-kind expenditures to the MPCA.

Will host sites be responsible for training their Minnesota GreenCorps members?

Minnesota GreenCorps members will be given basic training in AmeriCorps procedures and in the topic areas of their projects in September 2022, arranged by the MPCA. MPCA professional staff (and those from other State agencies) will also be available to provide a limited amount of guidance as “mentors” for Minnesota GreenCorps members. However, a majority of the training and ongoing supervision for day-to-day service will be provided by host sites.

Will money be provided to the Minnesota GreenCorps members by the MPCA to implement their projects?

No, host sites are expected to provide any needed materials or funds for the Minnesota GreenCorps members to implement their project activities. The MPCA pays the members’ living allowances, but does not have funds available to support projects.

How much time will it take to supervise a Minnesota GreenCorps member?

The minimum requirement is at least 0.10 FTE of a professional staff’s time to supervise one Minnesota GreenCorps member, or at least 4 hours per week. Supervision time may exceed this minimum requirement depending on project and member needs.

Are Minnesota GreenCorps members considered employees of our organization?

No, Minnesota GreenCorps members are not to be considered employees or volunteers of the host site, although they will be provided with office space, computer, and other support services. They should be referred to as “members” and the activities they carry out as “service.”

Our organization is too small to host a Minnesota GreenCorps member. Can we submit a joint application with other local organizations and share the Minnesota GreenCorps member with them?

It is possible for a small organization to involve another organization(s) in an application for a Minnesota GreenCorps member, but one organization must bear full responsibility for supervision, reporting, time-tracking, and other aspects of the Minnesota GreenCorps members’ work. Partnerships must be clearly defined.

Will we be able to participate in the selection process of our Minnesota GreenCorps members?

The MPCA will make selection decisions. Time constraints prevent active participation by host sites in the member selection process. Host sites are encouraged to invite strong local candidates to apply for member positions, but this does not guarantee that a member will be selected and/or placed with that host site.

If we are provided with a Minnesota GreenCorps member in 2022-2023, can we apply again for another Minnesota GreenCorps member in future years?

Dependent on future funding and a continued program, it will be possible for successful host sites to apply for Minnesota GreenCorps members in future years. Past performance will be taken into consideration.

Can one organization submit multiple applications?

In an effort to allocate Minnesota GreenCorps member positions and resources to various communities, organization have historically not received more than two member positions and the MPCA anticipates a similar approach for the 2022-2023 program year. **Organizations must submit an application for each member position request.**

Can Minnesota GreenCorps members assist businesses?

An AmeriCorps member cannot provide a direct benefit to a for-profit entity. However, members may assist businesses with environmental practices when the primary goal is to improve the environment/community, and the business only benefits secondarily. Members may not assist businesses with coming into compliance or avoiding fines from any local, state, or federal environmental laws.

We would like to apply for two members. Would we be more likely to be considered if we only asked for one?

Applying for more than one member does not make you any more or less likely to be selected as a host site. You might, however, be selected as a host site but only awarded only one member. In an effort to allocate Minnesota GreenCorps member positions and resources to various communities, organization have historically not received more than two member positions and the MPCA anticipates a similar approach for the 2022-2023 program year.

We were a previous host site. Do we need to obtain a new board resolution?

Yes. Your previous board resolution applied only to that service year, so a new resolution must be obtained for the 2022-2023 service year.

If we are selected, does the assigned member work on all four focus areas during their time with us or does the host city select one focus area and apply based on that selection?

Host sites are expected to select one focus area for the project that a member will carry out, and identify that specific position type on their application. All positions allow for marginal function service activities where a member can assist with other sustainability-related tasks in the host community (not to exceed 20% or 340 service hours of the member's time).

What overhead expenses, outside of a workstation and vehicle (when needed), are host organizations responsible to provide?

The MPCA does not charge a fee for participation in the Minnesota GreenCorps program. Host sites are expected to provide in-kind contributions in the form of supervision, office space, internet, telephone, and professional development costs associated with hosting a member. Host sites are expected to provide any needed materials or funds for the Minnesota GreenCorps members to implement their project activities.

How does the candidate selection process work? Would we have the opportunity to review potential candidates' education, work experience, and provide preference rating for the GreenCorps candidates?

The MPCA administers the recruitment, application, and selection process for Minnesota GreenCorps members. Host sites do not participate in reviewing potential candidates or providing preference rating for the GreenCorps candidates. Time constraints prevent active participation by host sites in the member selection process. Potential host sites are encouraged to promote member service opportunities to individuals familiar with their organization and the community in which the member would be serving and also invite strong local candidates to apply for member positions, but this does not guarantee that a member will be selected and placed with that host site.

Do we need to have our own 501(c) (3) status in order to apply?

Eligible host sites include government entities, school districts, 501(c) (3) nonprofit organizations, and not for profit institutions of higher education. As part of the application process, nonprofit host site applicants will be required to provide proof of eligibility: 501(c) (3) status.

Do I understand correctly that the financial commitment of the host site is to provide the member with office space and necessary supplies and equipment to meet the objectives of their work plan?

The financial commitment of the host site is to provide in-kind contributions in the form of supervision, office space, internet, telephone, vehicle or travel reimbursement (when required for service activities) and professional development costs associated with hosting a member. Host sites are expected to provide any needed materials or funds for the Minnesota GreenCorps members to implement their project activities.

Is the expectation that the project fulfills all of the listed essential functions, just one, or most of them?

It is not required that the project fulfills all of the listed essential functions, the essential and marginal functions are guidelines for project tasks. However, the service project must align with at least one outlined performance measure; alignment with two or more measures is encouraged.

Our Board of Directors is not scheduled to meet until after the application deadline. Would it be permissible to submit the Board resolution after the application deadline?

The resolution may follow after the application deadline; however, an expected timeline for submittal should be included in the application. The resolution must be obtained by the MPCA before an agreement can be executed with the host site.

Appendix B. Host site requirement checklist

Host site applicants: Please use the following checklist to verify your ability to participate in the Minnesota GreenCorps program. Eligible host sites must be able to respond “yes” to all of the following:

Host site requirements	Meets requirements
Host site is an eligible entity (government entity, school district, not for profit institution of higher education, or 501(c)(3) non-profit).	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site has adequate space for the member including a phone with messaging, access to a computer that has internet and email, place to save work files electronically, access to printer and copier, is accessible to people with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site understands and ensures that the member is not replacing the work of staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site supervisor will set a schedule with the member.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site will provide on-site training to member.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site will provide a comprehensive host site orientation to the member during the first week the member is on-site.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor is able to meet with the member a minimum of 4 hours per week.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor will ensure Minnesota GreenCorps member is not involved in any general site fundraising (including grant writing) or other activities prohibited by AmeriCorps (i.e., partisan activities, religious activities, labor organizing, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor will furnish an in-kind documentation letter, which details the in-kind office space expenses and the supervisor’s hourly wage without fringe benefits.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor will approve/submit all reporting on time which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member timesheets bi-weekly. • Supervisor in-kind hours bi-weekly. • Quarterly reports. 	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor can attend host site orientation in September 2022.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

Appendix C. Sample board resolution

WHEREAS, _____ (name of organization) has applied to host an AmeriCorps member from the Minnesota GreenCorps, a program of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), for the 2022-2023 program year; and

WHEREAS, if the MPCA selects _____ (name of organization), the organization is committed to implementing the proposed project as described in the host site application, and in accordance with pre-scoped position description; and

WHEREAS, the MPCA requires that _____ (name of organization) enter into a host site agreement with the MPCA that identifies the terms, conditions, roles and responsibilities;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT _____ (name of organization) hereby agrees to enter into and sign a host site agreement with the MPCA to carry out the member activities specified therein and to comply with all of the terms, conditions, and matching provisions of the host site agreement and authorizes and directs _____ (name of a position) to sign the grant agreement on its behalf.

Print name of signing officer

Title

Signature of an officer with our governing body

Date your governing body agreed to this resolution