



Oregon Health Authority/AmeriCorps VISTA Partnership Project



Host Site FAQs

Version: 10/02/17

Note: The award of all VISTA resources as well as the approval of all VISTA sites and final project application is subject to the availability of funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service and approval of Federal Appropriations.

Program information

Contact Information and Application Submission	Please return completed applications to: Danielle Brown danielle.y.brown@state.or.us Phone: 503-894-3913
Notification of intent to apply due	As soon as possible by email and/or phone. We want to work with you on forming your application together before submitting it for final approval to CNCS.
Review process	Rolling application review and approval process. We help revise and submit applications to CNCS as they arrive from sites. The current review calendar does not permit us to wait for all applications to arrive and be reviewed in one competitive process.

<p>Application Due Dates</p>	<p><u>Part I: Project plan and draft VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)</u></p> <p>Due date: October 31, 2017</p> <p>Submit drafts or portions of applications as soon as possible so the OHA team can provide assistance and submit it for early approval from the national VISTA program. Applications actually received on or near this due date may receive a simple rejection or approval due to national VISTA program hard deadlines, with no time for revisions. Applications or draft portions of applications received well before the final deadline will receive our greatest attention and assistance revising before submitting to the national VISTA program officers. Prospective host sites apply to OHA and work with our team in an iterative revision process to align the proposal with both local needs and national VISTA program priorities.</p> <p>Please send outlines or draft versions of these pieces as soon as possible.</p> <p><u>Part II: Position Listing and Orientation and Training Plan (OSOT)</u></p> <p>Due date: November 3, 2017 Position listing on AmeriCorps website will be live on November 13, 2017</p> <p><u>Part III: Final VISTA Assignment Description</u></p> <p>Due date: November 15, 2017</p>
<p>Approval Notification</p>	<p>Rolling notification of provisional approval by OHA and CNCS. Final approval notification is subject to the availability of funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service and approval of Federal Appropriations.</p>
<p>Cost to host sites</p>	<p>See project plan form.</p>
<p>Program Definition</p>	<p>The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) VISTA Partnership Project aims to alleviate, prevent and reduce poverty by engaging new public health professionals in a year of full-time service in major public health organizations to create or expand public health systems capacity. The project aims to reduce poverty in local communities through building sustainable county- and state-wide healthy community initiatives and taking a systems-approach to ensuring health equity, community resiliency and improved health outcomes. The project addresses primarily the Healthy Futures CNCS focus areas by helping build capacity to provide services to individuals in underserved communities to gain access to preventative and primary health care services.</p>
<p>Age Requirement</p>	<p>21 years and older. Note that OHA and host sites can set their own age and education requirements.</p>
<p>Member Benefits</p>	<p>The national VISTA program provides a relocation allowance, poverty level stipend paid bi-weekly, basic health benefits, post-service education award or stipend, student loan forbearance or deferment for qualified federal loans, child care and one year of noncompetitive status for federal government jobs. OHA provides professional development, travel and regular support. Host sites are encouraged to provide additional benefits during the year, especially in hard to recruit areas.</p>
<p>Education Benefits</p>	<p>Upon successful completion of the service term, Members are eligible to receive a \$5,920 Segal AmeriCorps Education Award OR a \$1,800 end-of-year stipend. Loan forbearance and interest accrual payment on qualified student loans are available.</p>

Examples of positions, service projects, and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate partnerships with community-based organizations that address the needs of low-income individuals. • Support or facilitate community-wide public health dialogs, assessments and improvement plans. • Work with agency personnel to create quality improvement processes. • Support funding development activities to build institutional capacity to serve persons living in poverty. • Build a volunteer program for long term sustainability of public health initiatives.
Key requirements	<p>The project must address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public health 2. Poverty 3. Building long-term organizational and/or community capacity 4. Support the national VISTA program’s Healthy Futures Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Obesity and Food (Food Resources): Improving access to nutritious food. And/or: b. Access to Health Care: Connecting economically disadvantaged individuals to preventative and primary health care services. <p>The VISTA must have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Dedicated supervisor, project leads, mentors 6. Clear assignment description
Prohibited Activities	<p>VISTAs cannot displace staff, endorse or promote religion or a specific religious belief during service hours, provide direct service to clients, participate in political activities or labor or anti-labor activities, or lobby. Sites cannot select VISTAs that are in the immediate family or are close relatives of project site staff or board of directors.</p>
Member recruitment starts	<p>November 13, 2017 OHA provides primary recruitment and applicant vetting. Host sites select candidates to interview, participate in all interviews and make final selection of their candidate. OHA makes formal offer. CNCS officially hires member. OHA coordinates onboarding and relocation with CNCS.</p>
Member Selection	<p>Must be made by January 10, 2018</p>
Primary Service Orientation (PSO) for new VISTAs, provided by CNCS	<p>February 26-March 1, 2018</p>
OHA Team Orientation	<p>Mid-March 2018</p>
All-team training and professional development	<p>Approximately 5 times during the year</p>
Member first day of service	<p>March 2, 2018 (may vary for some individuals)</p>
Member Completion	<p>March 1, 2019 (may vary for some individuals)</p>

Background

What is the Oregon Health Authority VISTA Partnership Project?

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) VISTA Partnership Project aims to alleviate, prevent and reduce poverty by engaging new public health professionals in a year of full-time service in major public health organizations to create or expand public health systems capacity. The project aims to reduce poverty in local communities through building sustainable county- and state-wide healthy community initiatives and taking a systems-approach to ensuring health equity, community resiliency and improved health outcomes. The project addresses primarily the Healthy Futures CNCS focus areas by helping build capacity to provide services to individuals in underserved communities to gain access to preventative and primary health care services.

What is AmeriCorps?



AmeriCorps is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), an independent federal agency whose mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps is made up of three main programs: AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps).

AmeriCorps VISTA is the national service program designed specifically to fight poverty. AmeriCorps VISTA



Members serve in community and faith-based nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, local governments, and other agencies to develop and expand services and programs that help support the efforts of low-income individuals to rise out of poverty. In total, more than 170,000 committed individuals have joined forces with 15,000 local organizations to strengthen communities and help people escape poverty across the nation. Authorized in 1964 and founded as Volunteers in

Service to America in 1965, VISTA was incorporated into the AmeriCorps network of programs in 1993. VISTA has been on the front lines in the fight against poverty in America for 50 years. VISTA members commit to serve full-time for a year at a nonprofit organization or local government agency, working to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, strengthen community groups, and much more. With passion, commitment, and hard work, VISTA members create or expand programs designed to bring individuals and communities out of poverty.

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AmeriCorps provides funds to local and national organizations and agencies committed to using national service to address critical community needs. OHA VISTA slots are primarily addressing the CNCS priority area of “healthy futures” through capacity building but will also consider proposals addressing the other focus areas if they have a strong tie to public health. The other focus areas are: disaster services, economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, and veterans and military families. Each year, AmeriCorps offers 75,000 opportunities for adults of all ages and backgrounds to serve through a network of partnerships with local and national nonprofit groups.

General Guidelines for AmeriCorps VISTA Projects & Host Sites

- AmeriCorps VISTA Members must be placed in a capacity-building role for the entire term of service. Proposals must demonstrate that the position provides a direct benefit valued by the community at large. Activities cannot duplicate routine functions of staff or displace paid employees.
- The project may not include administrative duties that support general organizational goals such as clerical responsibilities, answering phones, or data entry.
- The impact of service provided to the community and organization must be measurable and fit within the goals and activities of the AmeriCorps VISTA Program.
- Placement sites must be able to effectively recruit, train, support, and supervise the AmeriCorps VISTA Member(s).
- Placement sites are eligible to have an AmeriCorps VISTA Member serve with their organization, in the same position, for up to three years. Each year is meant to build upon the previous year:
 - Year 1 – AmeriCorps VISTA Member establishes and creates a program or project
 - Year 2 – AmeriCorps VISTA Member continues to implement project and begins to create structure for sustainability
 - Year 3 – AmeriCorps VISTA Member focuses on making the project sustainable
 - Year 4 proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must address a significant community need or new project focus.
 - Note that beyond year 1, renewals are not automatic. Sites will be re-evaluated and must re-apply each year.
- The placement must not include any of the activities prohibited for AmeriCorps Members.

National Guidelines for AmeriCorps VISTA

- Projects must work to break the cycle of poverty by addressing critical community needs for which there is limited funding. Projects cannot be direct service but instead must build the capacity of communities to address their own challenges.
- Current national program priorities are to build the capacity of anti-poverty programs and organizations operating in these focus areas identified in the strategic plan: Healthy Futures, Education, Economic Opportunity, Veterans and Military Families.
- The OHA VISTA Partnership Project addresses the Healthy Futures focus area.
- For more information see [AmeriCorps VISTA Program Guidance for Current and Potential Project Sponsors, Fiscal Year 2017, October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017](#).

AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities

AmeriCorps VISTA Members may not perform specific activities in the course of their duties while charging time to the AmeriCorps program, nor at the request of anyone including OHA or the host site. Furthermore, Members and staff may not engage in conduct that would associate the national program or the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) with prohibited activities. Host sites must become familiar with specific provisions described in CNCS' formal regulation and the grant provisions.

While charging time to the AmeriCorps VISTA program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or CNCS, staff and Members may not engage in the following activities (see [45 CFR § 2520.65](#)):

- a. Attempting to influence legislation;
- b. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
- c. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
- d. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;

- e. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
- f. 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;
- g. 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 proselytization;
- h. Providing a direct benefit to:
 - i. A business organized for profit;
 - ii. A labor union;
 - iii. A partisan political organization;
 - iv. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
 - v. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph g. above, unless CNCS assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
- i. Conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
- j. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
- k. Such other activities as CNCS may prohibit.

AmeriCorps VISTA Members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non- CNCS funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

Eligibility

Under the national VISTA program, public, private, or faith-based nonprofit organizations, as well as, local, state, or federal agencies can become an AmeriCorps VISTA sponsor. The OHA VISTA Partnership Project focuses on local, state and tribal public health agencies, but welcomes applications from any other organization or coalition that addresses public health.

Selection Criteria for all VISTA positions

- Supervision, training, and support of AmeriCorps VISTA Member(s)
- Project design and connection to the goals and activities of the program
- Identified community need and demonstrated partnerships
- Strong VISTA Assignment Description with clear activities, tasks, and timelines
- Clear assessment and evaluation plan measuring project impact on community and host site