

Frequently Asked Questions – Community Stewardship Corps RFA/Applications

General Community Stewardship Corps Program Series Questions:

1. *What is the Community Stewardship Corps? I thought it was a specific grant in years past?*

The Community Stewardship Corps was a specific grant in previous years. The Community Stewardship Corps program series now serves as program that offers multiple options under its purview. The options that currently have grant funding opportunities are as follows:

- a. On-The-Job Training
- b. Service Learning Education

2. *Is there a program grant that is similar to what we applied for in the previous Community Stewardship Corps grants?*

Yes, The Service Learning Education grant is now that grant opportunity. The name change aligns with collective efforts occurring throughout state agencies to coordinate and collaborate more efficiently. The main difference now, is that these grants go from an annual nine-month duration to lasting continuously through the end of June 2027.

3. *What happened to the Summer Corps grants?*

The Summer Corps grant has moved under the Community Stewardship Corps program and is being called On-The-Job Training. The main focus of this grant is to fund programming for youth participants where the primary benefit provides stewardship focused, crew based, and paid workforce and training experiences. The grant allows funding expenditures throughout the biennium to allow for more access and paid employment opportunities. Grants awards go from an annual award that was limited to four-months to an award that lasts through the end of June 2027.

4. *Now that grants have been extended timelines, does our program need to provide programing throughout the whole time?*

No, however, for each individual grant awarded, organizations will need to meet the criteria described within the RFA.

5. *I see that we are able to offer internship opportunities now?*

Yes, however please review the RFA for more specific criteria. Organizations will also need to meet the minimum crew-based criteria described within the RFA in order to offer internship opportunities.

6. *Are there any changes to the On-The-Job Training grant now that it is under the Community Stewardship Corps?*

Yes, more project eligibility areas are available for programs to provide youth projects.

7. *Will Oregon Youth Corps require Support Vouchers in the grant series?*

Due to insufficient resources, HECC is suspending statutory support vouchers, as per OAR 715-100-0004 subsection 8. Grant applicants/organizations may choose to provide youth participants who successfully complete an applicant's program experience with a support voucher, understanding that applicants/organizations are responsible for paying, distributing, and managing 100% of earned vouchers.

Frequently Asked Questions – Community Stewardship Corps RFA/Applications

8. *Will Oregon Youth Corps still pay for a percentage of earned support vouchers?*

Grant funds may still be used to offset paying out support vouchers to participants.

However, applicants/organizations opting to use Oregon Youth Corps grant funds to provide support vouchers for participants will need to provide (in their application) their organization's process for earning, awarding, and redeeming vouchers.

9. *Our organization has a federally approved indirect rate, can we really use that for building our grant budget?*

Yes, provided you supply the necessary documentation to verify their approved rate.

If you are awarded a grant, organizations will need to supply HECC with the following documentation:

- Approving federal agency, cost rate, and period covered of approved agreement

10. *If I haven't operated an Oregon Youth Corps or Oregon Conservation Corps grant, or I haven't had a planning grant, why can't I apply under this RFA?*

Providing a quality and sustainable youth workforce and development program experience is challenging venture. Programs have a short time frame during an open RFA to find quality community partners and projects, connect skill and interpersonal development/curriculum, and navigate strict agency insurance requirements. And doing this work on a limited grant budget makes the challenge even more difficult.

At Oregon Youth Corps, we want new to Oregon Youth Corps programs to spend some time doing the planning before you apply, and not spend programming time trying to figure it out as you try to implement a program grant. Therefore, we require new programs to apply for a planning grant and work with staff to better help prepare your organization in advance of the work of receiving a future Community Stewardship Corps program grant. This model has proven effective in on-boarding more sustainable programming models and creating a network of more prepared applicants.

Application Submission:

1. *Where do I submit my full Community Stewardship Corps application(s)?*

When ready (prior to the RFA deadline) please utilize SM Apply to apply. The application can be found at: <https://www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Pages/grants-contracting.aspx>

2. *How do I know my Community Stewardship Corps application packet was received?*

SM Apply should send you a response once your application(s) have been submitted. Oregon Youth Corps staff will also check on the status of organizational applications during the open RFA period.

3. *Can I submit pictures, letters of reference, maps, any other attachments not requested in my application?*

No, please only submit what is being requested at this time. If more information is required, Oregon Youth Corps will reach out to you directly for more information.

4. *How many times do I need to fill out a Community Stewardship Corps Organizational Application?*

Just once. This application provides organizations the opportunity to provide an organizational overview in alignment with guided narrative prompts.

Frequently Asked Questions – Community Stewardship Corps RFA/Applications

Building your Application Packet (Examples):

1. ***How do I apply for only one specific grant request (I.e. only the Service Learning Education or only the On-The-Job Training) within the Community Stewardship Corps program series?***

If your organization is applying for one specific grant opportunity within Community Stewardship Corps program options (On-The-Job Training grant or the Service Learning Education grant), you will need to fill out and submit the following through SM Apply:

- Community Stewardship Corps Organizational Application; and
- An Individual Grant request for either:
 - On-The-Job Training grant, or
 - Service Learning grant; and

2. ***How do I apply if I have programming in multiple counties/tribal sovereign nations?***

If your organization is applying for grant opportunities in multiple counties/sovereign nations within the Community Stewardship Corps program series, your organization is welcome to fill out an individual grant request for each specific program offering through SM Apply:

- Community Stewardship Corps Organizational Application; and
- Individual Grant request(s) (one for each specific program request and location):
 - On-The-Job Training grant(s), and/or
 - Service Learning grant(s), and/or

3. ***How do I apply if I have two distinctly different programs within the same county/tribal sovereign nation?***

If your organization is applying for multiple grant requests within the same county/tribal sovereign nation within the Community Stewardship Corps program series. Your organization is welcome to fill out a request for each, provided the program offerings are distinctly different. You will need to fill out and submit the following through SM Apply:

- Community Stewardship Corps Organizational Application; and
- An Individual Grant request (one for each specific program request):
 - On-The-Job Training grant, and
 - Service Learning grant, and/or

Planning Grants:

1. ***When will new Planning Grants be available to apply?***

Because we are heading into a new legislative session, Oregon Youth Corps will keep an eye on the legislative process for any potential impact or changes. Oregon Youth Corps anticipates providing an RFA for planning grants in Spring or Summer of 2025 for new applicants.

Frequently Asked Questions – Community Stewardship Corps RFA/Applications

General Contact:

1. Who do I contact if I have a question that is not answered in by the RFA or FAQ?

For questions, clarifications, or if you need this material in a different format, please contact

Jeremy Ahola at: HECC.OYC@hecc.oregon.gov