

CivicSpark is a Governor’s Initiative AmeriCorps program dedicated to **building capacity for local public agencies to address emerging environmental and social equity resilience challenges such as: climate change, water resource management, affordable housing, and mobility.** CivicSpark is managed by the Local Government Commission (LGC) in partnership with the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research.

CivicSpark Fellows serve for 11 months, implementing projects across California on a wide range of topics, including: water resources and policy, climate adaptation and mitigation, affordable housing, and alternative transportation. Fellows gain valuable experience in the sustainability field, build professional skills, and develop a strong network while having a lasting 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.”
Former California Governor
Edmund G. Brown, Jr.

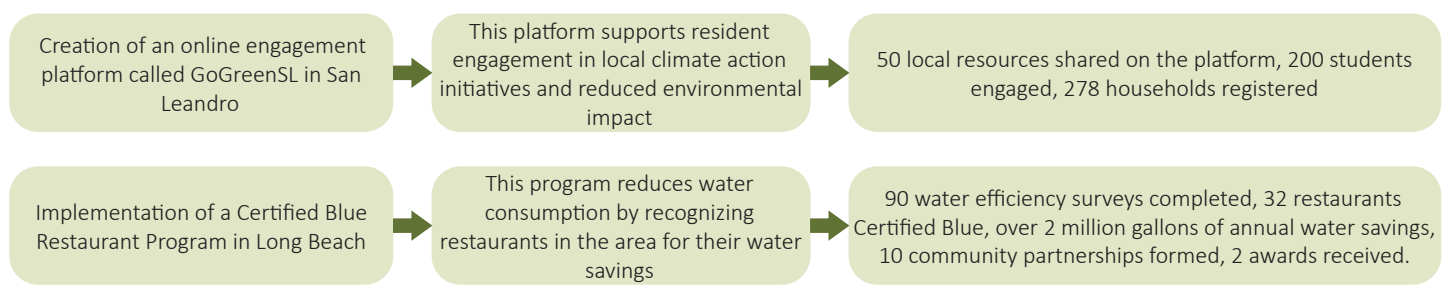
Our Impact

Over the past five years, **308** CivicSpark Fellows provided over **515,000 hours** of service to California’s communities. Fellows implemented roughly **500 projects** with more than **190 local public agencies** and reached over **47,000 community members** (including residents, business owners, and the general public). CivicSpark Fellows supported a wide range of actions, including:

- 100 GHG inventories
- 50 climate or energy action plans
- 160 energy efficiency surveys
- 1,875 water inventories, surveys, or reports
- 30 vulnerability assessments
- 414 community events
- 175 Implementation workshops
- 14,000 volunteer hours supported



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

CivicSpark has supported a wide variety of projects, below is a small sample, more can be found on our website: civicspark.lgc.org/fellow-project-concepts

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, Santa Barbara County, and many more.

Sea Level Rise Adaptation:

Supporting the research and creation of an adaptation plan for sea level rise for the City of Alameda.

Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program (DACI):

Completing a strengths and needs assessment to better engage and allocate funding and resources in support of overburdened communities in the Santa Ana River Watershed.

Water/Energy Nexus:

Identifying and implementing water and energy saving projects in San Mateo County schools and public buildings through an auditing program.

Regional EV and Fuel Cells:

Accelerating adoption of electric and alternative fuels vehicles for a robust alternative fuels market in the broader North Coast region.

Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities:

Provide technical assistance for the Affordable Housing/Sustainable Communities (AHSC) grant program.

Receive Project Support

CivicSpark focuses on supporting local government capacity to respond to emerging environmental and socioeconomic resiliency challenges including climate change, water management and water resources, affordable housing, and transportation sector mobility.

CivicSpark Fellows are placed with local project partners across California (ideally in teams of two or more for Fellow experience and impact). Public agencies, State agencies, Native American Tribes, and Non-Profit Organizations can contract directly with LGC to host CivicSpark Fellows as long as the project work is closely connected to a specific local public agency beneficiary. Beneficiaries can include counties, cities, towns, special districts, school districts, MPOs, COGs, JPAs, etc. who have a defined capacity need (see eligibility below), will “benefit” from the project’s implementation and can commit to completing a pre- and post-service capacity survey, and to participating in at least one project interview with the Fellow. The host or project partner does not have to be a “beneficiary”

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. Project partners have the opportunity to select their Fellow from a curated list of highly qualified individuals.

Each Fellow serves at least 1,700 hours during the service year; 1,300-1,400 of these hours are dedicated to implementing 2-4 partner projects. The remaining 300-400 hours are allocated for professional development and community service.

CivicSpark Partners provide project oversight and professional development support to Fellows. LGC Regional Coordinators conduct monthly Fellow trainings and act as local liaisons to the partner. LGC staff also provide monthly cohort calls and content or project specific support (e.g. climate, water, housing, transportation, etc.).

2020-21 Service Year Calendar

January 13, 2020

Project application opens.

February 14, 2020

First Priority Deadline to submit project applications.

April 3, 2020

Second Priority Deadline to submit project applications.

April - August, 2020

Approved partners work on Service Agreements and conduct candidate interviews, complete capacity assessments. Rolling applications for remaining openings.

August 21, 2020

Deadline for Agreements and Capacity Assessments.

September 1, 2020

The service year begins with Fellow orientation

September 8, 2020

Local projects Start! Fellows begin Gap Assessments.

Mid February 2021

In-person Mid Year Gathering for all Fellows

Mid-August 2021

Projects wrap up and the cohort graduates!

What We're Looking For

Tangible and impactful resiliency projects

- Clear, suitable scope of work
- Commitment to implementation
- Strong connection to public agencies need

Commitment to Fellow growth and development

- Direct project oversight from a dedicated supervisor
- Conduct performance assessments & support goals
- Engage in and support development opportunities

Eligibility

Partners are responsible for identifying 2-4 distinct projects designed to build local public agency capacity to address emerging environmental and/or socio-economic issues. Participating public agency "beneficiaries" must demonstrate a "capacity need," measured by meeting at least one of the following criteria:

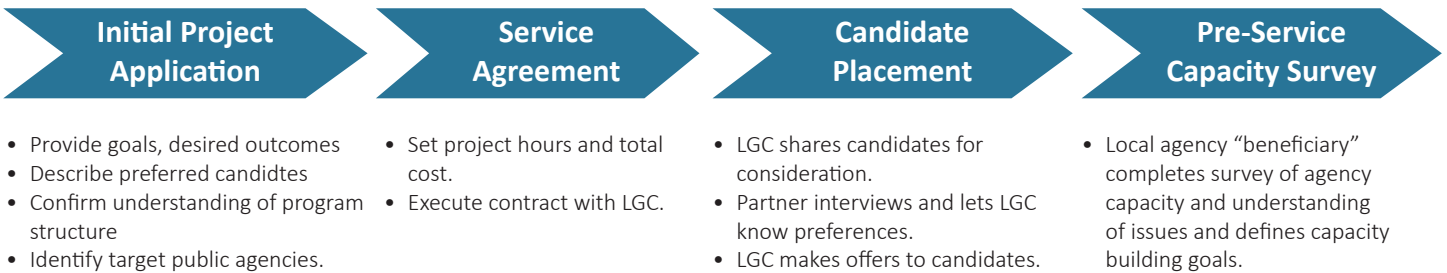
Significant community-wide burdens, demonstrated by any of the following indicators:

- CalEnviroScreen >33
- Distressed Community Index >50,
- Unemployment above state average
- Regional Opportunity Index (People or Place) below state average

Absence of an adopted and up-to-date strategy (plan, element or other) that comprehensively addresses the target resiliency issue with appropriate funding, programs, and policies, to implement the strategy

A defined resiliency capacity gap as evidenced by at least 1 significant program, policy, or planning goal for a specific resiliency issue that has not been met, or cannot be met, without resource or system development assistance.

Application and Startup Process



Tentative Project Pricing

Cost	Project Support Provided per Fellow	Additional Benefits per Fellow
\$52,000 / 2 Fellows \$26,500 / 1 Fellow	11 Months and 1,300+ project hours	80 additional project-prep hours 100 volunteer engagement hours

"CivicSpark is a win-win-win! The Fellow receives experience and serves the community in a highly targeted way, and the Agency receives talented, energetic, and vetted young professionals. The community and many stakeholders benefit directly from this synergy." - Sonoma County Water Agency Staff

Contact

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Other Resiliency Projects
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