



THE UNIVERSITY of
MISSISSIPPI
McLEAN INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE
AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



VISTA Host Site Application 2020-2021

The North Mississippi VISTA Project is seeking applications from nonprofit organizations and Title I school districts to host VISTA members for the August 2020 – August 2021 program year. Prospective host sites are invited to submit applications that demonstrate **how a VISTA member will enhance the organization's capacity to fight poverty through education in Mississippi.**

About the North Mississippi VISTA Project

As an initiative of the McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement, the North Mississippi VISTA Project fights poverty through education. AmeriCorps*VISTA core principles include an anti-poverty focus, community empowerment, sustainable solutions, and capacity building.

VISTA members dedicate one year of full-time national service to build sustainable systems that connect the University of Mississippi to underserved communities throughout a 28-county area. By developing new, meaningful, and sustainable connections between UM and partner schools and nonprofits, VISTAs build capacity to move Mississippians toward academic success and higher education.

Benefits to Host Sites

Host sites benefit from a VISTA in many ways, including:

- Addition of a passionate VISTA member to support public service and poverty alleviation efforts;
- Use of approximately \$40,000 worth of human resources (i.e., a full-time VISTA member);
- Chance to build deep partnerships with community agencies that have an anti-poverty focus; and
- Promotion of community-university partnerships and engagement.

Expectations of Host Sites

VISTA Site Supervisors advance the mission of NMVP in the following areas:

Programmatic:

- Align VISTA's assignment with AmeriCorps*VISTA and NMVP mission
- Support VISTA in creating legacy folder to ensure continuity and sustainability of efforts

Administrative:

- Provide a work space with a computer, internet, and phone access
- Execute MOU with NMVP
- \$1,500 cost share
- Participate in 2 site visits per year
- Notify McLean Institute immediately if VISTA is not performing duties

Supervisory:

- Dedicate 5%-10% of time to supervise VISTA
- Provide on-site orientation, meet regularly with VISTA, and approve monthly timesheets
- Allow time for Pre-Service Orientation, completion of monthly reports, and NMVP professional development and events, including National Days of Service

Strategic:

- Recruitment of prospective members for host site and for the NMVP network
- Support other NMVP sites

Rules and Regulations

The VISTA role is NOT intended to provide:

- General staffing, clerical or administrative duties
- Supervision of other staff
- Direct service for more than 10% of time (unless for training purposes, events/duties required of all staff, emergencies, or National Days of Service)

Under federal law, prohibited activities include:

- Religious instruction
- Political activities (lobbying, electoral activities, demonstrations)
- Displacement of employed workers
- Receiving outside compensation without approval of site supervisor and CNCS State Office

Benefits to VISTA Members

All VISTAs are part of the AmeriCorps National Service initiative. As such, they receive the following benefits:

- Modest living allowance (approximately \$900/month)
- Award of \$1,800 OR education award of \$6,195 upon successful completion of service
- Health care benefits provided by AmeriCorps*VISTA
- Loan deferment/forbearance while enrolled in the program
- Relocation reimbursement in certain circumstances
- Professional development opportunities

Some host sites also offer housing benefits and/or meal plans, depending on availability.

New Site Application Process

The North Mississippi VISTA Project invites applications from campus- and community-based organizations that are interested in hosting a VISTA Member for the 2020-2021 program year. NMVP recruits our largest cohort to begin service in August/September 2020, but start dates are available throughout the year on dates specified by CNCS.

To be considered as a prospective host site, please submit the following materials:

1. **Letter of interest** in becoming a host site with the North Mississippi VISTA Project, discussing mission alignment with NMVP, capacity building needs that a VISTA could address, and evidence that organization can successfully uphold supervisor and host site expectations.

2. **Draft VISTA Assignment Description** (see guidance on following pages).

3. **Draft performance measures** to address measurable outcomes around capacity building and poverty alleviation during the VISTA member's term of service. The poverty alleviation performance measures should be drawn from the *Education, Economic Opportunity, or Healthy Futures* focus areas.

Please submit these documents by email to vista@olemiss.edu. Priority will be given to applications received by March 16, 2020.