



## WHAT IS A FISCAL SPONSOR, AND WHY DOES MY CHAPTER NEED ONE?

Many AmeriCorps Alums Chapters are not 501©(3) tax-exempt nonprofits. A few may be in the process of applying, and most are simply not interested or ready right now. It is still possible for chapters to apply for the same grants as nonprofits or collect tax-exempt donations. To do this, the chapter needs to partner with an existing 501©(3), this organization is called the fiscal agent or sponsor.

Having a fiscal agent allows AmeriCorps Alums Chapters to apply for the same grants as other organizations without the burden of applying for 501©(3) status and administrative costs of maintaining a nonprofit staff.

There may be many nonprofits willing to act as a fiscal agent for your chapter. Many times, the 'HandsOn Action Center' near you is the best place to start your search for a fiscal sponsor and you can find the nearest one here: <http://www.handsonnetwork.org/actioncenters/find>

Here's how sponsorship works: If your chapter is interested in a grant, you send in the proposal to the foundation or donor and identify your fiscal agent, providing all the necessary documentation. A contract is written between your chapter and the fiscal agent, and goes into effect either when the grant money is released by the donor or when the contract states. The fiscal agent is responsible for giving the money to your chapter in a timely manner, maintaining the needed documentation for the donor, and ensuring the grant money is used in the way it was intended. Your chapter is responsible for implementing the project described in the grant, and giving regular reports to the fiscal agent. Fiscal agents often charge a small administrative fee to cover the expense of managing the grant or any individual donations.

If you are interested in learning more about if a 'HandsOn Action Center' or other organization (your state's service commission is also a good partner, the list is here:

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact/statecommission.asp>) can become your fiscal sponsor, it's usually best to contact someone in their finance department or the executive director. Be sure to tell them that you are leading an AmeriCorps Alums chapter... and provide the Certification Letter sent to you by the Member Services and Outreach Coordinator. If you are having trouble getting in touch with someone at your local HandsOn Action Center please contact AmeriCorps Alums at 202-729-8186 or [wsoenksen@americorpsalums.org](mailto:wsoenksen@americorpsalums.org)

Get your Sample Contract with a Fiscal Agent here. Get more Chapter fundraising resources in our toolkit here.

FAQ's about sponsorship are here: <http://www.compasspoint.org/askgenie/index.php?tpid=8>

As a local AmeriCorps Alums chapter leader you can advance your chapter's cause and make a difference in your community by inspiring national service alumni and mobilizing them for change. Use AmeriCorps Alums as your training ground for future success by connecting with our chapter specialists.