



## SerVermont AmeriCorps VISTA Program Site Application Guidelines: 2017-2018

Important Dates	
<b>Letter of Intent Deadline</b>	February 6, 2017
<b>Technical Assistance Call</b>	Weeks of February 13 and 20
<b>Site Application Deadline</b>	February 24, 2017
<b>Sites Notified of Selection</b>	March 3, 2017
<b>Required Webinar for All Supervisors</b>	March 9, 2017
<b>Recruitment Forms Due</b>	March 16, 2017
<b>VISTA Assignment Descriptions Due</b>	March 30, 2017
<b>Ongoing Recruitment</b>	April – June
<b>Recruitment Deadline</b>	June 30, 2017
<b>Supervisor Orientation</b>	Week of July 10 (Tentative)
<b>Pre-Service Orientation</b>	Early August (Exact dates TBA)
<b>First Day of Service for VISTAs</b>	TBA
<b>VISTA Orientation</b>	Week of August 24 (Tentative)

### Letter of Intent Instructions:

- Letters of Intent can be brief. They should include the number of slots you intend to apply for, the geographic region that will be served by the VISTA, and the focus area and objective(s) the position will address. Electronic submission is acceptable.

### Application Instructions:

- Please make sure to answer all answers completely. Boxes will expand as you type. Whenever possible, **provide relevant data and statistics to support your project's ability to alleviate poverty.**
- Type the application and mail an electronic version via email to [robyn.baylor@vermont.gov](mailto:robyn.baylor@vermont.gov).
- Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until **February 24.**

### Attachments to Include with New Application

*\*It is not necessary to include these attachments if you are a returning site unless there have been changes in staff/board membership that should be updated for our records.\**

- Job Description of Site Supervisor
- Resume or C.V. of Site Supervisor
- Letter of Support from Board or Advisory Committee. Must support placing a member at the site and paying the cost share. This letter should be current and signed by an authorized representative.
- List of Board of Directors. Must be current, dated, and contain board member's affiliation.

**Reminders:**

- VISTA is NOT a direct service program. Applications should be focused on **indirect service and capacity building** projects such as fundraising, volunteer management, increasing collaboration and community participation, and increasing efficiency and effectiveness of programs that alleviate poverty.
- VISTA members must primarily be involved with initiatives that help **alleviate poverty** in Vermont. The goal of every project must be to help individuals and communities move out of poverty, not simply make poverty more tolerable. The project should focus on **long-term solutions** rather than short-term services.
- All VISTA Projects must select at least one capacity building performance measure. These measures are what your VISTA will be responsible to report on throughout their term. There is no advantage to selecting a large number of performance measures so please only select those which you can confidently track and meet according to the requirements and guidance found [here](#).
- VISTA Projects are for a three-year cycle and VISTA members serve a one-year commitment. Your site application should be geared towards projects that can be sustained without the presence of a VISTA member after three years.
- If you apply for more than one member, each member should have distinct responsibilities and goals. Your application should be sure to explain why more than one member is necessary to achieve your goals.
- Sites must pay a cost-share fee for their VISTA member. First year sites pay \$6,000 and that amount increases by \$1,000 each year, not to exceed \$8,000.

2017-2018 SerVermont AmeriCorps VISTA Priority Areas		
Focus Area	Objective	Programming Area
Economic Opportunity	Financial Literacy	Providing financial services-related assistance to economically disadvantaged people to improve their financial literacy.
	Housing	Providing housing-related assistance to economically disadvantaged people to improve their housing situation.
	Employment	Providing employment-related assistance to economically disadvantaged people.
Healthy Futures	Obesity and Food Resources	Providing services to individuals in underserved communities to gain access to food resources
	Access to Health Care	Providing services to individuals in underserved community to gain access to preventative and primary health care services.
Veterans & Military Families	Veterans Served	Providing services to low-income veterans, veterans' family members, family members of active duty military, and military service members.
Education	School Readiness	Providing services for children living in poverty to make gains in school readiness in terms of social and/or emotional development, in terms of literacy skills, and in terms of numeracy (math) skills.
	K-12 Success	Providing services to students living in poverty to improve academic performance and engagement.
	Post-Secondary Success	Providing services to students living in poverty to increase enrollment in a post-secondary institution, or to receive a vocational or technical certificate.

### **Site Selection:**

The process for selecting sites is as non-competitive and collaborative as possible, while also ensuring that our member slots are filled, and members are recruited in a timely manner.

SerVermont's goal is to place VISTAs where they are most needed while considering:

1. **Capacity:** placing members at sites that have the capacity to recruit, train, and supervise members with a high level of effectiveness
2. **Geographic Distribution:** placing members throughout the state in concentrations that mirror population and poverty based need concentrations
3. **Impact:** placing members at sites where the efforts of their service will make a positive impact in the community by alleviating poverty
4. **Priority Areas:** Sites which most directly and relevantly address the current priority areas will be more likely to receive VISTA member(s). Current priority areas are listed below.
5. **Performance Measurement:** Sites are REQUIRED to measure the impact of their VISTA member in accordance with CNCS policies. Sites which do not have the capacity to measure their member's progress will not be granted a VISTA member. All sites will be accountable for meeting their measures, and documenting progress in the manner which VISTA **requires** for that measure. **This will require additional time to administer.**

### **Member Selection Process for 2017-18:**

The start of the SerVermont VISTA Program year is in early August. For the 2017-18 program year, **all host sites will be identified by March and members will begin sometime in August. Members must be identified by June 30.** It is very important for sites to actively engage in the interview process and return information regarding potential members to SerVermont in a timely fashion.

SerVermont will follow up with all applicants on the web-based AmeriCorps portal to request resumes and cover letters from online applicants and send them to the host sites for vetting and interviewing. SerVermont will only interview members once a host site has already done so, and once the host site has informed SerVermont that they are interested in an applicant. At that point SerVermont will interview the applicant in order to assess their fit with the VISTA Program. **SerVermont must make the final offer to an applicant.** Host Sites which do not demonstrate that they are actively recruiting members (following up with applications, promoting their position locally, interviewing applicants, communicating with SerVermont during the process) **will not** have a member placed at their site. **SerVermont is unable to guarantee that a site will have a member placed with them.** It is essential that all host sites have the capacity to engage in a comprehensive and active search for their VISTA member. **If the deadline to start members is nearing and a site has been unsuccessful at recruiting a qualified applicant, sites from the waitlist will also be invited to begin recruiting.**