**Oregon Health Authority/AmeriCorps VISTA**

**Partnership Project**

Host Site Application Information Sheet

Version: 3/28/23

**Note:** The award of all VISTA resources as well as the approval of all VISTA sites and final project application is subject to the availability of funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service and approval of Federal Appropriations.

Program information

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| **Contact Information and Application Submission** | Please return completed applications to: **Caroline Tydings****Caroline.d.tydings@oha.oregon.gov****Phone: 503-432-7574** |
| **Notification of intent to apply due** | **As soon as possible by email and/or phone**. We want to work with you on forming your application together before submitting it for final approval to CNCS. |
| **Review process** | **Rolling application review and approval process**. We help revise and submit applications to CNCS as they arrive from sites. The current review calendar does not permit us to wait for all applications to arrive and be reviewed in one competitive process.  |
| **Application Due Dates** | **Project plan application*** Submit drafts of applications as soon as possible so the OHA team can provide feedback and support and submit to the national VISTA program for early approval.
* **Last day to submit a host site application: April 24, 2023**

**Opportunity Listing** * **Final/OHA Approved OL due date: May 1, 2023**
* Position listing on AmeriCorps portal can be live as soon as the OL is approved by the OHA VISTA leadership team.

**VISTA Assignment Description*** **Final/OHA Approved VAD due date: May 8, 2023**

**Other Recruitment due dates to note*** On-site Orientation and Training Plan
* **Due date: July 10, 2023**
* Detailed Workplan
* **Due date: September 14, 2023**
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| **Approval Notification** | Rolling notification of provisional approval by OHA and CNCS. Final approval notification is subject to the availability of funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service and approval of Federal Appropriations. |
| **Cost to host sites** | **Standard:** $3,250. These highly competitive positions are more heavily subsidized by the national AmeriCorps program. These positions are intended for organizations and communities with very limited resources. This amount is the Site Support Payment (SSP) which covers costs associated with the members' training, orientation, team meetings, professional development and program staff salary.**Cost share:** $23,891 (Columbia, Clackamas, Multnomah, Washington, and Yamhill Counties) or $20,851 (all other counties). The host site pays a larger amount to cover the members' subsistence allowance and the SSP. Choose this type to greatly increase your approval by OHA and the national AmeriCorps program. Larger organizations with significant funding are asked to provide this level of support.Note: Metro area host sites are required to pay an additional $1,200 to pay for a 1-year transit pass for the member |
| **Program** **Definition** | The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) VISTA Partnership Project aims to alleviate, prevent and reduce poverty by engaging new public health professionals in a year of full-time service in major public health organizations to create or expand public health systems capacity. The project aims to reduce poverty in local communities through building sustainable county- and state-wide healthy community initiatives and taking a systems-approach to ensuring health equity, community resiliency and improved health outcomes. The project addresses primarily the Healthy Futures CNCS focus areas by helping build capacity to provide services to individuals in underserved communities to gain access to preventative and primary health care services. |
| **Age Requirement** | 18 years and older. OHA and host sites can set their own age and education requirements (typically age 21 with bachelor’s level education).  |
| **Member Benefits** | [National AmeriCorps VISTA program benefits](https://americorps.gov/members-volunteers/vista/benefits):* relocation allowance
* poverty level stipend paid bi-weekly
* basic health benefits
* post-service Segal AmeriCorps Education Award or alternate cash stipend
* student loan forbearance or deferment for qualified federal loans
* childcare
* one year of noncompetitive status for federal government jobs.

OHA provides the following benefits:* Ongoing professional development financial and resource procurement support
* Technical assistance in locating and navigating Oregon low-income benefit requests
* Peer leadership from the AmeriCorps VISTA leader(s)
* Paid travel, lodging, and per diem to attend OHA VISTA team meetings around the state roughly 4-5 times per year to meet as a cohort and team, gain professional development, and learn about the state of Oregon through cultural experiences.

Host Sites:* Host sites are encouraged to provide additional benefits during the year, especially in hard to recruit areas.
* Host sites in the Portland metro area are required to provide transportation support in the form of Trimet passes or gas cards.
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| **Education Benefits** | Upon successful completion of the 1-year service term, members are eligible to receive a $6,895 Segal AmeriCorps Education Award OR a $1,800 end-of-year stipend. Loan forbearance and interest accrual payment on qualified student loans are available. |
| **Examples of positions, service projects, and activities** | * Cultivate partnerships with community-based organizations that address the needs of low-income individuals.
* Support or facilitate community-wide public health dialogs, assessments and improvement plans.
* Support funding development activities to build institutional capacity to serve persons living in poverty.
* Build a volunteer program for long term sustainability of public health initiatives.
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| **Key requirements** | The project must address:1. Public health
2. Poverty
3. Building long-term organizational and/or community capacity
4. Support the national VISTA program’s Healthy Futures Objectives:
	1. Obesity and Food (Food Resources): Improving access to nutritious food. And/or:
	2. Access to Health Care: Connecting economically disadvantaged individuals to preventative and primary health care services.

The VISTA must have:1. Dedicated supervisor, project leads, mentors
2. Clear VISTA assignment description
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| **Prohibited Activities** | VISTAs cannot displace staff, endorse or promote religion or a specific religious belief during service hours, provide direct service to clients, participate in political activities or labor or anti-labor activities, or lobby. Sites cannot select VISTAs that are in the immediate family or are close relatives of project site staff or board of directors.  |
| **Member recruitment starts** | **May 1, 2023**OHA provides primary recruitment and applicant vetting. Host sites select candidates to interview, participate in all interviews, and make final selection of their candidate. OHA makes formal offer. CNCS officially hires member. OHA coordinates onboarding and relocation with CNCS. |
| **Member Selection/enrollment deadline** | July 21, 2023 |
| **Virtual Pre-Service Orientation (PSO) for new VISTA members, provided and required by CNCS** | **Required webinars for new VISTA members:****August 8, 2023:** Countdown to Service (60 minutes) – This webinar highlights what webinars need to do before service, what to do on the first day of service, relocation, the criminal history check process, and provides an opportunity to ask questions.**August 14, 2023:** Launching Your VISTA Service (90 minutes) – This webinar highlights the VISTA program’s mission, discusses the VISTA Assignment Description (VAD), describes where to find resources and support, and officially swears the VISTA into service. This webinar occurs at 12:00 pm PST on the first day of service.  |
| **OHA Team Orientation** | **September 13-15, 2023:** The OHA team orientation provides a comprehensive training that prepares new AmeriCorps VISTA members for their year of service, outlines program expectations, professional development, and activities to promote team cohesion. Travel reimbursement, lodging and meals will be provided, and we will help facilitate travel arrangements/carpooling to prevent excessive early morning/late evening travel.  |
| **All-team training and professional development** | Approximately 5 times during the year |
| **Member first day of service on site** | August 14, 2023 (may vary for some individuals) |
| **Member Completion** | August 13, 2024 (may vary for some individuals) |

**Background**

**What is the Oregon Health Authority VISTA Partnership Project?**

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) VISTA Partnership Project aims to alleviate, prevent and reduce poverty by engaging new public health professionals in a year of full-time service in major public health organizations to create or expand public health systems capacity. The project aims to reduce poverty in local communities through building sustainable county- and state-wide healthy community initiatives and taking a systems-approach to ensuring health equity, community resiliency and improved health outcomes. The project addresses primarily the Healthy Futures CNCS focus areas by helping build capacity to provide services to individuals in underserved communities to gain access to preventative and primary health care services.

**What is AmeriCorps?**

****AmeriCorps is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), an independent federal agency whose mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps is made up of three main programs: AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps).

****AmeriCorps VISTA is the national service program designed specifically to fight poverty.AmeriCorps VISTA Members serve in community and faith-based nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, local governments, and other agencies to develop and expand services and programs that help support the efforts of low-income individuals to rise out of poverty. In total, more than 170,000 committed individuals have joined forces with 15,000 local organizations to strengthen communities and help people escape poverty across the nation. Authorized in 1964 and founded as Volunteers in Service to America in 1965, VISTA was incorporated into the AmeriCorps network of programs in 1993. VISTA has been on the front lines in the fight against poverty in America for 50 years. VISTA members commit to serve full-time for a year at a nonprofit organization or local government agency, working to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, strengthen community groups, and much more. With passion, commitment, and hard work, VISTA members create or expand programs designed to bring individuals and communities out of poverty.

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AmeriCorps provides funds to local and national organizations and agencies committed to using national service to address critical community needs. OHA VISTA slots are primarily addressing the CNCS priority area of “healthy futures” through capacity building but will also consider proposals addressing the other focus areas if they have a strong tie to public health. The other focus areas are: disaster services, economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, and veterans and military families**.** Each year, AmeriCorps offers 75,000 opportunities for adults of all ages and backgrounds to serve through a network of partnerships with local and national nonprofit groups.

### General Guidelines for AmeriCorps VISTA Projects & Host Sites

* AmeriCorps VISTA Members must be placed in a capacity-building role for the entire term of service. Proposals must demonstrate that the position provides a direct benefit valued by the community at large. Activities cannot duplicate routine functions of staff or displace paid employees.
* The project may not include administrative duties that support general organizational goals such as clerical responsibilities, answering phones, or data entry.
* The impact of service provided to the community and organization must be measurable and fit within the goals and activities of the AmeriCorps VISTA Program.
* Placement sites must be able to effectively recruit, train, support, and supervise the AmeriCorps VISTA Member(s).
* Placement sites are eligible to have an AmeriCorps VISTA Member serve with their organization, in the same position, for up to three years. Each year is meant to build upon the previous year:
	+ Year 1 – AmeriCorps VISTA Member establishes and creates a program or project
	+ Year 2 – AmeriCorps VISTA Member continues to implement project and begins to create structure for sustainability
	+ Year 3 – AmeriCorps VISTA Member focuses on making the project sustainable
	+ Year 4 proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must address a significant community need or new project focus. Subject to scrutiny by CNCS.
	+ Note that beyond year 1, renewals are not automatic. Sites will be re-evaluated and must re-apply each year.
* The placement must not include any of the activities prohibited for AmeriCorps VISTA Members.

### National Guidelines for AmeriCorps VISTA

* Projects must work to break the cycle of poverty by addressing critical community needs for which there is limited funding. Projects cannot be direct service but instead must build the capacity of communities to address their own challenges.
* Current national program priorities are to build the capacity of anti-poverty programs and organizations operating in these focus areas identified in the strategic plan: Healthy Futures, Education, Economic Opportunity, Veterans and Military Families.
* The OHA VISTA Partnership Project addresses the Healthy Futures focus area.
* For more information see [AmeriCorps VISTA Program Guidance for Current and Potential Project Sponsors, Fiscal Year 2023, October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023.](https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2022_09_01_FY23%20AmeriCorps%20VISTA%20Annual%20Guidance_VISTA.pdf)

### AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities

AmeriCorps VISTA Members may not perform specific activities in the course of their duties while charging time to the AmeriCorps program, nor at the request of anyone including OHA or the host site. Furthermore, Members and staff may not engage in conduct that would associate the national program or the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) with prohibited activities. Host sites must become familiar with specific provisions described in CNCS’ formal regulation and the grant provisions.

While charging time to the AmeriCorps VISTA program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or CNCS, staff and Members may not engage in the following activities (see [45 CFR § 2520.65](http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/45CFR_chapterXXV.pdf)):

* 1. Attempting to influence legislation;
	2. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
	3. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
	4. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
	5. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
	6. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
	7. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
	8. Providing a direct benefit to:
		1. A business organized for profit;
		2. A labor union;
		3. A partisan political organization;
		4. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
		5. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph g. above, unless CNCS assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
	9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
	10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
	11. Such other activities as CNCS may prohibit.

AmeriCorps VISTA Members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non- CNCS funds. Individuals should not wear the AmeriCorps logo while doing so.

### Eligibility

Under the national VISTA program, public, private, or faith-based nonprofit organizations, as well as, local, state, or federal agencies can become an AmeriCorps VISTA sponsor. The OHA VISTA Partnership Project focuses on local, state and tribal public health agencies, but welcomes applications from any other organization or coalition that addresses public health.

### Selection Criteria for all VISTA positions

* Supervision, training, and support of AmeriCorps VISTA Member(s)
* Project design and connection to the goals and activities of the program
* Identified community need and demonstrated partnerships
* Strong VISTA Assignment Description with clear activities, tasks, and timelines
* Clear assessment and evaluation plan measuring project impact on community and host site