

# MANAGING YOUR VISTA PROJECT

Roles, Responsibilities, & Support



# Session Outcomes

- Describe in broad terms how your VISTA project fits into the National Service Network
- Follow communication protocol with your State Office
- Recognize VISTA project responsibilities
- Identify opportunities for member support
- Know where to go, when, and for what!

THE BIG PICTURE...



# National Service Network



Social  
Innovation  
Fund

AmeriCorps  
NCCC

AmeriCorps  
State/National  
Grants

AmeriCorps  
VISTA

# What is the Corporation State Office?

- ❑ State Office staff help develop, manage and monitor VISTA programs in their state and often in other states for large & national projects.
- ❑ Staff support your supervision of the VISTAs and intervene in emergencies or difficult situations.
- ❑ Staff are also responsible for connecting you to the resources most appropriate to meet your needs.



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# Support from Your State Office

- Technical assistance—conference calls, webinars, etc—regarding eGrants, recruitment, training & program registration, performance measures, adjusting project plans....
- Compliance monitoring of the project
- Support of the supervision of VISTAs



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# Reporting Relationships

## Communication chain:

- 1) VISTA member goes to immediate supervisor first
  - Intermediary if applicable
- 2) CNCS State Office if program related
- 3) VISTA Headquarters if not resolved



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# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Project & Member Management

# Sponsor Responsibilities

## **Project Management:**

- Monitor progress and collect data in relation to your performance measures
- Report through PPR & VPRS
- Ensure VISTAs know our expectations, including the amount of living allowances

# Sponsor Responsibilities *cont'd*

## **Member Management:**

- Orientation and Training
- Administrative support (space, supplies, equipment)
- Supervision (guidance, support, coaching)
- Monitor attendance and use of leave days
- Service-related transportation (not commuting)
- Sponsor Verification Form
- Emergency Funds Advance, if required



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# Sponsor Responsibilities *cont'd*

## **Recognize members as VISTAs and AmeriCorps as a funder/supporter on:**

- your website, blogs and social media
- in print and broadcast publicity
- on member business cards
- at public meetings and conferences

# VISTAs and Housing

- Some VISTAs are permitted to relocate prior to PSO & starting service
- Know your VISTAs status (already secured housing or arriving directly from PSO)
- Advise VISTAs on safe areas to live
- Ask Board, staff, community for housing leads
- Offer temporary housing if possible during the search
- Allow them time for the search & settling in



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# On-Site Orientation & Training (OSOT)

- ❑ Submit OSOT plan well before the VISTA's arrival
- ❑ Implement when the VISTA arrives on-site
- ❑ The more support and more comprehensive the OSOT, the shorter the learning curve



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# MEMBER TERMS, CONDITIONS, BENEFITS

Support & Enforcement as a Supervisor

# Addressing Member Issues

- Prohibited Actions: policies related to employment, political activity, criminal activity, religious activity, education, time & attendance
- Early terminations
- Removal from project
- Nepotism



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# VMSU & Benefits

The VISTA Member Support Unit (VMSU), contacted through the National Service Hotline, manages the VISTAs' service benefits.

800-942-2677

A sponsor may contact the VMSU in support of a VISTA, though it should be unnecessary. (Project issues should be referred to your State Office.)



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# VMSU Support Areas

## **End of Service Benefits**

- Education Award
- Interest Accrual
- Forbearance Requests
- Stipend

## **Travel**

- Reimbursements
- Emergency

## **Service Letters**

- Currently Serving
- Verification of Service
- Income Disregard

## **Benefits**

- Child Care
- Health Benefits Plan

## **Forms**

- W-4, Direct Deposit, Life Insurance



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# Living Allowance

- “Standard” VISTAs are paid directly by VISTA HQ through direct deposit
  - Direct deposit and all related forms are available via <https://my.americorps.gov>
- “Standard” VISTAs contact the VMSU about:
  - W-2 and 1099 forms
  - Deductions
- Program grant VISTAs’ “payroll” is managed by the grantee, including tax reporting (W-2 and 1099)



# Helping Your VISTA

What can you do as a VISTA sponsor to support your VISTA member?

- Housing
- Food/gifts
- Clothing/Promotional items (agency logo apparel)
- Health insurance
- Provide ongoing training

*Be fair and equitable in support to all VISTAs serving with you*



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# VISTA Leaders

**VISTA Leaders have already served one year or more.**

- Leaders help:  
recruit, mentor, train, **coordinate report writing**,  
and generally support teams of VISTA s serving  
projects with at least 6 VISTAs
- They can guide in data collection & interpret data  
(but not perform the reporting)

# REPORTING



# Sponsor Verification

- Bi-weekly e-mail notification
- Completed in eGrants
- See “AmeriCorps VISTA Supervisors Manual” on the VISTA Campus for detailed instructions

# Project Reporting

**Project Progress Report:** Submitted in eGrants, the PPR reflects the accomplishments (milestones) of the overall project, not the VISTAs' tasks in their VADs.

- Supervisor's Narrative
- Member(s)' Narratives

**Additionally**, a sampling of press coverage, newsletters, curriculum in hardcopy or email is sent to the State Office

- Links, attachments, and images are not supported through eGrants



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# Reporting Periods (PPR)

- ❑ First year projects report quarterly
- ❑ Second and third year projects may report semi-annually, at the discretion of the Corporation State Office

## **Project Period Covered:**

- ▶ Oct. 1 – Dec. 31
- ▶ Jan. 1 – Mar. 31
- ▶ April 1 – June 30
- ▶ July 1 – Sept. 30

## **Date Report is Due:**

- January 30
- April 30
- July 30
- October 30



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# VISTA Progress Report Supplement (VPRS)

- The VPRS, submitted through eGrants, is an annual supplement to the PPR.
- The data are aggregated and reported externally—the VPRS is not used to assess project progress performance.
- The VPRS asks for performance information that CNCS tracks from all Corporation programs.



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# VISTA Progress Report Supplement (VPRS)

**VPRS** reports on CNCS Performance Measures in Capacity Building Activities

**Capacity Building is defined as** a set of activities that expand the *scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness* of programs & organizations.



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# VPRS Measures in Brief

- # community volunteers recruited and/or managed
- # organizations implementing 3 or more effective volunteer management practices
- # staff & community volunteers received training
- # organizations completed community assessment



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# VPRS Measures in Brief

- # hours of service contributed by community volunteers
- # organizations more effective, additional activities, new systems or processes
- Dollar value of cash/in-kind resource leveraged



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# VPRS Reporting

- Annual report due October 31st for the previous fiscal year (Oct. 1 – Sep. 30)
- Confer with your State Office to determine what data you will collect & report
- Establish tracking tools to collect the data



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# Reporting Recap

- PPR:
  - Quarterly and perhaps later semi-annually
  - Reports on the accomplishments of the overall project
- VPRS:
  - Annually
  - Reports on CNCS Performance Measures



# eGRANTS



## eGRANTS MESSAGES

Welcome Malissa

## VIEW MY GRANTS/APPLICATIONS

- [View All](#)
- [1 Approved for Consideration/Funding](#)
- [3 Awarded](#)
- [1 Concept Papers](#)
- [1 Subapplication being reviewed by prime](#)
- [1 Subapplication rejected by prime](#)

## VIEW MY AMERICORPS PORTAL

- [Portal Home](#)

## Creating an Application

- [New](#)
- [Continuation/Renewal](#)
- [Amendment](#)
- [Concept Paper](#)

## Managing My Account

Click on the links below to access common account functions.

- [My Account](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Survey](#)

## Reporting to CNCS

- [Financial Report](#)
- [Progress Report](#)
- [Progress Report Supplement](#)

# Informal Communications

In addition to quarterly reports, we encourage you to communicate with your Corporation State Office:

- Email (snippets of accomplishments, member activities are helpful)
- Individual state page on VISTA Campus
- Phone



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# Monitoring & Compliance Visits

## Site visits

- Conducted by State Office staff (occasionally HQ)
- May be informational, to provide technical assistance, or for monitoring

## Compliance Monitoring visits

- Scheduled in advance
- Interviews with project staff, VISTAs, advisory council members, and community
- Review of documentation & procedures
- A letter outlining conclusions is shared after



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# Contacts and Resources

Supervisors  
Orientation  
Workbook

➤ Resources  
Section

VISTACampus.gov

➤ Supervisors  
Section