



Recruiting for Your AmeriCorps VISTA

AmeriCorps.gov/VISTA



Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** 

Introductions



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Introductions



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CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

NATIONALSERVICE.GOV/CORONAVIRUS

CNCS is closely monitoring the latest developments related to COVID-19. As America responds to the COVID-19 pandemic, you may have concerns about the potential impacts on AmeriCorps programming. Check out our FAQs to address any questions. Check back as they are updated regularly.

Agenda



- Why AmeriCorps VISTA?
- Benefits to VISTA Members
- Planning for Recruitment
- Marketing and Outreach
- Screening and Interviewing Candidates
- Selecting Candidates
- Engagement of Selected Candidates
- Questions

Why VISTA?



Advance Local Solutions

- Respond to community needs
- Serve community organizations
- Create change
- Improve the lives of others



Why VISTA?



- 18+ eligible (no upper age limit)
- Anti-poverty focus
- Indirect service
- Professional setting
- Serve with a nonprofit or local government agency



ANNUAL IMPACT OF AMERICORPS VISTA

- 1 **8,100+** Members Serving
- 2 **4,200+** Locations Across the U.S.
- 3 **550,500+** Volunteers Leveraged
- 4 **\$173M** Raised From Other Sources
- 5 **3.9M** Volunteer Hours

What are the Benefits?



Living Allowance

Receive a modest bi-weekly living allowance to cover basic expenses.



End of Service Award

Earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award (\$6,395*) to pay for current education expenses, and to repay qualified student loans.



Professional Development

Sharpen your skills and bolster your resume.



Health Benefit

AmeriCorps VISTA offers limited health benefit.



Jobs with Leading Employers

Connect to a network of over 600 employers from all sectors who value AmeriCorps experience.



And many more benefits...

You can find them at:
AmeriCorps.gov/Join

Stages of Recruitment



AmeriCorps VISTA **Recruitment**

STEP

01

Plan

STEP

02

Market

STEP

03

Screen

STEP

04

Interview

STEP

05

Select

STEP

06

Engage

Barriers to Recruitment



- Candidate's accessibility to computers and technology
- Highly computerized intake excludes some candidates
- Clarity about national recruits and community-based recruits
- Stipend at the poverty level
- Location of the project
- Housing for national recruits
- Good job market
- Ineffectively presenting opportunities



Barriers to Recruitment



Barriers	Opportunities
Access to technology	Bring them to your office or library
Computerized intake	Help them complete intake
National/local recruits	Relocation; use knowledge of area
Living allowance	66+ needed income; college grad-family supplement; community-based income; supplement other benefits
Location of project	New adventure or desired change; explore the country
Housing – national recruits	Other VISTA members, seniors need roommates, shared housing in community, colleges and universities
Seeming lack of opportunity	Highlight the win-win's: What's in it for them?
Good job market	Professional development; serve between undergrad and grad school; pay off loans

Creating a Recruitment Plan



Begin with the
end in mind

Plan
Backwards

What is
required to
achieve the
desired
outcome?

Who will help
with the
recruitment
process?

Where to find
well-qualified
candidates?

Timelines are
critical

Who, What, When, Where, & How?

Creating a Recruitment Plan



Identify the project **goals** and outcomes

Identify the special **skills** and knowledge needed for position

Identify the top 5 **responsibilities**

Identify the top 5 personal effectiveness **competencies**

Recruitment Plan Inputs

- Number of VISTAs
- Date of VISTA Member Orientation (VMO)
- Start date for VISTAs
- For each phase identify:
 - Activity
 - Person responsible
 - Completion date



Recruitment Plan Elements



- Outline marketing, screening, interviewing, and selection steps
- Develop recruitment task list
- Draft recruitment timeline
- Set up tracking system
- Identify staff and roles
- Prepare for interview



Calendar Your Recruitment Plan

- Develop your recruitment calendar
- Estimated starting point:
120 days before VISTA Member Orientation (VMO) date
- Keep track of recruitment deadlines



Marketing and Outreach



- VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)
- Service opportunity listing
- Outreach and advertising
- Challenges

VISTA Assignment Description



VAD Sample

TITLE	Mentor Recruitment and Management Systems Designer
SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	Waketa Community Services (WCS)
PROJECT NAME	MentorCorps
PROJECT NUMBER	12ABCD345
PROJECT PERIOD	08/20/20XX - 08/19/20YY
SITE NAME	if applicable
FOCUS AREA(S)	Education (Primary)
NOTE	If your VAD is not accepted, the State Office will note the reason(s) why here.

VISTA Assignment Objectives & Member Activities

PROJECT GOAL To help ensure that children of incarcerated parents receive the educational, social, and emotional support they need to help them break the cycle of poverty, the MentorCorps VISTA project will build the capacity of WCS by developing a sustainable volunteer recruitment and management system for its mentoring program.

OBJECTIVE Assess the current state of WCS' efforts in reaching, selecting, and supporting volunteer mentors, and create or revise policies, procedures, and documents to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the mentor recruitment and matching system.

MEMBER ACTIVITIES

1. Research the history of volunteer programs at WCS.
 - a. Identify strengths and challenges of the current program. Based on this report, make a plan for improvement.

2. Develop systems for screening and matching mentors.

OBJECTIVE Set up outreach systems and build partnerships with community organizations in order to spread the word about the mentor program. Develop targeted marketing materials.

MEMBER ACTIVITIES

1. Plan for outreach and recruitment.
 - a. Identify skills, abilities, and experiences sought in volunteer mentors.
 - b. Write volunteer task descriptions that include: qualifications, activities, benefits, time commitment, and other expectations.
 - c. Develop partnerships with community organizations whose members are possible mentors or who can support the organization in other ways.
 - d. Develop partnerships with people or organizations that understand the needs of children of prisoners and can assist with the training and support of mentors.

2. Market the program to targeted audiences.

➤ Well-written VAD

➤ VAD approval

➤ Match personal competencies to needs

➤ Familiarity with community or skills to address needs

Service Opportunity Listings



Be:
Creative
Innovative
Engaging

Create:
Interest,
Excitement, &
Opportunity

Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE**

My AmeriCorps
Your Place to Manage Your AmeriCorps Experience

[Contact My AmeriCorps](#) | [Login](#)
FONT SIZE: [Default](#) | [Large](#)

If you use assistive technology and need assistance accessing the My AmeriCorps Portal please contact the National Service Hotline at 1-800-942-2677.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps VISTA

AmeriCorps NCCC

2018 tax forms have been mailed.

CNCS recommends that you use Internet Explorer version 7 or above when accessing My AmeriCorps. Other browsers have been shown to cause issues for users.

Please complete all required fields. An asterisk (*) denotes a required field.
By clicking on "login" you are agreeing to the terms and conditions outlined below:

* Username:

* Password:

[Forgot your Username?](#) | [Forgot your Password?](#) | [Login Help](#)

Creating a Two-Line Teaser



Accepting Applications Now

Results 11 Through 20

[First](#) [Previous](#) [1](#) | [2](#) | [3](#) | [4](#) | [5](#) | [6](#) | [7](#) | [8](#) | [9](#) | [10](#) [Next](#) [Last](#)

Your search returned 1080 results.

Program Name ▾	Program Type ▸	Accepting Applications ▸	Location ▸
2018-19 Tulane University Center for Public Service VISTA members work in conjunction with Tulane staff and community organizations to build volunteer programs, develop community capacity, and create sustainable partnerships.	VISTA	01/07/2019 - 01/30/2020	LA
2019 City of San Antonio-My Brother's Keeper MBKSA's mission is to improve the life chances of boys and men of color through policy and systems change, shifting public narratives, and developing leadership and capacity programs.	VISTA	12/01/2018 - 03/21/2019	TX
2019 Community Engagement Specialist VISTA Join Volunteers of America Indiana in fighting the opioid epidemic by coordinating volunteers and donations for our Winchester House addiction treatment program.	VISTA	01/18/2019 - 03/20/2019	IN
2019 Disaster Resilience AmeriCorps VISTA- Atlantic City, NJ Disaster Resilience AmeriCorps VISTA program is building capacity in communities at high risk from natural disaster, provides disaster preparedness for populations with limited English proficiency.	VISTA	09/12/2018 - 03/22/2019	NJ

WE'RE RECRUITING!

Service Opportunity Listings

Key Components:

- Who are you? Where are you located?
- What will members do?
- What attributes and skills are you looking for?
- Why should people join your project? What's in it for them?
- What are the start and end dates of your project?
- Additional details:
 - contact information; living allowance amount; terms, conditions, and benefits of VISTA member service

Outreach and Advertising

- Identify marketing strategies
- Identify network for marketing
- Develop your message
- Get approval



Outreach and Advertising



Post the listing

Advertise the position

Market program to candidates



- Virtual Career Fairs
- Webinar Info and Q&A Sessions
- Exhibit at Virtual Conferences

Outreach and Advertising



craigslist®





Outreach and Advertising

Tips for Success

- External opportunity postings should include the same details as your My AmeriCorps listing
 - Note where your best applicants found out about your listing
- Once a position is filled:
 - Take down external listings
 - Uncheck “accepting applications” in eGrants
- Remember to look for candidates within the community you serve



Outreach and Advertising



Be Clear with Advertising



What's in it for them?

- Motivation to serve with the community
- Professional experience
- VISTA benefits
- Other benefits

How to position this opportunity as a win-win?

Be clear and get feedback to ensure understanding!

Outreach and Advertising

Recruitment & Where to Advertise

- my.amerikorps.gov
- Civic and social organizations/sororities and fraternities
- Social media
- Community centers and volunteers at nonprofits
- Organization website
- Retirees
- Houses of worship
- Idealist.org, Craigslist.org, other
- Schools (high schools, trade, community and 4-year colleges)
- Current VISTA members and VISTA alumni





VISTA supervisors stress the importance of creating a detailed and clear position description that can be used as a screening tool before and during an interview.

Screening and Interviewing

- Know the terms and conditions of service
- Pre-screen
- Round 1 – Narrow your applicant list
- Narrow your list of applicants
- Round 2
- Review and rate applicants and materials
- Round 3



Screening and Interviewing



Conduct first round of interviews



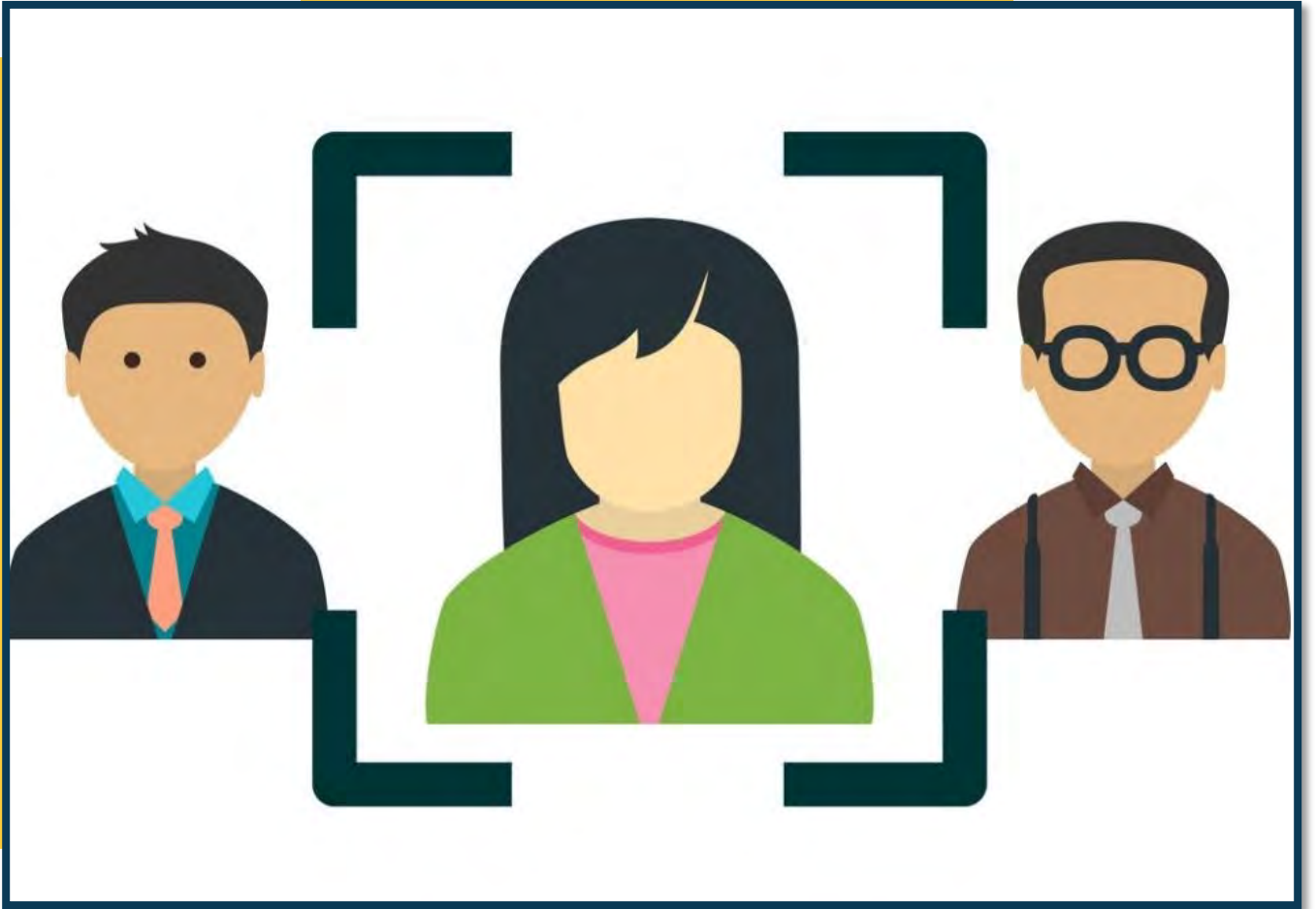
Conduct second round of interviews



Identify top picks and back-up
candidates

Selecting Your Candidate

- Conduct **reference checks**
- **Offer** your candidate(s) a position
- Outline **next steps** for candidate, including a **timeline** for when service will start and **required documentation**





Engagement

From recruitment until start date:

- Call from supervisor
- Weekly email communication
- Welcome mailing from Chamber of Commerce
- Share attractions or events in your area
- Connect them to other VISTA members
- Send housing opportunities



Recruitment Best Practices



- Begin early – **9 to 16 weeks** in advance of the VISTA Member Orientation
- Starting in the **spring** works best
- Plan to spend average of **9 hours per week**
- Enlist **support**
- Utilize **word-of-mouth**, Twitter, Craigslist, or Idealist
- Consider high-quality, **community-based candidates**
- Recruit for specific **skill set**, traits and **national service interest**
- Develop a clear, **well-written VISTA Assignment Description** and **Opportunity Listing**

Q&A

8 REASONS TO AMERICORPS

A program of the Corporation for National & Community Service

MORE THAN
1,000,000
AMERICANS HAVE SERVED
SINCE 1994



LEVERAGES
\$1 BILLION
IN OUTSIDE RESOURCES
EVERY YEAR


75,000
MEMBERS SERVE
EACH YEAR

BENEFITING
MILLIONS
OF AMERICANS




KATRINA
JOPLIN
SANDY
FLINT
FLORENCE
MICHAEL
AND MORE.

**HELPS COMMUNITIES
RECOVER FROM DISASTER**



21,000+
SERVICE LOCATIONS
TACKLING PROBLEMS
WITH LOCAL SOLUTIONS

79%
OF ALUMNI PLAN TO BE
**ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN
THEIR COMMUNITY**



NEARLY
450,000+
VETERANS
AND MILITARY FAMILIES ASSISTED
THROUGH NATIONAL SERVICE
EACH YEAR

\$3 BILLION



SCHOLARSHIPS EARNED
(\$1 BILLION USED TO REPAY
QUALIFIED STUDENT LOANS)

AmeriCorps.gov

#AMERICORPSWORKS



Resources

- VISTA Campus Recruitment

<https://www.vistacampus.gov/supervising/recruiting>

- Guide to Creating Opportunity Listings

<https://www.vistacampus.gov/resources/guide-creating-ameriacorps-vista-service-opportunity>

- Interviewing Resources

<https://www.vistacampus.gov/recruiting-interviewing-resources>

- AmeriCorps VISTA Branding Guidance and other Marketing Resources

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/SponsorVista>



Resources

- AmeriCorps Recruitment Hub

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/recruitment-resource-hub>

- AmeriCorps Request for Concept Papers Resources

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/ameriacorps-vista-request-concept-papers-and-timeline>

- Coronavirus FAQs

www.nationalservice.gov/coronavirus

- AmeriCorps VISTA FAQs

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameriacorps/ameriacorps-programs/ameriacorps-vista/ameriacorps-vista-faqs>



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