



AmeriCorps

Charleston Community AmeriCorps VISTA Project

2021 Site Selection REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

AmeriCorps VISTA is...the national service program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) designed specifically to **fight poverty**. VISTA supports local efforts by engaging members in a **one-year, full-time service year with a local organization**. All VISTA projects seek to build the **capacity** and **sustainability** of local organizations and agencies to serve their clients more effectively.

The City of Charleston serves as the Project Sponsor for AmeriCorps VISTA, providing member slots to non-profit organizations and public agencies serving the Charleston community. As Project Sponsor, the City is responsible for management and oversight of the grant, including site selection, VISTA member placement, and on-going supervisor and member management. The City will be submitting a renewal application and this RFP is to be considered as a project site for the 2021-2022 member year.



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Project Overview

As the AmeriCorps VISTA Project Sponsor, the City of Charleston serves as the intermediary and manages the program for the Charleston Community. Members are placed with sites for full time, one year terms. For 2021, 25 VISTA positions, and 2 VISTA Leader positions will be requested. Members will serve from June/July 2021-June/July 2022. The focus areas for our project are **Education, Healthy Futures, and Economic Opportunity, with an interest in projects that address the current challenges of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.**

The **vision** for the project is to mobilize VISTA members to **fight poverty** by building effective systems within and among organizations that help them more effectively serve low-income clients, empowering them to overcome poverty.

Program Requirements

In addition to completing a Memorandum of Understanding, organizations must provide the following:

Supervision and Work Environment:

- A designated full-time employed supervisor to provide daily supervision and guidance.
- Mentorship and coaching of the VISTA member.
- A comfortable and safe work environment, including reasonable office space.
- Use of a computer and phone, and e-mail access comparable to that of paid staff.
- Meaningful work that is a high priority to the leadership of the organization.
- A written and complete Project Plan for the VISTA member that will be mutually agreed to by the host site, VISTA member, Mayor's Office for Children, Youth and Families (MOCYF) and CNCS.

Planning, Training and Reporting:

- Effective recruitment, interviewing and selection of the VISTA member, with support and approval from MOCYF and CNCS.
- Participation in MOCYF VISTA Project Plan development and on-going training.
- Professional development for the VISTA member.
- Ensure completion and submission of reports, data, and other required paperwork.
- Active planning and ongoing communication/feedback to create optimum conditions for success of the VISTA member and the project, leading to sustainable impact beyond the VISTA term.

Cost:

- A payment of \$2500 to the City of Charleston AmeriCorps VISTA Program for each VISTA member hosted. These funds are used to contribute to the living allowance for Cost-share members and for training and support of VISTA members, as well as to support additional program services.
- If selected, sites must pay \$500 of the full \$2500 fee by March 1, 2021, in order to begin recruitment. This portion of the fee is non-refundable.



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- NOTE: Once a member has been selected and their term of service has begun, should the member choose to terminate their service or be terminated, a pro-rated reimbursement of the site fee will be provided as long as it is within the first 6 months of the VISTA member term.
- Sites are responsible for reimbursement to a VISTA member for all service-related travel expenses above the \$900 allotment from MOCYF.

VISTA members are not clerical or administrative staff, nor are they selected to provide direct service (such as tutoring or client intake). They are limited in the amount and type of direct service they can perform, and are not expected to be the assistant to a staff member. They do not act in a staff capacity or perform duties that would otherwise be performed by employed workers, and which supplant the hiring of or result in the displacement of employed workers. VISTA members further cannot engage in religious instruction, worship, proselytizing, or other religious activity or engage in electoral activities, lobbying, or participate in demonstrations during service hours or while representing (or appearing to represent) AmeriCorps.

Eligibility and Selection

Any non-profit, public or governmental agency or organization whose programs seek to alleviate poverty among low-income children, families, and/or individuals operating in Charleston County is eligible to apply. The applicant agency must have:

- A Charleston County location (may serve Tri-County area)
- A physical office- not located in a home- with a dedicated workspace for the VISTA member
- At least one paid, full-time staff person who will be on site to supervise the VISTA member

The AmeriCorps VISTA Grant Review Team will review applications and make recommendations on site selections. **NOTE: Provision of VISTA members is contingent upon approval of the Charleston AmeriCorps VISTA Project by the Corporation for National and Community Service.**

Applications must be received by January 22, 5:00 pm.

Applications should be submitted electronically (preferred), mailed (must be received by the date and time due), or hand delivered. Faxed applications will not be accepted.

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