Is My Organization Ready?

An assessment tool for potential AmeriCorps*State applicants

This assessment tool is designed to help potential applicants assess their organizational readiness to administer and support a high quality AmeriCorps*State program. This tool asks the reader to score the organization/legal applicant on elements necessary to run a high quality program by selecting the answer that best describes the organization's current status or performance. There are no wrong answers.

Organization Mission

1. Does your organization have a written mission statement? [If no, skip to question 5.]   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

2. Does the mission statement provide a clear expression of your organization's reason for existence?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

3. Is the mission understood by **all** stakeholders within the organization?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

4. Is the mission frequently referred to (e.g., in meetings, in annual planning)?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

Strategic Planning and Operations

5. Does the organization have a clear and coherent written plan (e.g., 3-10 year strategic plan)? [If no, skip to question 11.]   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

6. Does the strategic plan have well defined goals and action steps with timeframes **and** are the goals measurable   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

7. Is the strategic plan linked to the overall mission, vision, and overarching goals of the organization?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

8. Is the strategic plan broadly known by the staff and board?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

9. Has the strategic plan been supported with a realistic and detailed annual plan that outlines the specific work to be accomplished?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

10. Is this annual plan consistently used at all levels of the organization to direct operations?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

Needs Assessment, Program Design and Implementation

11. Does the organization conduct frequent assessments of community needs?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

12. Does the organization analyze the results of needs assessments and implement changes?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

13. Does the organization have the ability to grow and/or create new and innovative programs to meet the needs of service recipients?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

14. Does the organization have a track record of accomplishments with its programs?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

Program Alignment

15. Are the organization's programs and services well defined?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

16. Are the programs fully aligned with the organization's mission, goals, and overall strategy?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

17. Do the programs and services fit together well as part of the overall strategy?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

Performance Measurement

18. Does the organization have a well developed and comprehensive evaluation system used to measure the social impact of the programs and services? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

19. Does the organization collect data to measure performance and progress on a continual basis? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

20. Does the organization analyze the data and report findings to stakeholders in an accurate and timely manner (e.g., issue an annual report)? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

21. Does the organization conduct frequent assessments of existing programs' effectiveness in meeting recipient needs and identify areas for improvement? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

22. Does the organization conduct continual assessment of internal operations to assess efficiency and effectiveness? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

23. If yes to questions 22 and 23, are adjustments and improvements always made? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Use of Technology

24. Does the organization have networked computing hardware with a comprehensive range of up-to-date software applications? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

25. Does every key staff member have a computer with up-to-date software? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

26. Does every key staff member have internet access and e-mail capabilities? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

27. Is computer technology used regularly by staff? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Financial Management

28. Has the organization ever managed a federal grant? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

29. Is the organization familiar with procedures for the determination and allowance of costs in connection with Federal grants and contracts (e.g., OMB Circulars)? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

30. Does the organization have a written cost allocation plan? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

31. Does the organization have a computerized accounting system? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

32. Does the organization produce and review financial statements regularly? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

33. Does the organization have formal internal controls governing all financial operations? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

34. Is the cash flow actively managed? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

35. Are the financial operations audited annually? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

36. Does the organization utilize a strategic budgeting process that reflects the organizational needs and objectives? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

37. Is the budget closely and regularly monitored? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

38. Are time distribution records maintained by funding source and project for each employee to account for total hours devoted to the organization? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

39. Are timesheets approved by appropriately signed documentation? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Human Resources

40. Does the organization have a well planned process to recruit, develop, and retain employees?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
41. Does the organization provide relevant and regular internal and external training?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
42. Are employee performance appraisals consistent and institutionalized?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
43. Does the organization have a proven willingness to ensure high-quality job occupancy?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
44. If applicable, does the organization have a well planned process to recruit, develop, and retain volunteers?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure

Partnership/Collaboration

45. Has the organization built and maintained partnerships?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
46. Are these partnerships strong and do they have a high impact?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
47. Have these relationships led to mutually beneficial collaboration?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure

Sustainability

48. Does the organization have highly diversified funding with multiple financial resources?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
49. Does the organization have a group of dedicated people who believe in and support the organization's success?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure

Governance and Operations

50. Does the organization have an active and effective board of directors and/or other governing body?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
51. Does the board of directors or governing body meet on a regular basis?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
52. Does the organization have written by-laws?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
53. Does the organization provide staff with all of the information necessary to carry out duties appropriately?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
54. Does the organization have a written policies and procedures manual? [If no or unsure, skip questions 55 and 56.]	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
55. Does this manual address civil rights issues?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure
56. Does staff understand and consistently follow the written policies and procedures?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unsure

Results

Each "yes" answer is worth one point.

51 points or more: Based on your self-assessment, your organization may have the capacity to administer AmeriCorps*State funds.

42-50 points: Based on your self-assessment, your organization may need to make a few improvements in capacity and planning to succeed.

Less than 41 points: Based on your self-assessment, your organization may have a significant need to build its capacity. Applying for AmeriCorps*State funds may not be a suitable option for you at this time.