

CivicSpark

a program of the Local Government Commission

CivicSpark is a Governor's Initiative AmeriCorps program dedicated to **building capacity for local governments to address climate change**. CivicSpark is managed by the Local Government Commission in partnership with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

Each year, 70 CivicSpark fellows serve for 11 months, implementing water resource management, climate change mitigation, and adaptation projects throughout California. Fellows gain valuable experience in the sustainability, professional skills, and a strong network while having a meaningful impact in local communities.

"Climate change is a global challenge that requires strong, sustained local action. This program gets young people into the communities across California to help reduce emissions and boost energy efficiency."

California Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.

Our Impact

In our first two service years, CivicSpark fellows have provided over **131,000 hours of service** to California's communities, implementing 80 targeted projects to support over 100 local government agencies—50% of which are "high-need" communities—and reaching over **5,500 community members**, including residents, business owners, and the general public. CivicSpark fellows supported a wide range of actions, developing, conducting, and organizing:

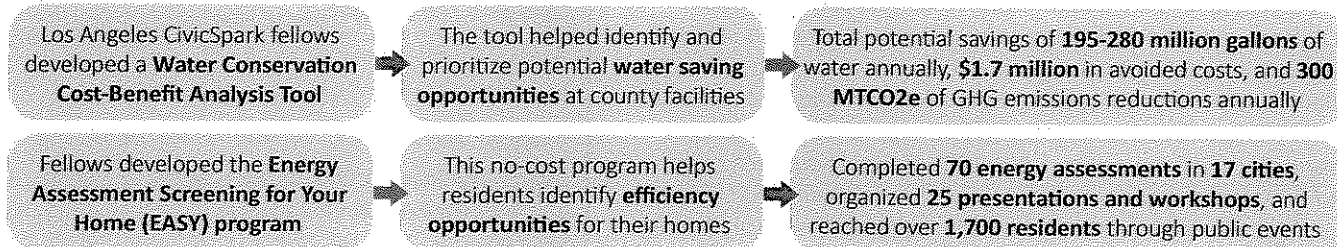
- 14 climate or energy action plans
- 150 energy reports and benchmarking assessments
- 13 vulnerability assessments
- 19 greenhouse gas inventories
- 47 community workshops

Additionally, the program leveraged over \$1 million in local matching funds statewide, and received 5 applications for each open position in year one and over 6 applications per position in year two.



"The projects our fellow is working on are important for the County's success in designing and implementing climate action strategies. They are also significant components in broader thinking about long-term sustainability. Without our CivicSpark fellow, these significant pieces would be several years out for their completion." —San Francisco Bay Area Project Partner

Our Success Stories



Our Model



Gap Assessments

Fellows interview staff and review key documents to finalize the project scope.



Service Projects

Based on the gap assessment results, fellows implement a specific capacity-building project.



Volunteer Engagement

In parallel with their project, fellows support increased volunteerism in the region.



Transitioning Expertise

Fellows provide training to staff and/or share results with key stakeholders to sustain progress.

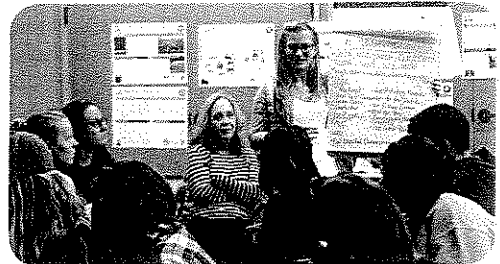
Project Examples

Climate Change

Climate Action Plan Implementation: Implementing Climate Action Plan measures in Emeryville, Hayward, Santa Monica, Piedmont, Union City, Walnut Creek, the Sierra Nevada, Los Angeles County, Merced County, San Luis Obispo County, and Santa Barbara County.

Accelerating Clean Energy Opportunities: Scoping 117 municipal buildings for zero-net energy retrofits in Oakland, and implementing Building Energy Savings Ordinances (BESO) in Berkeley and Piedmont.

Regionally and Locally: Supporting the accelerated adoption of electric vehicles and other alternative vehicle fuels to develop a robust market for alternative fuels in the broader North Coast region.

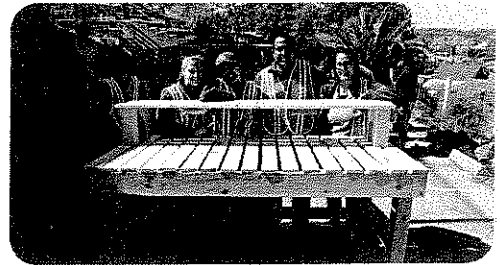


Water Management

Disadvantaged Communities: The Southwater Regional Water Quality Control Plant (RWQCP) Completing a strengths and needs assessment to better allocate funding and resources in support of overburdened communities in Riverside County.

Water-Energy Nexus: Identifying and implementing water and energy saving projects in San Mateo County schools and public buildings through an auditing program.

Water Leaders Academy: Creating a curriculum for local officials to better understand regional water resources and challenges.



Receive Project Support

CivicSpark helps local governments build their climate response and water management capacity by working on projects directly with local staff and community members. CivicSpark offers two thematic tracks: **Climate** (50 fellows) and **Water** (20 fellows). Each track operates similarly, but has some variation in support, supervision, and costing (outlined below). Public agencies, State agencies, or non-governmental organizations can contract directly with LGC for CivicSpark fellows as long as the project work has a connection and benefit to specific local public agencies.

CivicSpark fellows are placed with local project partners across California. All CivicSpark fellows are AmeriCorps members selected through a highly competitive national application process. Fellows have at minimum a college degree in a relevant field, and typically have workplace and community service experience. Each fellow serves for 1,700 hours with 1,300-1400 of these hours dedicated to implementing partner projects, and the remainder dedicated to professional development and broader community service. Partners provide direct project supervision for fellows.

CivicSpark Climate and Water partners provide project oversight and professional development support, which includes identifying a supervisor who will help the fellows set professional goals and conduct performance assessments at start and close of the year. For CivicSpark Climate, an LGC Regional Coordinator conducts monthly fellow trainings and acts as a local liaison to the partner. For CivicSpark Water, an LGC Water Associate provides program support to supervisors and professional development support for fellows.

2017-18 Service Year Calendar

February 1, 2017

Call for proposals is open for project applications. LGC staff talk with potential partners about interest and opportunities for engagement.

April 15, 2017

Priority deadline to submit project applications. Applications will continue to be accepted on a rolling basis after the deadline.

April 24, 2017

The 2017-18 fellow application opens!

August 15, 2017

Target date for all service agreements to be signed, and capacity assessments to be completed.

Mid-September 2017

Fellow orientation for the 2017-18 cohort takes place.

Late-September 2017

Local projects get underway!

Mid-August 2018

Projects wrap up and the 2017-18 CivicSpark cohort graduates!

Eligibility

Partners are responsible for securing target local agency “beneficiaries” for project activities to benefit. Eligibility requirements for “beneficiaries” are outlined below:

Climate Track

Participating public agency beneficiaries must demonstrate a “capacity need,” measured by the absence of 1 or more criteria:

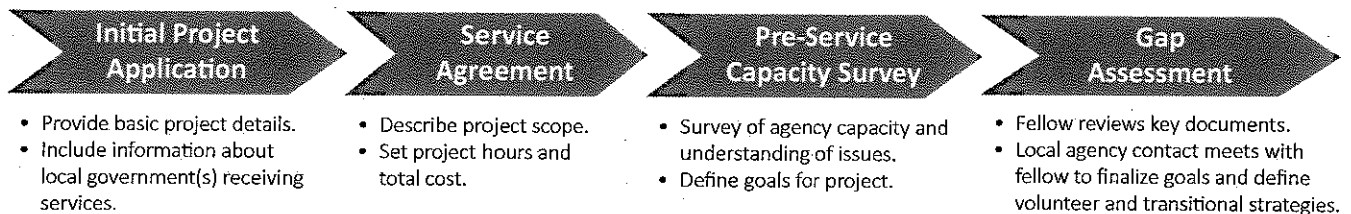
- A full-time dedicated sustainability staff.
- A formally adopted Climate Action Plan.
- Robust mechanisms to track climate action progress.

Water Track

Participating public agency beneficiaries must demonstrate a “capacity need,” measured by the absence of 1 or more criteria:

- Dedicated staff responsible solely for cross-sector & inter-jurisdictional collaboration, or coordinating water & land use;
- Actively participating member of an IRWMP (Integrated Regional Water Management Plan);
- Actively participating in GSA Formation (Groundwater Sustainability Agency) or GSP development (Groundwater Sustainability Plan);
- Currently equipped to meet all data, research, planning, engagement, and coordination needs.

Application and Startup Process



Project Costing

CivicSpark is funded in part by the Corporation for National and Community Service, and in part by match-funding from our project partners. Participation in this program requires a fiscal contribution. Specific costs are determined by thematic track (Climate or Water) and number of project hours requested; see table below.

	Climate Fellows: Six Months	Climate Fellows: Eleven Months	Water Fellows: Eleven Months
Cost	\$13,000 / fellow	\$25,500 / fellow	\$41,000 / 2 fellows
Hours	650 project hours	1,300+ project hours (average of 1400)	2,700 project hours
Additional Benefits	• 20-40 additional project-prep hours • Up to 75 additional service hours focused on volunteer engagement • Up to \$200 in project-related travel	• 40-80 additional project-prep hours • Up to 150 additional service hours focused on volunteer engagement • Up to \$400 in project-related travel	• 80-160 additional project-prep hours • Up to 200 additional service hours focused on volunteer engagement • Up to \$800 in project-related travel

Contact

Climate Track
Kif Scheuer
 kscheuer@lgc.org
 415-717-4809

Water Track
Danielle Dolan
 ddolan@lgc.org
 916-448-1198 x311



As an AmeriCorps program, CivicSpark is administered by CaliforniaVolunteers, and funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

www.civicspark.lgc.org