

CivicSpark

The California Partnership for Accelerating Local Climate Response & Resiliency

Local governments will take the fundamental actions in California's response to climate change. Budget constraints, the loss of key tools and funding sources, and limited technical familiarity with emerging tools and practices, however, pose significant challenges to local communities – large and small – as they seek to implement these efforts quickly and effectively.

To help local governments overcome these obstacles, the Local Government Commission, in partnership with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, proposes to launch **CivicSpark**. This new AmeriCorps program will work with regional partners to place teams of three to six AmeriCorps members in each of nine regional hubs (see next page for locations), where they will provide capacity-building support to local governments through research, planning and project implementation activities.

Because CivicSpark's Regional Partners are already engaged in regional climate efforts and have broad stakeholder networks, they will provide regional understanding and support to member teams as they engage local government participants, facilitate sharing of experiences and information, and leverage resources and opportunities.

Selected AmeriCorps members will have a college degree (most likely in an environmental field), and ideally relevant expertise with project implementation through volunteer service, academic study or work experience.

"CivicSpark will bring resources directly to communities that need them most."

– Governor Jerry Brown



"It's time for courage, it's time for creativity and it's time for boldness to tackle climate change."

– Governor Jerry Brown

Why participate?

Participating local governments will benefit through the development of:

- ✂ Capacity for sustainable communities and response to climate change.
- ✂ A pipeline for future sustainability efforts.
- ✂ State-local partnerships for information and expertise exchange.
- ✂ A workforce with local expertise in climate change, energy and sustainability.
- ✂ Access to affordable resources, resulting in increased capacity and hands-on training.

What CivicSpark does for local governments

CivicSpark will provide (1) an initial gap assessment to determine specific project needs and finalize the project scope; (2) project implementation (research, planning or pilot projects); (3) engagement efforts to set up a volunteer system that will support ongoing work in the community; and (4) transitional support in the form of stakeholder presentations and/or staff training to ensure that project deliverables and resources are adequately handed off to local government participants.

Sample projects include:

- ✂ Educating community members about climate change.
- ✂ Benchmarking commercial building energy use.
- ✂ Conducting electric vehicle readiness planning.
- ✂ Inventorying greenhouse gas emissions.



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How do local governments participate?

Regional Partners will reach out to work local governments to identify and prioritize potential projects. Local governments will define a scope of service and contract with CivicSpark to implement this work at an estimated \$18 per hour (e.g., 100-hour project = \$1,800). This all-inclusive rate covers both work by the members and their supervisors' oversight and project management, as well as the support of program staff from the Local Government Commission and the State of California.



CivicSpark will operate statewide



Key Dates for CivicSpark

Although finalized funding for this new program will not be announced until May 2014, Regional Partners will begin talking with local governments about their interest and needs prior to that.

■ Estimated timeline for participation

May	CivicSpark is funded, and launches operations.
June	Regional Partners open dialogue with potential local governments to determine interests and needs, and begin coordinating applications for support.
June-August	Regional Partners work with CivicSpark staff to finalize project scope.
June-September	AmeriCorps members are recruited for each region.
Mid-September	AmeriCorps Members participate in two-week intensive training.
Early October	Members begin work on first-year projects.
Mid-August 2015	All first-year projects are completed.

For more information

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