



VISTA Site Informational Application



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Dimensions to a VISTA Project:

1. Build the capacity of programs and organizations.
2. Help organizations & communities out of poverty. (Antipoverty activities)

Program Information:

Program Overview

To build capacity in non-profit organizations and communities from Battlement Mesa to Aspen to help bring individuals and communities out of poverty.

What is AmeriCorps VISTA?

The AmeriCorps VISTA program has been addressing the needs of impoverished communities since 1965. VISTA members work with local and national nonprofit groups, faith-based organizations and public agencies. Their goal is to develop permanent infrastructure that strengthens programs which are focused on helping communities out of poverty.

Core Principles:

- **Anti-Poverty Focus** – Any non-profit organization, educational institution, tribal or public agency with a program that is poverty-related in scope can apply to sponsor a VISTA project. The project's goal addresses helping individuals and communities out of poverty, not simply making it more sustainable.
- **Capacity Building** – VISTA members do not provide direct service to low-income individuals, but rather work to increase the capacity of organizations. Through activities such as fundraising, developing community volunteer systems, outreach and grant writing, VISTA members mobilize local resources to achieve lasting solutions.
- **Sustainable Solutions** – VISTA members are a short-term resource to help sponsoring organizations address a new or existing program area related to their mission. VISTA's help build the capacity of an organization with the intention of

creating a sustainable program over time, allowing the host site to no longer depend upon the use of VISTA resources.

Who are AmeriCorps VISTA members?

VISTA members who serve with us come from across the region, state and country. They serve full time (40 hours per week) for one full year (365 days). Most are college graduates, and some have advanced degrees. Experience levels range from a recent college grad to a retired professional. VISTA members are different ages, genders, races, cultures and come from different socioeconomic backgrounds, yet all of them share the dedication and commitment of giving something back to the community and the mission of “getting things done.”

VISTA members are expected to live in the communities that they serve, and will receive a monthly living allowance, which is 105% of the Federal Poverty Level. In addition to the living allowance, they also receive healthcare benefits, loan forbearance and childcare (if eligible). Upon successful completion of their year of service, VISTA members can choose to receive either a cash stipend or an Education Award. All VISTA’s also receive ongoing training and development as well as the satisfaction of “getting things done” in their community.

What Can VISTA Members Do?

In determining whether VISTA is the right match for a given organization’s needs, think about the kinds of activities members will be expected to perform. The role of the VISTA member is primarily to build the capacity and sustainability of the project and community, with a focus on reducing and alleviating poverty. **INDIRECT service is the focus of VISTA.** Below are some examples of the types of service performed by a VISTA.

Indirect Service	Capacity Building	Sustainable Endeavors
Recruit volunteers	Develop forms, volunteer assignments, trainings	Development of Volunteer Policy and Procedure Handbook
Train direct service providers	Write training curriculum or manual; train trainers	Develop training manual and train the trainer curriculum
Coordinate projects	Develop procedures and systems	Develop volunteer management system and procedural guide
Public speaking	Develop speakers’ bureau	Develop community partnerships
Write press releases	Develop press kits, media database	Secure media partners
Organize fundraising events	Grant writing; develop database	Secure project staffing and diverse revenue streams
Organize task forces/coalitions	Develop leadership structure of task force/coalition	Create infrastructure

Conduct outreach	Design brochures, posters	Create mechanism for project evaluation
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Share of Costs

Our program requires a cash match from each sponsoring organization for each VISTA member awarded. The cash match is used to pay for sponsored trainings and travel, rent, and to administer the program. The **cash match for organizations that are entering their first, second, or third year utilizing VISTA resources is \$1000.00 due at signing of the MOU. Each organization is required to provide a housing stipend ranging from \$300-\$500 per month, depending on the operating budget of the organization.**

Additional Costs to Consider

Each project has different budgetary needs. Some projects will have more travel required where another will need more funding for training. Planning a budget before applying to be a VISTA host site can eliminate potential problems in the future. Please plan for the following expenses:

- Recruitment costs (advertising, printing, interview time, etc.)
- VISTA on-site supervisor time
- Project related training for VISTA
- Mileage reimbursement for project related travel
- Office supplies and equipment (computer, paper, software, desk, etc.)
- Postage
- Telephone and long distance
- Additional project related expenses (web-hosting, publishing materials, professional dues, etc.)

Placement Site Responsibilities

Our program feels that the following requirements enable both VISTA's and sponsors to maximize the benefits of a one-year placement.

Supervision and Mentoring

- Provide the VISTA with an immediate and available supervisor for the full term of service that is able to meet with the VISTA for a minimum of one hour each week in addition to providing an on-site orientation and training for the member upon arrival at the site.
- Assist the VISTA in identifying opportunities to meet professional development goals through their service and support the VISTA's participation in our program's meetings and training.
- If your organization is accepted, the designated Site Supervisors will be required to attend ONE of the AmeriCorps VISTA Supervisor trainings.

Project Support

- Provide adequate office space, office equipment, tools and materials for the VISTA to perform service.
- Provide a comprehensive on-site orientation and dedicate at least **\$ 750.00/year** for training and development for each VISTA on site.
- Provide transportation or mileage reimbursement for VISTA members during established service hours in accordance with the policies of the placement site.

- Support VISTA participation in trainings led by our program, national service day activities, and other required activities.

Outreach

- Conduct outreach within the sponsoring organization and the community to increase awareness of the service our program’s VISTA members provide the community.

Risk Management

- Establish safety guidelines and rules that ensure the well-being of the VISTA members and participants in the sponsoring organization's program.

Reporting

- Complete progress reporting at least two times during the service year.
- Participate in site visits with staff from our program.

Travel Reimbursement (Required)

Host sites must allocate a budget to cover work-related transportation costs and other appropriate expenses for members and supervisors to participate in agreed-upon activities and training. Answer the following questions and describe in detail how the host site will provide travel reimbursement.

How much money can you allocate to cover reimbursement costs?	
What will be the source of these funds?	
How will the VISTA be reimbursed for expenses?	

Supplies (Required)

As mentioned in the section on Placement Site Responsibilities, host sites must make available all the following items to their VISTA. Please acknowledge and agree to this commitment by checking whether the VISTA’s access to each provision will be on an individual basis or shared.

	Individual	Shared
Dedicated Office Space		
Telephone		
Voicemail		
Printer		

Fax Machine		
Computer		
Internet Access		
E-Mail Account		

Application Narratives

PROGRAM SUPPORT

- Placement Sites will be responsible for recruiting a VISTA to serve at their organization with the assistance of our program staff. Describe in specific terms how your organization will recruit qualified applicants to serve as VISTA members on this project. What challenges do you anticipate in recruiting qualified applicants?
- Describe plans for daily supervision of the VISTA member(s). State if supervision will be a full-time or part-time responsibility. If your organization is accepted to our program, supervisors are required to attend a VISTA Supervisor training. Please state the intention to attend this training.
- What in-kind resources will you provide to ensure the success of the proposed project?
- Describe the service-related transportation needs of the VISTA members and your plan for meeting those needs. Describe the accessibility of services provided to members of the community with disabilities. Is your organization able to accommodate AmeriCorps VISTA members with disabilities?

APPENDIX A

VISTA Prohibited Activities

Federal law and the Corporation for National and Community Service policy prohibit AmeriCorps programs and their members from engaging in certain activities. Examples of such activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

AmeriCorps VISTA service requires a full immersion in the project and community, both full and part-time employment are prohibited. Members must remain available for service without regard to regular working hours at all times. For the same reason, full-time enrollment in an educational institution is prohibited. Part-time enrollment in an educational institution is generally prohibited. One course may be authorized if: (a) the course is directly related to project assignment; or (b) the course is part of the member's career development plan developed in coordination with his or her supervisor. More than one course may be authorized if enrollment in the course(s) (6 hours or less) is required for Pell Grant eligibility. Note: Additional educational credit(s) may be received for AmeriCorps VISTA service and training if allowed by the institution, but this cannot include enrollment in additional school courses or class time. Enrollment in an educational institution requires approval from the Supervisor and Corporation for National and Community Service State Director.

- Any efforts to influence legislation, including lobbying for

AmeriCorps.

- Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts or strikes.
- Assisting, promoting or deterring union organizing.
- Impairing existing contracts or collective bargaining agreements.
- Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office.
- Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials.
- Engaging in religious instruction; conducting worship services; providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship; constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship; maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship; or engaging in any form of religious proselytizing.
- Providing a direct benefit to:
 - A for-profit entity
 - A labor union
 - A partisan political organization
 - An organization engaged in the religious activities described in the preceding sub-clause unless Grant funds are not used to support the religious activities.
 - A nonprofit entity that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of Title 26, except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent Members from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative.
- Performing services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any:
 - Presently employed worker
 - Employee who recently resigned or was discharged
 - Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures
 - Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency or sick)
 - Employee who is on strike or is being locked out.

At no time should a member be hired to perform any work for the sponsoring organization even if it is

unrelated to the member's service. Should a sponsor site offer a paid position to a member during his or her service year, the sponsor will be responsible for the full cash match per the contract. Our program will not be responsible for a replacement VISTA member at that site.

Please respond to the following:

Site Name	
Address	

City	
State	
Zip	
EIN	
Supervisor Name	
Supervisor Phone	

About the Supervisor

Identify a Site Supervisor who will provide daily supervision to the VISTA. The person must be available for frequent communication to meet with the VISTA to discuss projects, goals, and actions.

Name of VISTA Supervisor:	
Explain the position of the person who will supervise:	
Is this person full-time or part-time staff member?	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-Time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-Time
If part-time, what percentage does this person work?	
Amount of time to be spent in VISTA supervision?	

Organization Mission Statement:

Purpose of VISTA Volunteer: (There are no wrong answers, we want in your own words for you to what you foresee a VISTA Volunteer doing with your organization. Please limit your response to 750 words.)

How will your VISTA build capacity for your organization?

Do you foresee any challenges to having a VISTA, and what are they?

To the best of your knowledge everything in this informational application is true and accurate:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature:

Date:
