AmeriCorps|Florida VISTA Network
Project FAQ's

Project Host Site Applications for the AmeriCorps|Florida VISTA Network (*A|FVN*) are now available for new and <u>renewing</u> Project Host Sites for the 2023-24 program year! *A|FVN* provides higher education institutions and community-based organizations the opportunity to host a full-time AmeriCorps member. <u>Project Host Site Applications are due by 5pm EST on Friday, March 31, 2023.</u> If you have any questions about the application process, please review the FAQs and/or contact *A|FVN* program staff at 850-644-1881.

<u>FAQs:</u>

Q: Who can apply to become an A|FVN Project Host Site?

Not-for-profit colleges and universities as well as community-based organizations in Florida are invited to apply. All VISTA host sites must be a public sector organization, or a private organization designated as non-profit by the IRS.

Q: My institution/organization currently hosts an A|FVN AmeriCorps member. Do we need complete the 2023-24 Project Host Site Application?

Yes, <u>all</u> institutions, whether applying for the first time or renewing for the 2023-24 project year, must complete the Project Host Site Application to ensure that projects are moving towards sustainability and focus on A|FVN and VISTA programming priorities and performance measures.

Q: What is the timeline for the application process?

February 10, 2023	Release Notice of Project Host Site Application & Webinar Information
February 15, 2023 @ 1pm-2:15pm EST	Technical Assistance Webinar
February 22, 2023 @ 10am-11:15am EST	Technical Assistance Webinar
March 1, 2023 @ 10am-11:15am EST	Technical Assistance Webinar
March 7, 2023 @ 3-4:15pm EST	Technical Assistance Webinar
March 31, 2023	**Project Host Site Applications Due by 5pm EST**
April 2023	Notification of results and requested revisions. Approved Project Host Sites will receive an award letter, cost-share and sub-grantee commitment documentation.
May 12, 2023	Cost-share and sub-grantee commitment documentation and requested application revisions are due back to *A|FVN*
July 2023	Cost-share invoices sent
July/August TBD	Required Site Supervisor training(s)
August 18, 2023	Project Participation Fee due
September 2023	2023-24 grant/project cycle beings

The anticipated start dates for AmeriCorps members placed through this RFP process is July/August 2023. Exact start dates TBD are set by AmeriCorps and are not flexible. Additionally, AmeriCorps member start dates are offered through the year and we will work with projects to keep recruiting and/or identify the best start dates based on project needs throughout the entire grant cycle.

Q: How do I register for a Technical Assistance Webinar?

<mark>Choose one & click to register.</mark>

- [February 15, 2023 @ 1pm-2:15pm EST](#)

- [February 22, 2023 @ 10am-11:15am EST](#)

- [March 1, 2023 @ 10am-11:15am EST](#)

- [March 7, 2023 @ 3-4:15pm EST](#)

An additional Technical Assistance Webinar may be scheduled if needed, contact A|FVN program staff.

Participation in a Technical Assistance Webinar is a part of the application process for new and renewing sites. *Project Host Applications submitted by institutions that do not participate may not be considered by A|FVN for approval* Note: It is only necessary to participate in <u>one</u> of the webinar sessions offered. Content covered on each webinar will be similar.

How does my institution benefit from participating as a Project Host Site?

- Your institution gets an opportunity (subject to available AmeriCorps funding, training dates, and A|FVN criteria for recruitment) to recruit a full-time AmeriCorps member(s) whose service connects educators, students, and community partners to improve education and address societal needs through campus-community partnerships, applied civic education, and engaged citizenship. Students learn from being engaged in meaningful service opportunities.
- Your institution is taking an active role to engage local partners to find solutions to build the capacity of low-income communities to address poverty.
- Your institution gets the opportunity to provide an AmeriCorps member meaningful professional development and experience.

Q: What benefits do AmeriCorps VISTA members receive?

AmeriCorps members receive an annual living allowance of approximately $17,600, a healthcare benefit option, a post-service [AmeriCorps Education Award](#) of $6,895 or a cash stipend of $1,800 upon completion of a year of service. A complete overview of AmeriCorps member benefits is available on the [VISTA Campus website](#).

Q: What guidance and support does A|FVN and AmeriCorps provide?

A|FVN and the AmeriCorps provide the following:

- Virtual Member Orientation (VMO) for AmeriCorps members.
- Provide AmeriCorps member(s) In Service Training on ongoing professional development, when possible.
- Oversight and coordination of the Program through the Program Manager and AmeriCorps Leader.
- Site visits when appropriate to provide technical assistance.
- Other technical assistance as needed to Project Host Sites and AmeriCorps members.
- Assistance with recruitment and selection of AmeriCorps members.

- AmeriCorps manages the member payroll and healthcare options.

Q: What funds and support does the Project Host Site need to provide?

- Reimbursement to AmeriCorps for any project-related expenses including travel.
- A dedicated workspace, computer, phone line, email, parking, etc.
- Additional support such as housing or housing assistance, opportunities for professional development, recreation pass for on-campus fitness facilities, etc. These items are not required but are encouraged as they drastically increase the number and quality of AmeriCorps applicants.
- Project Participation Fee (non-Federal funds) to A|FVN, as outlined in Project Host Application/RFP. Estimated to be $6,000 to $6,500 per VISTA member position during the 2023-24 fiscal year. The Project Participation Fee covers match requirements to AmeriCorps as well as administrative and training expenses for the project. This fee is non-refundable. Payment for the 2023-24 Project Participation Fee will be due to A|FVN on or near 08/18/2023.

Q: How does A|FVN review and approve Project Host Site Applications?

Review Process: Project Host Site Applications are evaluated by A|FVN in part using the criteria outlined on the Reviewer's Score Sheet provided as part of the Resource Guide. Project Host Site Applications receiving an average score of 70 or below may be excluded from consideration. To ensure that VISTA resources are placed in as many communities as possible, A|FVN gives consideration to approving Project Host Site Applications from campuses in the Florida College System, the State University System of Florida, as well as colleges and universities from the independent sector. Consideration is also given to applications from community-based organizations that partner with a college or university.

Q: What if my VISTA project has been in existence for longer than three years, can I apply for a fourth year or more?

Year four of a project is evaluated on a case- by-case basis. If you are submitting an application for year four of a project, please seek prior approval from A|FVN. Sites that have had projects for four years or longer should not submit an application for an additional year for the same project. Host sites in this scenario are encouraged to submit an application for a new three-year project with a new goal. Please contact *A|FVN* if you are unsure which category you fall into.

Q: How can I best utilize an AmeriCorps VISTA member?

An AmeriCorps member is best utilized to enable a campus to address a need(s) within the community that would otherwise not be addressed because the institution lacks time, resources, energy or structural conduciveness. Once the need has been identified the host site can structure the VISTA Assignment Description in a way that builds capacity and ensures sustainability at the conclusion of the three-year VISTA project.

Q: What resources are available to help complete the 2023-24 Project Host Site Application?

You are strongly encouraged to review the Resource Guide for programming guidance, a sample VISTA Assignment Description, Reviewer's Score Sheet, and additional program policies. Also, review the draft Memorandum of Understanding for detailed terms and conditions. Contact A|FVN at any time for additional technical assistance.