

Virginia AmeriCorps

Becoming a Program Sponsor Part II-b: VISTA Application Process

**Corporation for National and Community Service
Virginia State Office**

Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** ★★★



TODAY'S LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Planning your program
- Planning your budget
- Program requirements
- Next steps



APPLICATION PROCESS

AmeriCorps*VISTA

- Non-competitive Procedure
- VA State Office can assist in proposal development and provide technical assistance in programmatic design
- Simple on-line 2-Step process
 - Part A – Concept Paper
 - Part B – The “Application”
- Memorandum of Agreement
- Notification Letter to the Governor

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Corporation for National and Community Service Virginia State Office

400 North 8th Street, Suite 446
Richmond, VA 23219

(804) 771-2197 (t) (804) 771-2157 (f)
<http://www.nationalservice.gov>

Kimberly Frola, State Director, kfrola@cns.gov

Debbie Martinez, State Program Specialist, dmartinez@cns.gov

Denise Jenkins, State Program Specialist, dmjenkins@cns.gov

Claudia Gray, State Administrative Assistant, cgray@cns.gov

Corporation for
NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE 

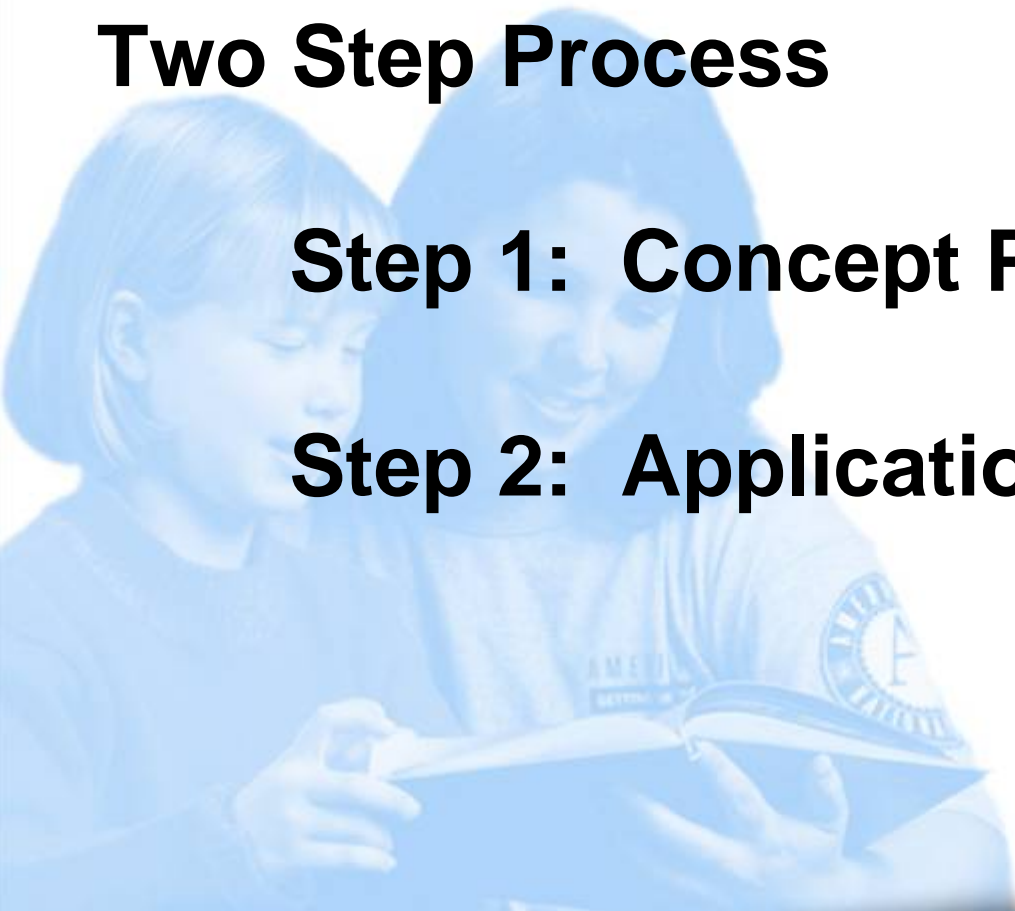


AmeriCorps*VISTA

Two Step Process

Step 1: Concept Paper

Step 2: Application



AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 1: The Concept Paper

- **CNCS uses Concept Paper as preliminary screening tool to:**
 - evaluate whether organization would be an appropriate sponsor and
 - determine suitable use of allocated resources.
- **Initially submitted to State Office as Word Document**
- **Once reviewed / refined, entered into eGrants**
 - CNCS' integrated, web-based system for applications.

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 1: The Concept Paper

- **Concept Paper:**
 - **Executive Summary**
 - **Need Statement**
 - **Strengthening Communities**
 - **Organizational Capacity**



AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 1: The Concept Paper

Executive Summary

- **Brief description of proposed project**
 - Goals
 - Overview of VISTA activities
- **Number of requested VISTAs**
- **Estimated length of time required to complete project**
- **Organization's mission, history, and program beneficiaries**

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 1: The Concept Paper

Need

In measurable and quantifiable terms describe:

- Specific poverty-related need(s)
- How was this identified
- Where is this documented
- Number of low-income people directly affected by problem(s)

Use current and local statistical data, citing source, to substantiate the problem.

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 1: The Concept Paper

Strengthening Communities

- Describe current activities being taken to address problem.
- How will proposed project complement this?
- How will new infrastructure / organizational capacity address needs of community and bring individuals, and ultimately the community out of poverty?
- How will community be involved to ensure sustainability of proposed project?

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 1: The Concept Paper

Organizational Capacity

- **Address organizational capacity to:**
 - Manage proposed project
 - Previous experience working with community volunteers and/or national service participants
- **Previously assigned VISTA members:**
 - Specify sponsoring organization, years and number of members
 - How is proposed service activity different?

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 1: The Concept Paper

Organizational Capacity

- **Currently receiving other CNCS resources:**
 - Specify which program
 - Number of members
 - Amount of grant (if applicable)
- **Available resources to support project**
 - Identify names of partner organizations
 - Is organization and/or are partners financially able to contribute to all or some of member costs?
 - Cost Share sponsor – approximately \$10,000 - \$15,000



AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 1: The Concept Paper

Reviewed – Refined – If Approved...

- Entered into eGrants
- Corporation State Office “accepts”

Move forward with Application...

- Entered directly into eGrants
- Information from Concept Paper will default into Application. Some additional information required.

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 2: The Application

Application Components:

Executive Summary

Summary of Accomplishments

Need Statement

Strengthening Communities

Recruitment and Development

VISTA Assignment

Program Management

Organizational Capacity

Action Plan with Performance Milestones

Budget

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 2: The Application

Executive Summary:

Defaults from Concept Paper; description of proposed project

Summary of Accomplishments:

Demonstrates history of successful collaborative partnerships, program/project management, and positive impact within service area

Need:

- Elaborate on poverty-related need
- Brief overview of strategies to meet need
- Measurable and quantifiable terms**



AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 2: The Application

Recruitment and Development

- Proposed methods to recruit VISTA candidates
- Anticipated challenges
- Service-related transportation needs and organization's plan to meet these needs
- Orientation – organization and community
- Plans and opportunity for training and development
- Accessibility of services
 - provided to members of community with disabilities
 - accommodations for VISTAs with disabilities

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 2: The Application

VISTA Assignment

Summary of Activities

- General tasks and activities
- Logically related to project goals (Work Plan)
- Limited to in-direct service
- Focus: Capacity Building, Community Empowerment and Sustainability

VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

- Separate and distinct in format and purpose
- Submitted upon application approval as part of attachments

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 2: The Application

Program Management:

Describe supervision of project and members

- Indicate VISTA Supervisor's name and title
- Job description to be submitted upon approval of application
- Full or part-time responsibility

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 2: The Application

Program Management:

Sites other than sponsoring organization

- Provide agency name
- Structure of relationship to sponsoring organization
- Names and titles of site supervisors
- Plans for programmatic orientation, training and technical assistance



AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 2: The Application

Program Management:

Board of Directors

- Are 51% of members the low-income community?
- If not, describe development of separate advisory group for proposed VISTA project consisting of members or representatives of low-income community served by project
- Address involvement of low-income individuals in development and implementation of proposed project

AmeriCorps*VISTA

Step 2: The Application

Program Management:

Evaluating Progress

- Describe plans for evaluating progress towards achieving anticipated goals and milestones
- What information and data will be used to demonstrate concrete impact of project?

Collaboration

- Describe plans, if any, for collaboration with other national service programs

AmeriCorps*VISTA

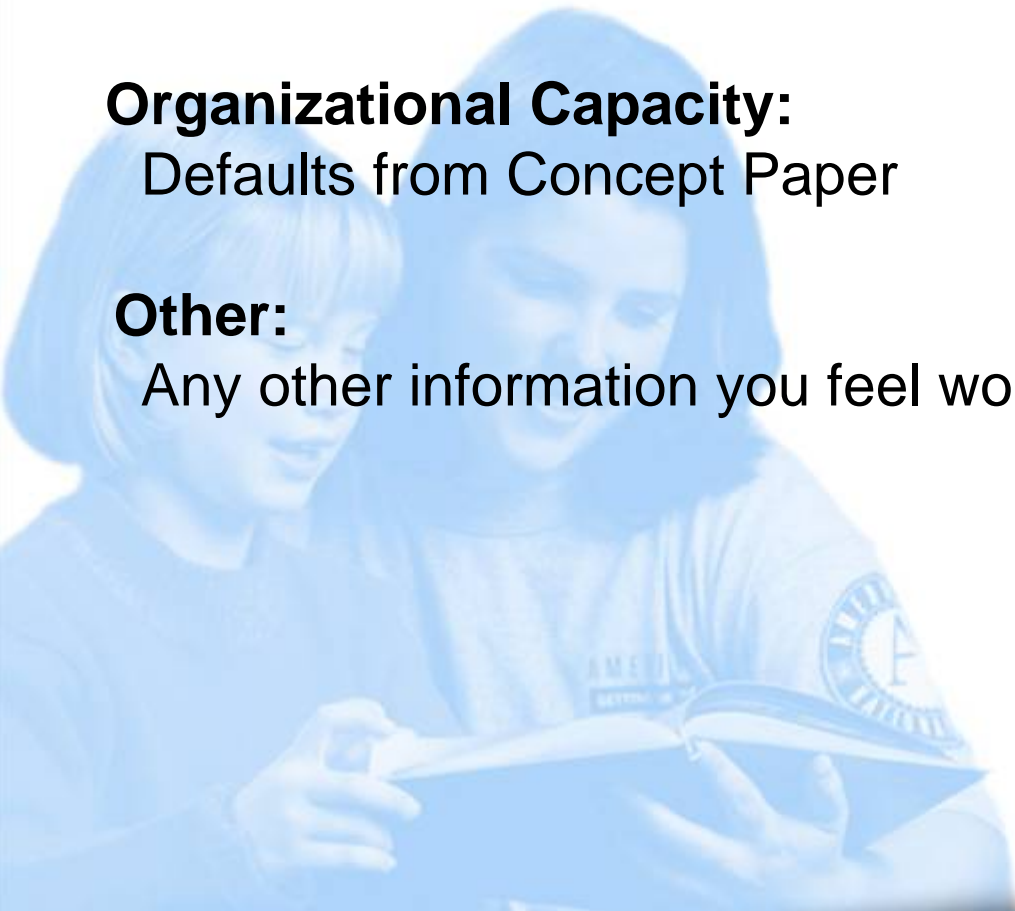
Step 2: The Application

Organizational Capacity:

Defaults from Concept Paper

Other:

Any other information you feel would enhance proposal



AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA PROJECT WORK PLAN

Project Work Plan:

- Program Management Tool
- Means to communicate program impact
- Developed in context of the application

Setting Project Milestones and Measurements:

- Helps to document project's achievements and legacy
- Serves as assessment tool for planning for improvements to enhance project's impact on community
- Helps projects achieve sustainability by demonstrating effectiveness:
 - Justification for future funders
 - Broaden community impact

AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA PROJECT WORK PLAN

Project Work Plan:

- Composed of one or more Action Plans

Action Plan Describes:

- Specific community need to be addressed
- Goal
- Milestone (expected results)
- How progress will be assessed

AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA PROJECT WORK PLAN

Action Plan Categories:

•Community Need Statement:

- Specific need that will be addressed by the project component in this Action Plan
- Measurable, citing reliable source to establish compelling need
- Covers a multi-year period; estimated length of time required to complete entire proposed project (approximately 3 years)

AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA PROJECT WORK PLAN

Action Plan Categories:

•Goal Statement:

- Over-arching direction of the project
- Describes impact project will have in addressing community
- Covers a multi-year period; estimated length of time required to complete entire proposed project (approximately 3 years)

AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA PROJECT WORK PLAN

Action Plan Categories:

•Performance Milestone:

- Expected Results
- Describes what you hope to achieve in a particular activity area over the course of a 12 month period
- Directly related to Goal Statement
- Quantity / amount: how many, how much, or how long
- Include one milestone per text box

AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA PROJECT WORK PLAN

Action Plan Categories:

•Planned Period of Accomplishment:

- Indicates project year and month milestone is expected to be achieved
- All milestones should be assessed at least annually
- Use Federal Fiscal Quarters:
 - Quarter 1: October - December
 - Quarter 2: January - March
 - Quarter 3: April - June
 - Quarter 4: July – September

AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA PROJECT WORK PLAN

Action Plan Categories:

• Indicator / Evidence of Progress:

- A specific measurable piece of information
- What you plan to track or measure that will allow you to determine if milestone has been met

• Target:

- How many, how much, or how long
- Same quantity/amount as described in Milestone above

AmeriCorps*State and AmeriCorps*VISTA PROJECT WORK PLAN

Action Plan Categories:

•How Measured:

- Instrument or method used to determine accomplishment of Milestone
- Chosen from drop down list

•Description of Data Collection:

- Information about data collection or measurement process (who collects it from whom and when and how often)

AmeriCorps*VISTA PROJECT WORK PLAN

45 CFR §2522.500-2522.650

Performance Milestones

- All grantees must establish, track and assess performance measures for their programs
- All grantees must ensure that any program under their oversight fulfills performance measure and evaluation requirements
- It is strongly recommended that each application contain a minimum of **three to five (3 - 5)** Performance Milestones for each Action Plan

AmeriCorps*VISTA BUDGET

Section I. Volunteer Support Expenses

- Project Personnel Expenses
- Personnel Fringe Benefits
- Project Staff Travel
- Local
- Long Distance
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Contractual Service
- Other Volunteer Support Costs
- Indirect Costs (not applicable)

AmeriCorps*VISTA BUDGET

Section II. Volunteer Expenses

A. Personnel Expenses

Living Allowances

Full Time (Federal):

of Members X Allowance Rate

Full Time (Non Federal):

Cost Share Members X Allowance Rate

Summer Associate (Federal): Not Applicable

Summer Associate (Non-Federal): Not Applicable

Education and End of Service Awards

Education Award: # Members X \$4725

End of Service Stipend: # Members X \$1200

(The education award and end of service stipend will increase with FY10 appropriated funding through the Kennedy Serve America Act.)

AmeriCorps*VISTA BUDGET

Section II. Volunteer Expenses

B. Fringe Benefits

Health Insurance: # Members X \$2700

FICA: # Members Receiving Stipend X \$7.65%

C. Travel: Job related reimbursement

D. Other Volunteer Expenses

E. Source of Funds

Section I: Volunteer Support Expenses

Section II: Volunteer Expenses

AmeriCorps*VISTA

COST SHARE

- Arrangement where sponsoring organization pays the living allowance for one or more of its VISTAs.
- Living allowance ranges from \$10,000 to \$15,000 depending on geographic location.
- VISTA Program (CNCS) provides for most other costs – training, health care, travel or relocation costs, and education award or stipend (upon successful completion of service).
- Not required – but strongly encouraged, especially for projects applying for resources beyond second year.

AmeriCorps*VISTA MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Legal agreement between Corporation for National and Community Service and sponsoring organization

Understanding concerning establishment and operation of a local project under the AmeriCorps*VISTA program

Effective for stated period (typically one year)

AmeriCorps*VISTA MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Clearly states:

- Total number of member assignments
- Sponsor's funding (Cost Share – if applicable)
- CNCS Responsibilities
- Sponsor Obligations
- Joint Responsibilities



AmeriCorps*VISTA MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Clearly states Prohibitions, such as:

- Delegation / Subcontracting
- Supplemental Payments
- Legal Restrictions

Also addresses.....

- Amendments
- Notices
- Order of Precedence
- Cost Share Provisions
- Increases in VISTA Payment Amounts

Severability
Termination

AmeriCorps*VISTA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

•Monthly Activities Report

- Synopsis of key activities
- Due last business day of month

•Project Progress Report

- Comprehensive report on Performance Milestones
- “Stories of Success”
- Challenges: overcome or that deterred progress
- Due 2-3 times per year



APPLICATION PROCESS

?

?

QUESTIONS or COMMENTS?

?

?

?

QUESTIONS or COMMENTS?

?

QUESTIONS or COMMENTS?

?

?

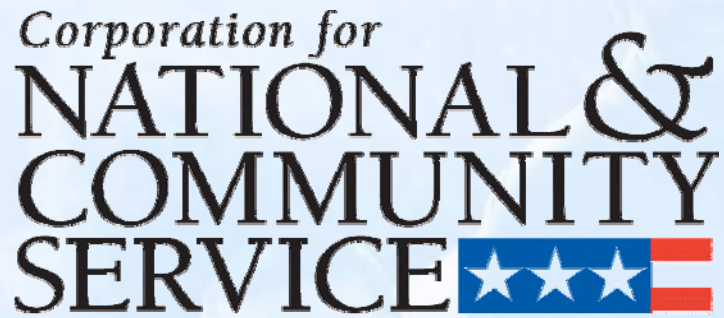
?

?

?

Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** ★★ ★





Thank You!

This information presented by:

**Corporation for National
and Community Service
Virginia State Office**

**400 North 8th Street, Suite 446
Richmond, VA 23219
TEL (804) 771-2197
FAX (804) 771-2157**

<http://www.nationalservice.gov>

