Services Overview for Applicants

Founded in 2014, Community Engineering Corps brings together underserved communities and volunteer engineers to advance local infrastructure solutions in the United States and its territories. Technical professionals and students volunteer their time and expertise to assist communities that do not otherwise have the resources to access engineering services and work alongside community members to design solutions to their identified problems.

Community-Led Development

Community Engineering Corps' work is centered around and led by the needs of our partner communities and organizations. All projects are completed in collaboration with local leaders, public officials, local or national nonprofits, or community-based organizations to provide engineering services that benefit a broader group of people, known as the "community." Community Engineering Corps cannot provide engineering services to an individual homeowner or a private, for-profit business that doesn't provide services to customers or clients that are considered underserved.

Project Application

Community Engineering Corps conducts a three-step community application review process which includes:
1. Review of online community interest form (https://formstack.io/32565)
2. If the project appears to be a good fit for the program, a detailed community application is sent to the community contact for completion.
3. Program staff reviews new detailed community applications on a monthly basis. Projects are evaluated for:
    ○ Fit within the program's vision, mission, and type of services provided
    ○ Benefit population meeting the program's eligibility criteria
    ○ A defined request for engineering consulting services, which may include elements such as designs, reports, permits, cost estimations, or construction oversight.
    ○ The scope and scale of work can be successfully completed by a qualified volunteer project team.

    If the application is approved, Community Engineering Corps will schedule a call with the community contact to discuss next steps. If an application does not match the capacity or mission of the program, the project will be declined and the applicant will be notified via email following the internal detailed community application review meeting.

Projects are strictly limited to engineering consulting services, and volunteers do not participate in construction activities, fundraising, academic research, or commercial product development.

The Community Engineering Corps program exists to provide pro-bono engineering and technical advisory services to communities that otherwise cannot afford or access traditional for-hire services. The applicant will be asked to attest that neither they nor the community the project serves can afford to hire equivalent engineering services from a private consultant or consulting firm.

Volunteers and Period of Performance

The Community Engineering Corps program fulfills engineering service requests through a volunteer workforce. Once a project is approved, program staff will make every effort to recruit appropriate volunteers and pair them with the engineering request. The time frame for a match can take as long as 6 months. If a match is not made by this time, staff will confirm if the applicant would like to continue to wait for volunteers or cancel the Community Engineering Corps project.

Dedicated Community Engineering Corps staff oversee the work of our volunteers. The volunteers bring the required technical expertise, while program staff provide additional training, quality control, project oversight, as well as orientation to community-based development and the Community Engineering Corps process. Volunteers are expected to follow the engineering Code of Ethics. Due to the nature of volunteering, Community Engineering Corps projects may take longer than a traditional for-hire project, with the goal for completing the project within 1 to 2 years from project kick-off depending on the project scope.

Community and Client Expectations

As a community-led program, Community Engineering Corps staff and volunteers work in partnership with our applicant communities. In order to effectively provide pro-bono engineering services to our communities, we ask that you review the following expectations:

- The applicant will identify a representative to provide timely and consistent communication with the volunteer project team and Community Engineering Corps staff. The volunteer project lead will be the point of contact for all project-related questions and activities, and Community Engineering Corps staff will address questions related to the volunteer team, legal, or other programmatic activities.
- Volunteers come from various backgrounds and walks of life including: race, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, ability, cultural interest, age, marital status, educational background, political affiliation, religious belief, and point of view. Community Engineering Corps embraces the diversity of our volunteers and celebrates their contributions to our communities and partners. We ask our communities to provide a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment for these volunteers, both in person and via virtual communications.

- Community Engineering Corps staff is here to support you. Inability to contact the volunteer project team lead, or any issues with the project team, should be brought to staff attention by the applicant representative.
- Any substantive changes that could affect the project should be communicated to the project team and program staff.
- The applicant will enter into a standard contractual agreement with Community Engineering Corps. This agreement will be provided once a volunteer team has been identified and assigned to the applicant's project.

Communications and Outreach

By agreeing to participate in the Community Engineering Corps project process, the applicant grants permission for their experiences and project details to be shared publicly within our network unless stated otherwise. This may include publication on our website, social media platforms, promotional materials and reports. Your participation is voluntary and will in no way impact the services that Community Engineering Corps provides. If you prefer your community to remain anonymous you may withdraw your consent at any time by contacting a program staff member. If you have any questions or concerns with this policy please feel free to reach out for clarification or discussion.