

Peer Review FAQs



Nevada Volunteers, the Governor’s Commission on Service, is Nevada’s resource center for volunteer and service efforts. One of our primary roles is to select and administer AmeriCorps State programs in Nevada. Nevada Volunteers reviews applications for AmeriCorps State operating grants annually in the fall and spring.

What is a Peer Review?

Peer Review is the portion of the grant application assessment process that is conducted by a panel of individuals from the community with expertise related to the purpose and/or area of focus for the grant program. Peer Reviewers look at submitted proposals in order to analyze the quality of each application and rate them based on a published set of criteria.

What is the process for Peer Review?

Once Nevada Volunteers receives grant applications, the applications (along with a scoring rubric) are distributed to peer reviewers electronically. Once received, Peer Reviewers independently read and score the applications. Peer reviewers then meet virtually to discuss ratings and comments on the applications to determine the final application scores and ranking that will be recommended to the Nevada Volunteers Commission for approval. The entire Peer Review process lasts about 1 month and occurs twice each year (fall and spring).

Is there a stipend for Peer Reviewers?

No. Nevada Volunteers asks peer reviewers to volunteer their time and expertise.

Are the identities of Peer Reviewers made public?

The identities of Peer Reviewers are protected during the review process. Once the decisions on awards are made public, reviewer comments, scores, and identities, are public information. The organizations that applied for funding and their proposals also become public record.

What are the responsibilities of Reviewers?

The primary responsibility of peer reviewers is to:

- Read and assess proposals, submit comments and participate in a final scoring and recommendation conference call.
- Protect the integrity of the process by monitoring for “Conflicts of Interest” and notifying Nevada Volunteers when such a conflict arises.
- Maintain as confidential, information about applicants that is revealed through the peer review process.
- Refrain from using such information in any way that would benefit the reviewer or any other organization or business.

What equipment or material is needed?

Peer Reviewers generally work at home or from their office location. The following tools are essential for the role:

- Reliable internet connection to handle opening of large documents and participating in online meetings.
- Ability to scan signed forms for transmitting to Nevada Volunteers.
- Access to a computer and basic knowledge of excel and dropbox.
- Printer (optional – depends on working preference)

What are the qualifications of Reviewers?

Successful candidates for Peer Review satisfy the following requirements:

- Have experience with AmeriCorps and/or the nonprofit sector
- Have experience with grant writing or grant review (or an interest in gaining experience)
- Have knowledge and/or experience in a field related to one of the application priority areas, including health, human services, disaster/emergency services, environment, education, veterans affairs, and economic opportunity.
- Can commit to reviewing 5-6 applications over a two-week period, spending approximately 2 hours on each application.
- Live or work in the state of Nevada

What is the benefit of being a Peer Reviewer?

Peer Reviewers gain experience in analyzing and scoring grants that benefit local programs directly. Reviewers gain an understanding of the grant-making process for a major source of funding allocated to Nevada and learn about the selection criteria for National Service programs such as AmeriCorps. Finally, reviewers have a chance to learn from others how technical aspects of meeting a community need integrate into activities through strong program designs.

What is the time commitment for participating in a review?

Each grant review period includes the review of 5 to 6 grant applications. We suggest you set aside 2 hours per application for review and scoring. In addition to this, you will be expected to participate in a 1-hour orientation and training webinar (new applicants only) and one 30-minute conference call to review and discuss final application scoring.