



### New VISTA Project Application

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Director and Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Site Supervisor and Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (include zip + 4): \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

EIN: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Status:  501(c)3 Charitable Non-Profit     Government Agency

# of FTE (exclude national service members): \_\_\_\_\_

# of PTE (exclude national service members): \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Budget: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

VMO Start Preference (circle one):            JULY            AUGUST            NO PREFERENCE

Does your organization have previous VISTA experience?            YES            NO

# of VISTAs Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

The application submitted includes:

- Narratives
- Performance Measure Charts  
\*includes capacity building activities, capacity building, anti-poverty
- VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)
- On-Site Orientation + Training (OSOT)
- Signature Page

## Section 1: Narratives

### ***General***

Share the mission of your organization and the core programs your organization must meet its mission.

Give a short paragraph description of your intended VISTA project.

**Community Needs**

Applicants will describe the specific needs of the community and how the VISTA project will help meet those needs. VISTA projects should also include the intended beneficiaries of the project and the community at large in its development and ensure the same groups will be involved in its implementation. Projects should address issues related to poverty as that is VISTA's main objective.

Describe the community, the intended population to be served, and the community need(s) to be addressed by the VISTA project and VISTA member's service. Why is this project necessary?

What is the evidence of this need? How is the community impacted by these issues?

Why is a VISTA project an appropriate way to address these needs?

How will the community be involved in the VISTA project? Identify at least one community partner (other non-profit, civic group, etc.) that will be involved in the development and implementation of the project.

VISTA projects are meant to include the voice of the beneficiaries that will be served because of the VISTA project impact. How will you ensure the population you intend to serve with this project has a voice in its development and implementation?

***Project Goals and Evaluation***

All project sites need to track the data related to the VISTA project's goals and activities. Activities described here need to correspond to activities listed in the VISTA Assignment Description. All VISTA projects must address capacity-building initiatives in addition to at least one of the anti-poverty performance measures.

Describe the measurable overall goals of the VISTA project. Specifically address the intended impact on your organization's capacity and the community issues identified above.

Provide a general description of the activities the VISTA member will work on to meet the goals of the project.

Describe how you will assess, track, and ensure oversight of the project goals.

### ***Project Sustainability***

Organizations that use VISTA resources are expected to build a sustainable project, which after three years (possibly more), no longer requires support from a VISTA project or member. Projects achieve sustainability in a variety of ways: through raising funds to support a paid staff person, transitioning the service of the VISTA member to other volunteers, existing staff, or students; and/or through meeting the community need outlined in the project proposal. A project extension beyond the three-year cycle may be possible with demonstrated continuing need and a project that aligns with our program's focus area of housing and economic opportunity.

Select the practices that your organization will implement to ensure that the VISTA project results are sustainable.

- Documenting procedures so staff or volunteers can continue activities
- Creating products (website, templates, communications) that will be continue to be used
- Fundraising/mobilizing resources
- Creating a framework for volunteer management and retention
- Establishing or amplifying mechanism(s) for the community/beneficiaries to have a voice (i.e. advisory council)
- Building or strengthening partnerships with community organizations
- Training staff or volunteers on how to use tools, templates, systems created by the VISTA
- Other:

### ***Supervisor + Project Site Capacity***

Organizations partnering with the VISTA program are expected to provide their members with the tools and support needed to be successful.

Please describe your organization's capacity to host a VISTA if you have no experience with VISTA or national service. This may include a description of administering a federal or state grant, and/or prior experience hosting community-based long-term volunteers.

Who is the proposed site supervisor and why is this person the optimal choice? The site supervisor will be the supervisor and mentor to the member as well as the one to manage the VISTA project. Who will take over if the proposed supervisor leaves or is out for an extended period?

What is the site supervisor's style of management? What should an incoming VISTA member know about the supervisor?

Describe the workspace that will be provided for the member. What will be their weekly schedule (36-40 hours per week)? What resources will you provide to support the VISTA?



**VISTA Recruitment + Retention**

Recruitment is a collaboration between the host site and HHCK. Host sites are expected to begin recruiting for members when the VISTA project is awarded. Each site will manage a recruitment campaign specific to their project, including site-specific qualifications for the site's ideal VISTA member. At the same time, we will recruit through the national AmeriCorps portal and organizational networks. Qualified candidates will be interviewed by our staff and forwarded to host sites. AmeriCorps ultimately makes the decision to approve the candidate.

Share your plans for recruiting a VISTA member. Include the following: How will you advertise? Who will be involved in the interview process? What do you plan to address in the interview? What specific skills and qualifications will you look for in a VISTA member?

VISTA members are expected to complete their full-term, one-commitment. Since our program is required to have a high retention rate to continue receiving federal funding to operate the VISTA program, we seek to award VISTA projects that are dedicated to working collaboratively with us.

What actions will your organization use to help ensure the VISTA completes their term of service?

Why is your organization a good environment for a national service member? How will you help make the member feel included and engaged?

**Evaluation Criteria for Narratives [55%]** – questions answered completely, thoroughly, and in requested format and order.

## Section 2: Performance Measures

The main components of a VISTA project are: (1) To build capacity of programs or organizations that (2) are intended to help individuals and communities out of poverty. The anti-poverty component is the reason resources are awarded to an organization while the capacity building measures are how the anti-poverty work is accomplished. **Project sites must select capacity building performance measures as well as an anti-poverty performance measure.**

Capacity building activities are activities that expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness of programs and organizations. Capacity building activities may also leverage resources for programs and/or organizations. Generally, capacity building activities are considered *indirect services* that enable organizations to provide more, better, and sustainable *direct services*.

Activities for an approved VISTA project must:

1. Support or enhance the program delivery model.
2. Respond to the organization's goal of increasing, expanding, or enhancing services to address pressing community needs.
3. Enable the organization to provide more or better direct services *after* the VISTA project has ended. Plan a project that intends to be sustainable beyond relying on continued VISTA resources.

### CAPACITY BUILDING COMPONENT (1 of 2)

**Capacity Goal (select one)**

- Scale and/or reach**
- Effectiveness**
- Efficiency**
- Leveraged Resources**

**Capacity Building Activities**  
(select all applicable and add description)

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>
Community Assessment	
Community Awareness and Engagement	
Expand/Strengthen Partnerships/Networks	
Financial Resources	
Material Development	
Outreach	
Program Development and Delivery	
Technology Use	
Volunteer Recruitment and Management System	

### Capacity Building Performance Measures

Project sites will report on these performance measures periodically during the term of service. You need to select at least ONE output. Everyone will report on the same outcome.

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Target Number</b> (May 2023-May 2024)	<b>Tracking Mechanism</b> (Database, sign-in sheets, etc.)
<b>OUTPUT:</b> # of community volunteers recruited or managed		
<b>OUTPUT:</b> \$ value or cash or in-kind resources leveraged		
<b>OUTPUT:</b> # of organizations receiving capacity building services		
<b>OUTCOME (required):</b> # of organizations that increase their efficiency, effectiveness, and/or program reach		

### ANTI-POVERTY COMPONENT (2 of 2)

Update your project's performance measures for May 2023-May 2024. Choose at least **ONE** complete set. Tracking mechanism include databases, sign-in sheets, etc.

<b>Performance Measure #1 (set)</b>	<b>Target #</b> (May 2023-May 2024)	<b>Tracking Mechanism</b>
Number of individuals receiving services (output)		
Number of individuals into safe, healthy, affordable housing (outcome)		
<b>Performance Measure #2 (set)</b>	<b>Target #</b> (May 2023-May 2024)	<b>Tracking Mechanism</b>
Number of housing units developed or repaired (output)		
Number of safe, healthy, affordable housing units made available (outcome)		
<b>Performance Measure #3 (set)</b>	<b>Target #</b> (May 2023-May 2024)	<b>Tracking Mechanism</b>
Number of individuals receiving services (output)		
Number of individuals with improved financial knowledge (outcome)		

Performance Measure #4 (set)	Target # (May 2023-May 2024)	Tracking Mechanism
Number of individuals receiving services (output)		
Number of individuals who reported increased food security (outcome)		

**Evaluation Criteria for Performance Measures [15%]** –capacity building activities identified (5%), capacity building performance measures identified (5%), anti-poverty performance measures identified (5%)

### Section 3: VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

A VISTA’s year-long work plan is called a VISTA Assignment Description (VAD). The VAD allows your VISTA member to take the project goals and view them as objectives, activities, and milestones that mark progress. Each VAD should have a timeframe for the accomplishment of objectives and activities. The supervisor and VISTA will review the VAD regularly, as all the VISTA’s activities should relate directly to the objectives in the VAD. The VAD can be revised if necessary.

When developing your VAD, you should keep in mind that the VAD should:

- **Include at least one capacity building objective and one community impact objective**
- Be detailed, but open to
- Be realistic to accomplish in one year
- Contain indirect service activities
- Contain action verbs
- Detail key products and deliverables with specific milestones and timelines
- Not contain any AmeriCorps-designated prohibited activities
- Not contain any activities that would lead to the displacement or duplication of staff or volunteers

Complete the VAD Template (separate document) and submit with this application.

**Evaluation Criteria for VISTA Assignment Description [15%]** –VISTA service activities do not include any CNCS prohibited activities or any duplication/displacement of staff or volunteers (5%), VISTA activities are reasonable with clear deadlines for achieving objectives (5%), VISTA activities clearly describe sustainable plans (5%).

### Section 4: On-Site Orientation and Training (OSOT)

VISTA members must receive detailed orientation and training that will give them the necessary knowledge and skills to accomplish their objectives. HHCK will provide the members with detailed training on the VISTA program, general housing and homelessness issues, and some general subject training (i.e. social media, grant writing).

Responsibility for introducing the member to your organization and preparing the member to perform their day-to-day tasks related to their VAD, however, rests with you. This orientation period should be no less than two weeks.

How will you encourage the personal and professional development of your VISTA? What skills or knowledge will you help them develop or strengthen over the year? What groups will you involve your member in to help them understand the community-based approach to meeting needs at your organization? Describe any other learning opportunities that your organization is willing and able to provide.

### **On-Site Orientation and Training (OSOT) Checklist**

Use the On-Site Orientation and Training Checklist provided as the bare minimum and then **EXPAND** on the checklist by including elements described in the evaluation criteria that your site will use.

#### **Before the VISTA Arrives**

- Explain AmeriCorps VISTA program and member role to other staff
- Inform partners and other departments about the member and what this means for them
- Order member business cards (include AmeriCorps VISTA logo)
- Contact member. Provide housing resources (if applicable), directions to office, and expectations for first day.
- Check-in with member about start time, project details, and office location. Direct VISTA member to HHCK staff for questions and guidance on starting VISTA service.
- Recognition of HHCK as a partner/supporter of the host site by placing the AmeriCorps logo on your website.
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## First Day

- Introduce member to the head of the organization, co-workers
- Discuss history and purpose of organization, how member fits in
- Show member their workspace, location of breakrooms, restrooms, etc.
- Discuss basic terms of work, policies, procedures
- Review VISTA handbook (leave policies, time keeping, etc.)
- Explain use of telephone, mail services, computer network, server, etc.
- Explain standards of conduct including rules of dress, housekeeping, and smoking.
- Explain parking practices and arrange for keys if needed
- Office Behavior: what is appropriate, what is not
- Attendance expectations
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## Project Related

- Discuss in more detail the mission, background, and purpose of organization
- Review organizational structure and staff duties
- Explain project goals and objectives
- Clarifying VISTA assignments, how goals will be achieved, and how the member's progress in achieving project objectives will be assessed
- Review VAD, explain specific responsibilities
- Important: make it clear what the expected project outcomes are, what the member will create and how it will help individuals or communities move out of poverty
- Give the member time to read any materials given to them
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## Member Assignment + Supervisor Relationship

- Discuss performance expectations and standards
- Explain supervisor and support structure, communications, reporting, accountability
- Discuss the working relationship between the VISTA and direct supervisor, mutual expectations, communications styles, work style, support needs, etc.
- Review staff meeting and team meeting schedules
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## Within the 1<sup>st</sup> Month

- Allow the VISTA member to learn about their project and develop their skills. This may include –
  - Professional development training
  - Office/community scavenger hunt
  - Signing up for appropriate listservs
  - Project-related research
- Allow the VISTA to sit in on organizational or community meetings
- Get VISTA member approved to drive organization vehicles
- Familiarize member with office emergency protocols
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Any other details:

**Evaluation Criteria for On-Site Orientation + Training [15%]** - OSOT will result in the members gaining the knowledge and skills needed to perform the tasks or carry out the role, training includes a site orientation, including staff integration and organizational policies and procedures. The organization clearly demonstrates support of a VISTA's professional development and/or knowledge/experience.



# SIGNATURE PAGE

## Acknowledgements:

We understand that AmeriCorps VISTA members placed through Homes for All are required to attend all Homes for All trainings/events, participate in conference calls, and national days of service. We agree to allow them away from the site to participate and will encourage their participation. We will support Homes for All in its effort to provide member training and recognition events and will accommodate occasional absences of the member (with advance notice, when possible) for this purpose.

## Assurances:

- The legal applicant organization has an active Drug-Free Workplace Policy and an active Non-Discrimination Policy.
- Project site has the institutional, managerial, and financial capability required to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the activities described in this application.
- Project site will comply with all applicable requirements of all federal laws, regulations, and policies governing this program.
- Project site will keep such records and provide such information to Homes for All and the federal AmeriCorps agency with respect to the program as may be required for fiscal audits and program evaluation, including documentation of in-kind contributions, for three years.
- Project site will comply with the non-displacement rules of The National and Community Service Act of 1990.
- Project site will comply with all Prohibited Activities related to AmeriCorps service.
- Project site agrees to provide a nonrefundable site contribution of \$6,000 per slot awarded. This is not the cost of the VISTA member's benefits or living allowance.
- Project site must be current or become current members of the Homeless + Housing Coalition of Kentucky.
- Project site agrees to keep the lines of communication between the organization and the appropriate HHCK staff (Program Director or Member Coordinator) regarding the member's progress, any problems that arise, and highlights of the member's service year.
- Project site agrees to **not** hire the member until the member's service commitment is complete.
- Project certifies the project facility, when considered in its entirety is accessible to persons with mobility, hearing, vision, mental and cognitive impairments, or disabilities.

Member Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Executive Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_