

# Beyond VISTA: Project Sustainability Approaches & Strategies

## Strategies Share in Chat Panel

### **What factors do you think lead to sustainable VISTA projects?**

- community buy in and eventual fiscal support
- Strong supervision
- A community need
- Realistic expectations at the outset
- Leadership support
- Stakeholder and leadership support
- Documentation of procedures
- Organizational support
- Community partnerships, social media
- The program has to be embedded into the community through partners for it to live on.
- Alignment with mission; advance planning to incorporate operations into organization.
- Realistic objectives
- Clear goals for the VISTA
- Strategic planning and organizational support
- Goals, metrics, vision, fiscal support
- Organization and community support
- Consistent staff at host org (limited turnover)
- The site as well as a VISTA needs to have a shared vision of what it looks like AFTER the VISTA leaves in order to backwards map the progress.
- Support from the entire organization
- Clear communication
- Worthwhile mission.
- Internal buy-in from staff
- A sustainable plan
- Organizational buy in
- Transfer of responsibilities for project (volunteers, staff position, etc.)

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- Remembering the fact that VISTAS will leave your agencies from the first day they start
- Vision and strong leadership
- Volunteer empowerment created by the VISTA and the organizations
- Collection of material in a compiled binder; open communication with VISTA and staff
- A clear blueprint/plan for project

## **How are you working with your VISTA(s) to ensure the sustainability of your program?**

- Making contacts with potential funders
- Researching & applying for community grants
- We have not begun our program yet.
- Creating a procedures handbook
- We have a continuity binder that the VISTA puts information in.
- Making a "sustainability binder" with each project
- My current VISTAs were involved in writing the VADs for next year's VISTAs.
- Sustainability plan for project
- Trying to arrange for a couple days of overlap between our VISTAs
- Creating procedure handbook,
- Vista member is helping to write a few small grants to for the continuation of the programs she is involved with. She is also working to improve sponsorship packets for some of our larger programs.
- Adding items to shared drive & notebooks
- Our VISTA is training "lead" volunteers
- Social media engagement, volunteer organizing, program expansion
- Legacy books make sure that information between VISTAs reduces training
- Developing procedures and opportunities with the research manager
- Creating a tool kit that includes instructions for anyone that will use it.
- Creating contacts list
- Manuals and shared drive passed to existing staff

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- Our VISTA is currently working on VADs for next year
- Journal type article to pass on corporate knowledge
- Guidebooks, presentations, left with HR depts.
- Tenant organizing activities to preserve affordable housing
- Policies and procedures saved in Intranet
- saving documents to shared drives
- Working with our Development department and searching grant databases.
- Drafting curriculum for program
- volunteer procedures handbook, marketing and outreach strategies given to communications staff person
- We have started putting the "hand-off" process together and plan on bringing on a new staff to cover this role a month before the VISTA departure.
- Grant databases. great idea
- Begin their service with the transition to the next VISTA in mind.
- Pair the VISTA with staff that will be taking on tasks after they leave.
- building stronger relationship with our non-profit partner
- Create a student/parent career mapping educational program and a college hub at our community center

### **List one action you will to take to ensure the program will continue after your last VISTA departs.**

- We will invite our current VISTA to come, meet and mingle with our new VISTA to share her experience with us.
- Creating a detailed sustainability plan.
- Training volunteers for leadership role
- Documented transition plans.
- Seek out more volunteer opportunities and look to hire to replace
- Develop milestones and timeline with "hand off" with VISTA
- Solicit external funding via grants & community recognition
- Establish lead and core volunteer group

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- Work with current VISTA to identify and draft plan of action to improve program
- Share the volunteer recruitment and retention processes with incoming staff
- Continue to seek additional funding/grants.
- Transition plan, goals and timelines
- We have systems in place that capture all new relationships, she will create a binder for the next Vista member/staff member that fills her roles
- Integrate their work into existing staff job descriptions.
- We plan to have our VISTA have a plan with volunteers executing as if she were with them.
- Determine the feasibility of continuation depending solely on volunteerism, or whether the organization needs to put funds to support a position?
- Engage board member volunteers and seek funding to hire part-time support
- Develop hand off timeline
- Included more community members, and make fundraising and annual and on-going event
- Assign a FT staff member to oversee the program, as a supervisor - be involved enough to know the program and the VISTA's duties!
- Our VISTA is building out a new software product. I will make sure that she has documented the process for building out the site, and we have a solid train-the-trainer model in place.
- Create a data stakeholders relationships, develop a list of community advisors
- Have current Vista connect with incoming Vista to go over electronic binders
- Involve VISTAs in meeting with housing commissions to secure housing vouchers.
- Share the social media, marketing and outreach ideas with our current marketing staff person.
- Create a transition plan and exit debrief to ensure continuity
- We are an each one teach one organization. Our VISTA is building initial capacity in our parent training program. Once these initial folks are trained they will help sustain the program.
- Ensure that community partners are fully engaged so that VISTA products are used, respected, understood, and maintained.