

Guide for Host Sites Recruiting RISE AmeriCorps Members



AmeriCorps



RISE



Recruitment Calendar

The following guide will present steps and strategies to recruit RISE AmeriCorps Members for your host site organization. With the right tools, you can find a quality cohort to join your site's team and make a difference in local immigrant and refugee communities.



Recruitment Steps

1. Plan

Position Descriptions

One of the first steps is editing a position description for a member's specific role at your site. Consider the tasks you are looking for RISE AmeriCorps members to take on and begin to outline them in a document. RISE AmeriCorps will create general position descriptions for all members at sites across Iowa, while host sites help create position descriptions specific to their sites. Ensure that the tasks in the position description are compliant with the latest RISE AmeriCorps grant cycle requirements. RISE AmeriCorps staff will approve final versions of position descriptions.



2. Market

Post on Job/Volunteer Boards

Once the final position description is complete and has been approved by RISE AmeriCorps staff, the host site can post them on job and volunteer boards. The post should advertise a RISE AmeriCorps position at your specific organization. Posts must include the desired start date, a summary of the position description and a link to the RISE AmeriCorps website to apply: www.refugeeriseiowa.org/members.html. You can use the social media captions in your toolkit as a start. The RISE AmeriCorps Program will also take care of posting about general, statewide positions.

Potential Sites to post on:

- Indeed
- Handshake
- LinkedIn
- Volunteer Match
- Idealist
- Zip Recruiter

Local Connections

Local connections and word-of-mouth referrals are likely the most effective way to recruit quality, new members. Do you know helpful volunteers, regular clients or other connections in your community who could be a good fit for RISE AmeriCorps? Explain a RISE AmeriCorps term and the benefits of joining! For talking points while recruiting, see further in this guide.

Reach out to local organizations and individuals who may know people interested in applying:

- **Volunteers:** Prioritize sharing the opportunity with volunteers of your current programs. They are already passionate about the work your organization does and may be interested in applying or know someone who would be a great fit.
- **RISE AmeriCorps members and staff:** Ask current and former members and staff to reach out in their circles for anyone who may be interested in supporting immigrant and refugee communities. Many members and alumni have connections in similar walks of life who might be a perfect fit for the RISE AmeriCorps Program and your organization.
- **Ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs):** RISE AmeriCorps intentionally recruits members from the refugee and immigrant communities we serve. Learn about ECBOs (such as EMBARC) in your community, and meet with them to share about your program. They likely know some great candidates!
- **Local nonprofits:** Nonprofits often have excellent, committed volunteers who are passionate about service and may be interested in stepping into a role with your organization.
- **High school teachers (especially ELL teachers):** Teachers often know recent graduates who could be great candidates for your program. ELL teachers especially have connections to graduates from immigrant/refugee backgrounds.
- **Local community colleges or universities:** They often know current students who could be great half-time RISE AmeriCorps Members. They also might know recent graduates who could be great for full-time positions.
- **Teachers or professors who are teaching subjects that align with the work your program does:** RISE AmeriCorps has had excellent referrals from professors teaching social work, education, TESOL, anthropology, nonprofit management and human services. Many students in these fields are looking for experience that RISE AmeriCorps can offer.



Flyers

A stack of printed flyers is needed on hand to give to individuals who are thinking of applying. While referring a potential member to the program, hand them the flyer provided in your recruitment toolkit. The flyer explains how to apply and the basics of the program.

Does your organization have a bulletin board or other space sharing information and resources? Print out flyer and display it in an easily viewable space. For extra visibility, consider asking to display RISE AmeriCorps flyers in community spaces such as libraries, colleges or religious centers.

You can either use the “general recruitment flyer” or provide information to the RISE AmeriCorps Program for a “host site-specific flyer” that is tailored to your organization.



Events

When your organization participates in a community event, print RISE AmeriCorps recruitment flyers to display and hand out. When passerbys inquire about your organization, **talk about a RISE AmeriCorps term as an opportunity to get involved.** For talking points while recruiting, see further in this guide.

Many RISE AmeriCorps members are also students or recent graduates looking to gain experience. If your organization is located near a university or community college, consider attending a career fair to talk to students about serving at your site.

Career fair contacts in Iowa:

- Iowa State University: careerservices@iasstate.edu
- Kirkwood Community: careerservices@kirkwood.edu
- University of Iowa: careercenter@uiowa.edu
- University of Northern Iowa: careerservices@uni.edu
- DMACC: careers@dmacc.edu



Social Media

If your organization has social media, take advantage of it to spread the word that you are recruiting. **Both social media captions and images created for your host site are included in your recruitment toolkit.** Simply copy and paste any caption and attach an image to fit your needs.

In addition to the captions in your recruitment toolkit, you will find a social media image that has been personalized to your host site. It has a photo and a short description of the site along with information to apply. A more general recruitment image that is not site-specific is available in French, Karen, Burmese, Mizo Chin, Spanish, Falam Chin, Hakha Chin and Swahili. Images have been adjusted for both Instagram and Facebook and are sorted into separate folders.

3. Interview and Select Candidates

RISE AmeriCorps staff will screen applicants before connecting them with host sites for an interview. While interviewing and choosing candidates to join your site, see our guide on selecting a quality member. The document is included in your recruitment toolkit. Please make final decisions and inform RISE AmeriCorps staff at least one month before the desired start date, in order to allow enough time to onboard the members.



4. Onboarding

After finalists are chosen and notified, RISE AmeriCorps staff will start onboarding. Due to requirements like paperwork and a background check with fingerprinting, onboarding usually takes about a month for new members to complete. Members must complete all onboarding requirements to start their RISE AmeriCorps term. If members do not complete the onboarding requirements in time, their start date may be pushed back.

Afterwards, members are enrolled in RISE AmeriCorps orientation and connect with their host site supervisors to begin their terms.



Strategy for Recruitment: Talking Points

Many sites may find that word of mouth referrals are especially effective in finding the right candidate for their organization, especially within specific immigrant and refugee communities. To help recruit members for your site, here are talking points to encourage individuals to join. Use these talking points at tabling events, at university career fairs, with volunteers, or with any other local connections.

RISE AmeriCorps is the **ONLY** AmeriCorps programs designed to eliminate barriers for and serve immigrant and refugee communities in Iowa.

Members serve with a network of **over 50 AmeriCorps members** who are increasing access to resources and creating opportunities for immigrant and refugee communities across the state.

RISE AmeriCorps members receive **“living allowance” funds** every other week, student loan forbearance and an education award to pay toward tuition or loans (For the amount, check refugeeriseiowa.org/members). Full-time members receive additional benefits, such as **health insurance**.

RISE AmeriCorps is ideal for students, recent graduates and others **who are looking to gain experience and kickstart their career in a helping profession**. The program can also accommodate students with part-time positions.

RISE AmeriCorps is not a “job,” but a **national service, leadership and apprenticeship/training program**.

RISE AmeriCorps members can spend up to **20% of their service term on training** and professional development. They also have the opportunity to be matched with **a mentor** to make sure they are working toward their own professional goals while they are helping others.

RISE AmeriCorps is for individuals who are passionate about **social justice**, connecting with individuals from other cultures, making a difference in their community and learning at the same time.

RISE AmeriCorps members have the opportunity to develop **leadership skills** during their term, including through a council of member leaders that meets to discuss and advise the RISE AmeriCorps Program.