**Content Tips**

- **Personalize need to connect to the reader.** Be sensitive to the language you use when describing the community need.
- **What role will the program play in meeting the need?** The reader knows the program can’t get rid of the need, but what difference can your program make?
- **Describe all member interventions will the same level of intension.** One is not more important than another. If it is, then you may not want to write about it in your application.
- **Focus on your primary member activities/interventions.**
- **If percentages or numbers sound low, explain the rational behind them.**
- **Personalize the statistics you use to connect them to your program theory.**
- **Talk positively about your board of directors and/or governing body.**
- **Explain any negatives – don’t let negatives stand alone.**
- **Explain any differences between budget narrative and program narrative or make sure they connect.**
- **Talk about sustainability.**
- **Are members trained to train and supervise volunteers?**
- **How are the site supervisors trained and supervised?**
- **If you mention any “plan”, be sure to explain the plan.**
- **Talk about program as whole, not partners separately.**
- **If you mention that your program aligns with one of CNCS’s strategic initiatives, make sure you can connect your program model or theory to that initiative versus a superficial connection.**
- **Don’t need “fluff” information; give the reader what they need.**

**Formatting Tips**

- **Put most compelling numbers first!**
- **Always start with a positive statement.**
- **Establish a foundation for your program at the beginning.** It doesn’t need to be long; it should give context to the rest of the proposal.
- **Need transition statements to connect paragraphs.**
- **Use consistent names/titles throughout the proposal.**
- **Don’t use lingo, jargon, or location specific language.**
- **Use AmeriCorps regulation language if appropriate.**
- **Be sure to print your application to ensure you are not over the page limit on both the narratives and the logic model.**

**Overall Tips**

- **Address ALL questions.**
- **Always ask “so what”!**
- **Clear connection from Need to Activities to Outcome.** Use your program theory and logic model!!
- **Be sure that your narratives, logic model and performance measures all reflect the same information.**
- **The reader should be able to conceptualize the program throughout the application and logic model.**
- **Find three people (besides the writer) to:**
  - Read the entire proposal
  - Check grammar
  - Read Program Design section and describe your program back to you
- **Sources should be current, not older studies.**
- **Performance measures should show growing impact of program over the years.**