

**Higher Education Coordinating Commission
RFP 525-1072-20**

20-078 RFP AmeriCorps OV Racial Equity Learning Series

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Questions & Answers_1

1. How many employees will participate in the equity, diversity, inclusion and dispute resolution-related training programs?

The exact number of attendees is to be determined, since it will depend on overall interest and availability. We plan to invite approximately 15 OV Commission members and staff, 10-20 AmeriCorps program staff, 150 AmeriCorps members, and 75 AmeriCorps supervisors. The learning series will be strongly encouraged but not required for all, since our AmeriCorps programs have different resources/time commitments and some are already engaged in their own extensive racial equity training within their program/organization. Oregon Volunteers is offering this opportunity as a resource for our AmeriCorps programs, in our role as a pass-through entity for federal AmeriCorps funds.

2. When was the last time (if ever) that employees were trained in equity, diversity, inclusion and dispute resolution-related topics?

We have 9 different AmeriCorps programs in our portfolio, and we have not surveyed them recently in relation to their own internal trainings. We know that some of our programs engage in this training and internal work regularly (monthly, quarterly) and others are less frequent. Oregon Volunteers staff are involved in regular DEI training and discussions, with sessions held at least monthly. The last time that OV hosted a DEI training directly for our AmeriCorps programs and members was in October 2018.

3. What was the success rate of previous equity, diversity, inclusion and dispute resolution-related training programs?

The October 2018 sessions invoked both positive and negative responses from participants. Overall, it was a learning experience to OV that these trainings should be a journey, not introduced as a one-off, and provide more space for learning and processing.

4. How was the training introduced and distributed?

The October 2018 training included a keynote speaker and breakout sessions to discuss equity and diversity in context of program areas (education, environmental stewardship, etc.)

5. What are some of the barriers you (or your team) face when it comes to participating in the training program?

In recent years, Oregon Volunteers has experience high amount of transition (moving between different home agencies) and staff transition/capacity challenges. This is becoming more stable now. For our AmeriCorps programs/members/sites, they have different AmeriCorps

members who join each year, and host sites/other staff may transition in and out as well. With this lack of consistency, challenging to offer annual training and support that is comprehensive, and yet meets each person where they are at (can't necessarily build a multi-year training programs, assuming a stable group of participants).

6. What challenges are your organization facing that could be resolved with training?

We have AmeriCorps programs/members/sites that are located all across Oregon, with geographic spread and different rural vs. urban settings. We have programs that have different resources and commitments in relation to DEI work, and this means they are all in different places in their organizational journey. We have people of color serving as AmeriCorps members in rural and/or very white settings, who may feel isolated and lack a sense of belonging. It's critical to ensure safety and build skills for all our members, and for our AmeriCorps programs and sites to have grounding in DEI work so that they can carry out this commitment and connect with their members.

7. How will you maintain and refresh acquired equity, diversity, inclusion and dispute resolution-related training beyond the training workshops?

Our agency and our commission are committed to this work; this commitment is clear and is led by our management team, our commission members, and our full-time DEI Director of HECC. Our commission has an Equity Workgroup that is developing an equity commitment statement, in addition to other guidance and principles to ensure that this work continues effectively among our AmeriCorps programs. They will guide this work and hold us accountable.