



Service for Climate Resilience and Economic Opportunity

From floods to fires, climate impacts are worsening in every corner of the U.S. Small, rural communities have some of the lowest capacity to respond to these impacts, and there are not enough people available to execute the work needed to adapt to climate change in these areas. While many interventions to adapt to climate impacts are currently being implemented in higher-capacity urban and suburban areas, rural communities have yet to benefit from these initiatives. Additionally, many rural communities struggle to retain residents and keep talent in place. As a result, young adults often leave the community to find jobs elsewhere, leaving rural communities without the advanced job skills needed to support climate resilience work.

To address these challenges, the American Society of Adaptation Professionals (ASAP) is planning a national AmeriCorps program that will simultaneously build the capacity of leaders in rural communities to address the climate impacts they're experiencing, create the conditions for more resources to make their way into rural communities, and create positive, lasting climate resilience and economic impact.

Sample Service Activities

The program will utilize existing ASAP and partner resources to create two outcomes: highly trained workforce members and more climate-resilient rural communities. Sample service activities include:

- Working with the community to assess readiness to plan and implement climate change interventions.
- Engaging the community in climate change planning and implementation.
- Engaging local government staff to streamline climate resilience opportunities into community planning and implementation.

Service Member Profile:

We will prioritize the recruitment of people with lived experience of climate impacts and people from within the community.

Resources for Service Members and Sites

- ASAP will focus on securing robust financial support for the program, specifically designed to ensure member benefits and living allowances which are attractive to potential service members and provide a comfortable standard of living.
- Service members will be able to plug directly into existing ASAP resources and programs; ASAP will also adapt specific programs to meet the particular needs of service members. Resources and programs include: Peer Learning, Mentorship, Training, and Leadership Development.
- Program staff will work directly with service members, communities, and employers to conduct career pathways identification and employer/employee matching. This will maximize the opportunities for service members to continue to live and work in the community and contribute to ongoing adaptation and resilience efforts.
- ASAP will support regional connectivity and learning by leveraging individuals and organizations from within the ASAP network who can strengthen connections between communities to build support and economies of scale for future work.
- ASAP will work with partners to provide technical assistance to program sites, and will provide training and technical assistance for service members and participating communities to leverage related public and private funding and finance to support ongoing adaptation and resilience work in their communities.

Planning Timeline and Location



APRIL-JUNE 2023

PHASE 1
Explore



JULY 2023

PHASE 2
Review Knowledge



AUGUST-NOVEMBER 2023

PHASE 3
Design Program



DECEMBER-JANUARY 2024

PHASE 4
Prepare Proposal



FEBRUARY-MARCH 2024

PHASE 5
Pre-Launch

- Phase 1: Explore and Document Intervention and Evidence Base (April-June 2023)
- Phase 2: Review Knowledge and Brainstorm Theory of Change (July 2023)
- Phase 3: Design Program (August-November 2023)
- Phase 4: Prepare Program Proposal (December-January 2024)
- Phase 5: Prepare to Launch Program (February-March 2024)

ASAP has chosen states that have both high need for adaptation and resilience work in rural areas and a strong base of support at the state level to get started on the work: Oregon, Colorado, Maine, Montana, North Carolina, and Minnesota.

Partnership Opportunities

We are connecting with the following types of partners to explore opportunities:

- National organizations working at the intersection of climate change, rural communities, and national service to explore opportunities to partner on planning and implementing the program.
- Public and private funders to explore opportunities to maximize the resources available to service members and to provide matching funds for the program.
- State and regional organizations focused on climate change, rural development, and/or national service to ensure alignment with existing efforts on the ground and explore opportunities to partner on implementing the program.
- Organizations supporting rural communities and those focused on supporting climate-impacted rural residents to deepen our understanding of how a national service program should be designed in order to increase climate resilience and economic development in rural communities.

About ASAP and Our Impact

The American Society of Adaptation Professionals (ASAP) is a professional association and social impact network that connects and supports climate change adaptation and climate resilience professionals to better address climate change impacts. Together with our members and partners, we are advancing the field of climate change adaptation by learning from Western science, Indigenous knowledge, and the lived experience of those addressing climate impacts in their communities. ASAP helps members strengthen their professional network, exchange best practices and practical advice, and accelerate innovation – all leading to a more equitable and effective climate adaptation practice.

Contact ASAP's Executive Director Debra Butler at dbutler@adaptpros.org for more information.

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