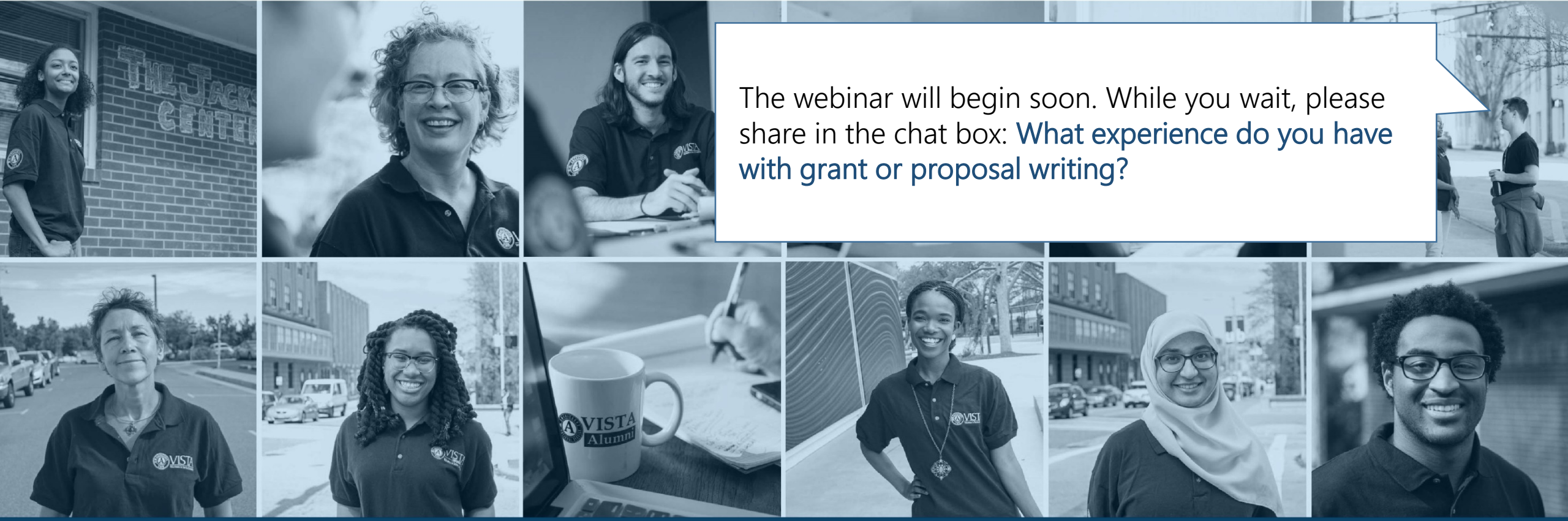

The webinar will begin soon. While you wait, please share in the chat box: **What experience do you have with grant or proposal writing?**

Writing a Winning Grant Proposal

VISTA
Volunteers In Service To America

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Corporation for National & Community Service

Connecting to Audio

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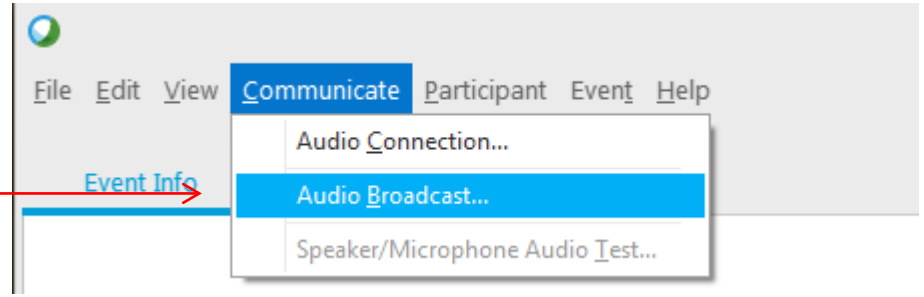
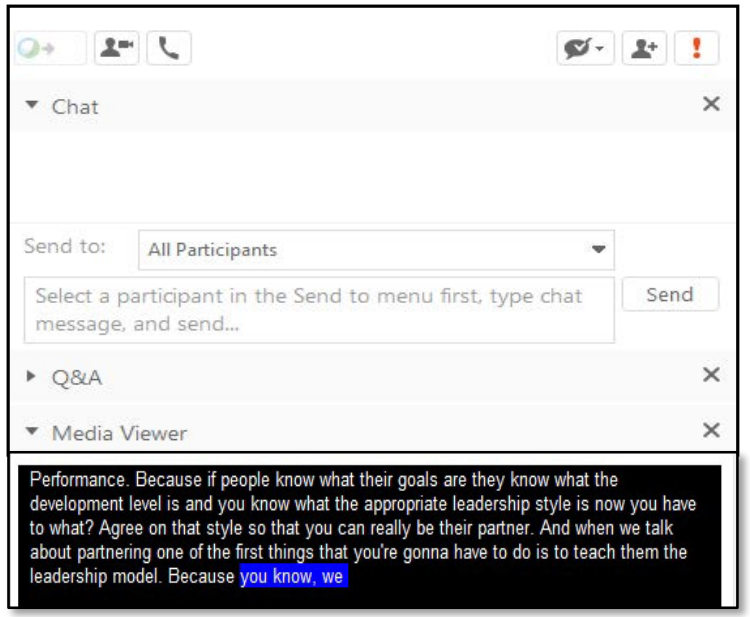
- Audio broadcast
- Call in via phone (number and passcode listed on each slide)
- View Closed Captions in the Media Viewer panel





Tips for Participating

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- Share comments and ideas in the Chat panel (send to "All Participants")
- Ask questions in the Q&A panel (send to "All Panelists")
- Some WebEx features are not available on mobile devices
- Links and recording will be available after the session

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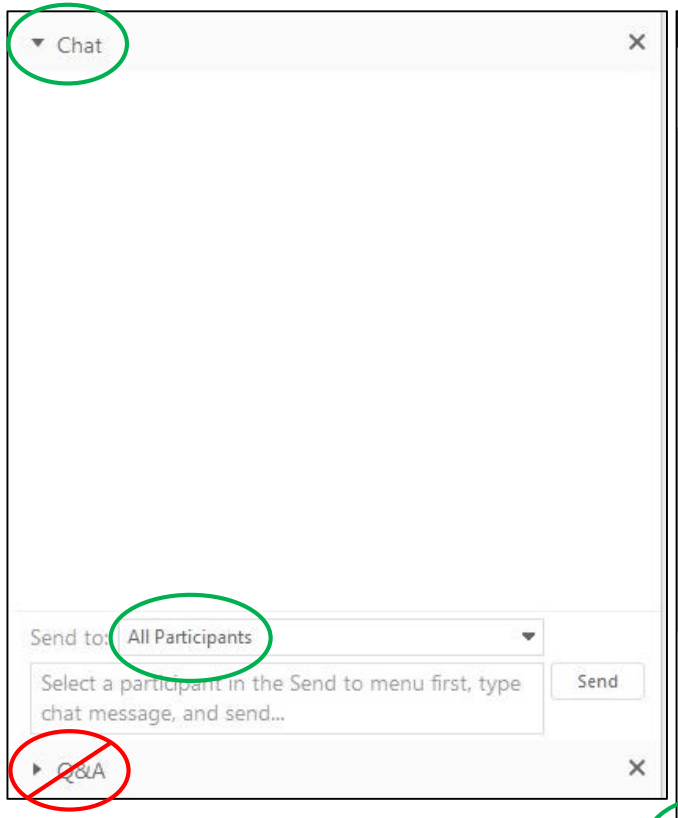

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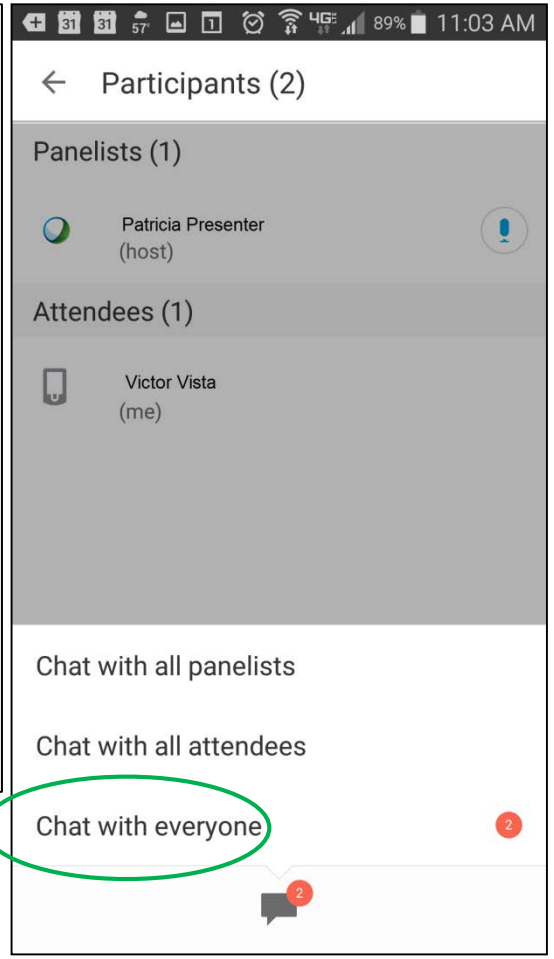

Webinar Etiquette

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- Focus on the topic
- Assume positive intent
- Respect diverse viewpoints and opinions

Writing a Winning Grant Proposal

AMERICORPS VISTA
Volunteers In Service To America

Corporation for National & Community Service

Session Goals

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By the end of the webinar, you will be able to:

- Distinguish between a grant and a gift
- Determine what needs to be included in a letter of inquiry (LOI) and each section of a grant proposal
- Include information that makes your grant proposal exceptional

Today's Speakers

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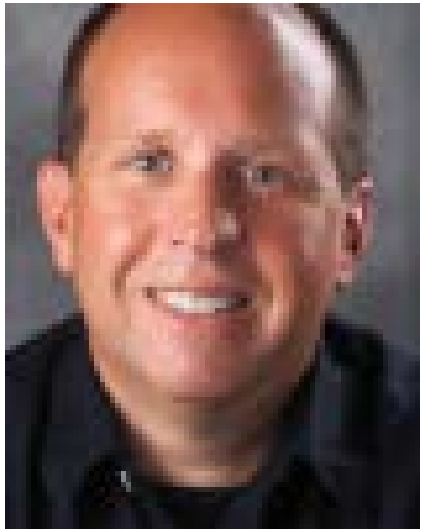

Dennis Norris

Author and trainer

VISTA Online Course - Resource Mobilization facilitator

Tiara Campbell

Randstad Grants Associate
Vanguard Charitable

AmeriCorps VISTA, 2017-2018

Chat Question

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What is your fundraising goal as a VISTA? How much are you expected to raise?

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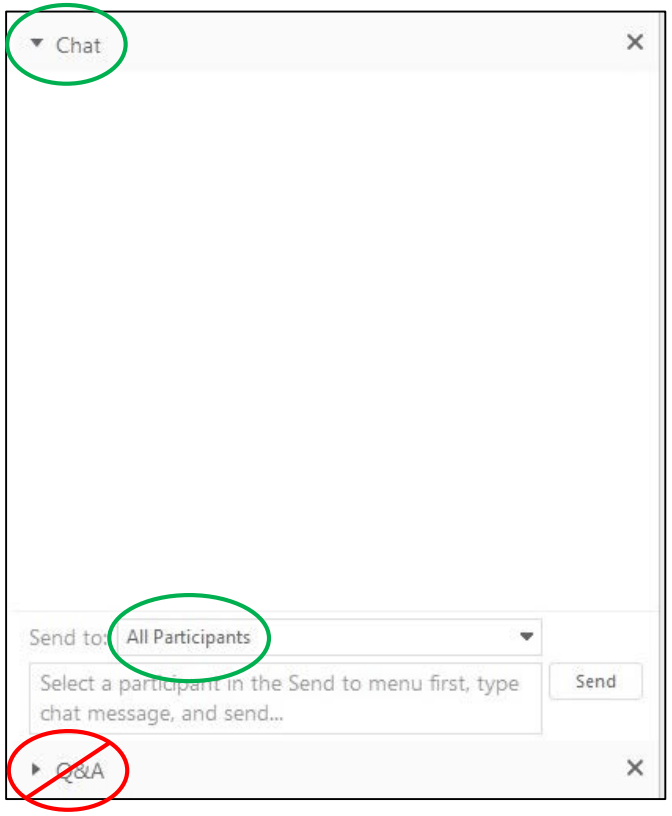

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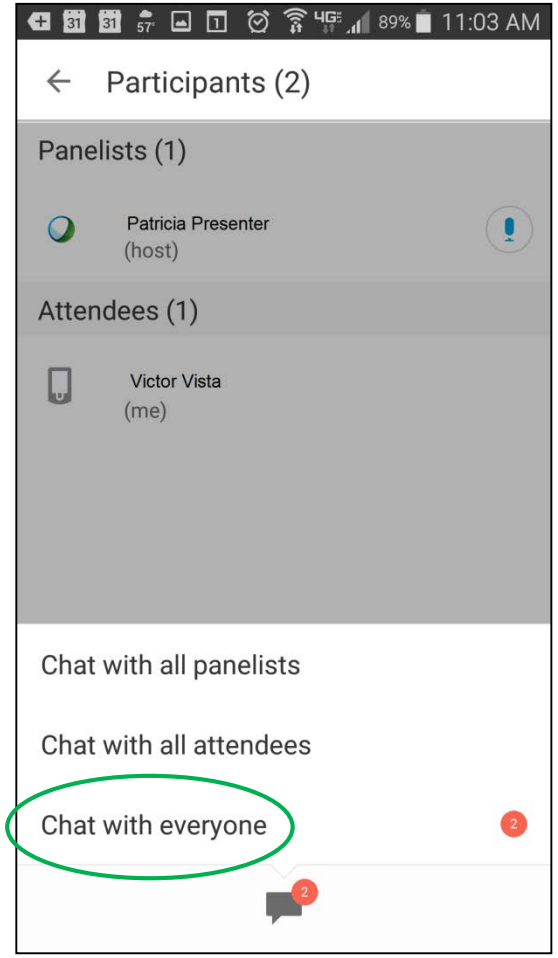

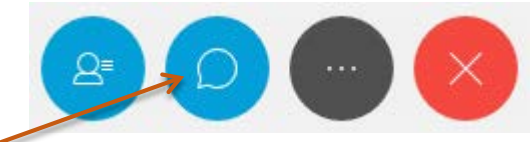

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Gifts vs. Grants

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Gifts

- Most come from **individuals**
- Made in response to an **"ask"**
- Also known as a **donation** or contribution

Grants

- Most come from **foundations**
- Made in response to a **proposal**
- Also known as a **contract** or agreement

Gifts vs. Grants continued

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Gifts

- Donor information is owned by the nonprofit and is **not public** information
- Donor gets at least a **thank you** letter with information on the **tax benefits** of the donation

Grants

- Information on funding organizations is **public** information
- Binding **legal contract** with instructions on how to report progress and how to account for every single penny

Examples of good language

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Gift

The greatest casualty of war is being forgotten.

Grant

Soldiers returning from war face problems ranging from government bureaucracy in receiving health benefits, to family and friends who do not have the proper tools to recognize or deal with depressive or addictive behaviors.

What Makes Grant Reviewers Smile

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- The absence of fundraising language - concise, business-like writing
- Well-structured proposals
- Realistic programming using the available funding
- Proposals showing a strong understanding of the problem to be solved

Grant Research

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- Locating grant funders
  - Foundationcenter.org – online database, tutorials, articles, tools
  - Grantspace.org – Foundation Center's learning community
  - Guidestar.org – Information about non-profits including 990s
  - GrantsAlert.com – education grants
  - Grants.gov – federal grants
- Find funders whose philanthropic goals <u>match</u> the focus of your project.

Guest Speaker

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Tiara Campbell

Randstad Grants Associate
Vanguard Charitable

AmeriCorps VISTA, 2016-2017

When Searching For Grants

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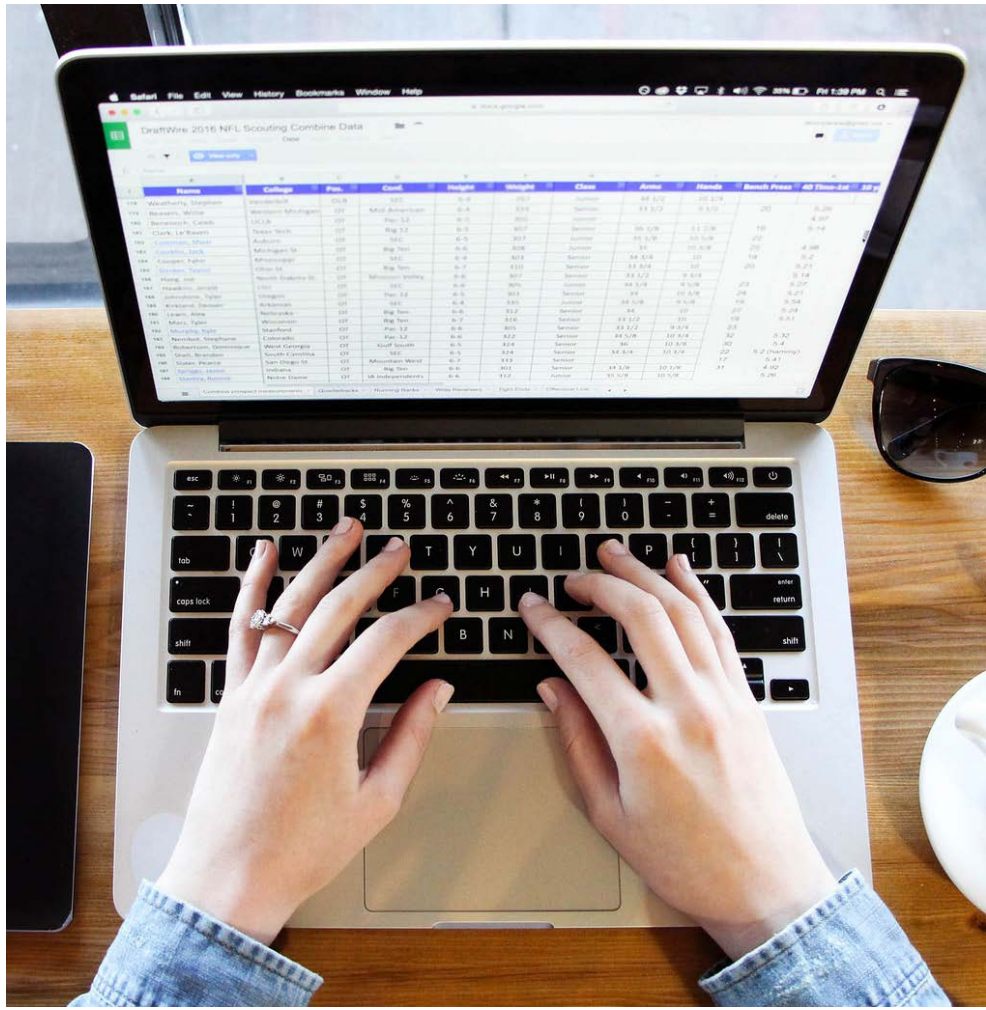
- Start searching as soon as you are able, record potential opportunities, keep for the next VISTA.
- Keep a copy of your grant applications and files for reference.



When Writing Grants

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Be clear on the who, what, when, where, and why

- **Who** are you asking for funding?
- **What** do you want them to fund you to do?
- **When** is the project occurring?
- **Where** is the project occurring?
- **Why** do you want to do this project and why are you asking this particular funder?

Project C.R.O.A.K.

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- Creeks, Rivers, Oceans and Kids
- Discovery of a funder interested in environmental education
- Process began with a letter of inquiry (LOI), that aligned the project goals with the funder's philanthropic goals

The Application Process

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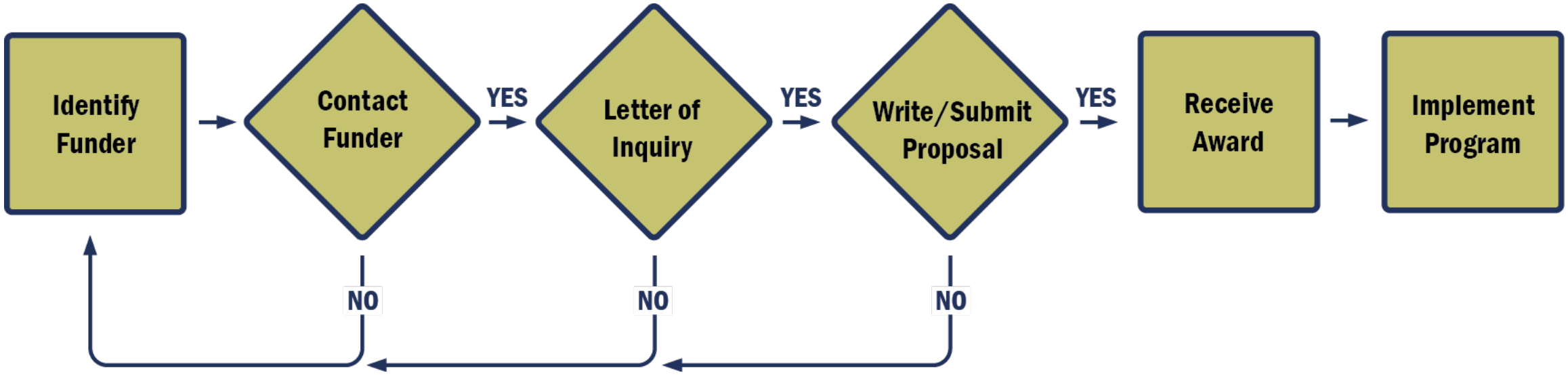

Letter of Inquiry (LOI)

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Expected

- Letter that requests to write a full proposal.
- The first sentence states:
  - Who we are and what we do.
  - What we want.
  - What we want it for.
- The rest supports all of that and touches on measurable objectives.

Exceptional

- Can be read and completely understood in seconds.
- Primary focus is on the measurable objectives (funder's ROI).
- Don't beg or plead for money. This is a business partnership.

Chat Question

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What do you do if the funder simply says, "Write a Proposal?"

a. Submit a Letter of Inquiry

b. Write a narrative about your project

c. Submit a standard proposal format

d. Send an email to the funder and ask what they want

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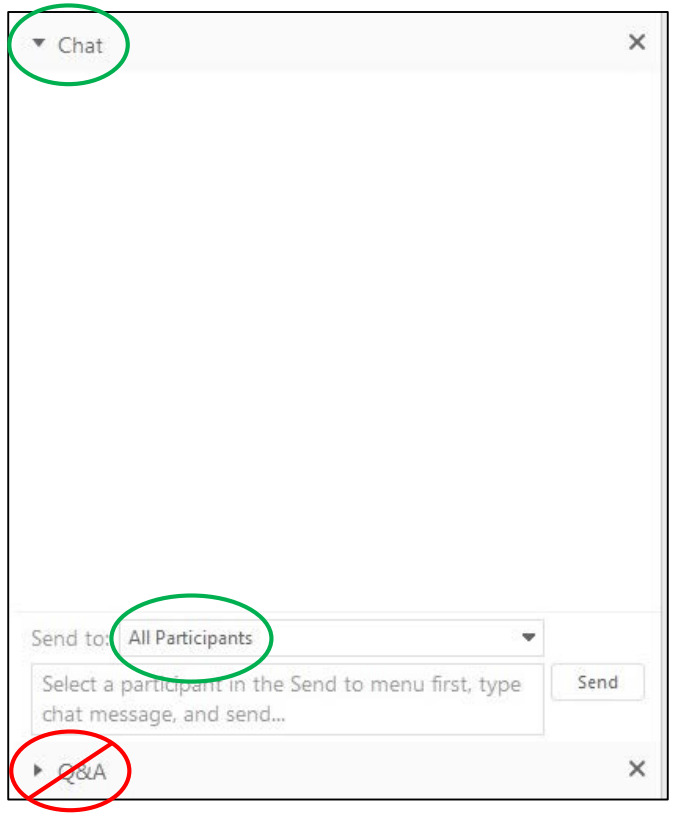

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A Standard 10-page Proposal

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- Executive Summary [1 page]
- Introduction [1 page]
- Goal Statement and Objectives [½ page]
- Needs Statement [1 ½ pages]
- Methods [3 pages]
- Evaluation [1 page]
- Existing and Future Funding [½ page]
- Budget and Budget Narrative [1 ½ pages]

Executive Summary [1 page]

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Expected

- Good summary of proposal
- Gives more info than LOI on measurable objectives and methodology
- Includes the funding amount and what it will be used for

*The first thing read by a grant reviewer, and often the **only** thing read for the first round.*

Exceptional

- Flows seamlessly from
  - first informative paragraph to
  - a brief need statement (para. 2) to
  - objectives and methodology (para. 3-4), to
  - the summary paragraph
- Comprehensive, yet compact, shows the program fits the funder's goals

You should be able to reconstruct your proposal using the Executive Summary.

Introduction [1 page]

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Expected

- Introduce your org. in relevant terms
- Establish credibility
- Illuminate your accomplishments.
- Provide mission and vision statements.

Exceptional

- Show how your project goals align with the funder's
- Use demographic or socioeconomic data
- Expand on mission and vision statements to bring them to life
- If new to the grant game, be honest, highlight staff capabilities and creative solutions

Goal Statement/Object. [½ page]

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Goal

The overall desired result.

Objectives

Smaller-scale outcomes that lead to the goal.

Goal Statement/Object. [½ page]

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Expected

- Goal is ambitious, but achievable
- SMART objectives lead to your goal
- Objectives tell you the degree to which you are successful.

Exceptional

- Has 3-5 strong objectives.
- Objective describes *who* is going to do *what*, *when* they are going to do it, and *how* it will be measured.
- Exceptional objectives do a good job of measuring.
- Objectives are based on good common sense are exceptional.

Activity: Goal and Objectives

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The goal of the SIGNALS Project is to address the lack of science curriculum in middle schools for at-risk girls.

1st Objective:

"Increase class offerings in biology, chemistry, and physics by 10% each year, over a 3-year period."

What is good about this or what could improve it?

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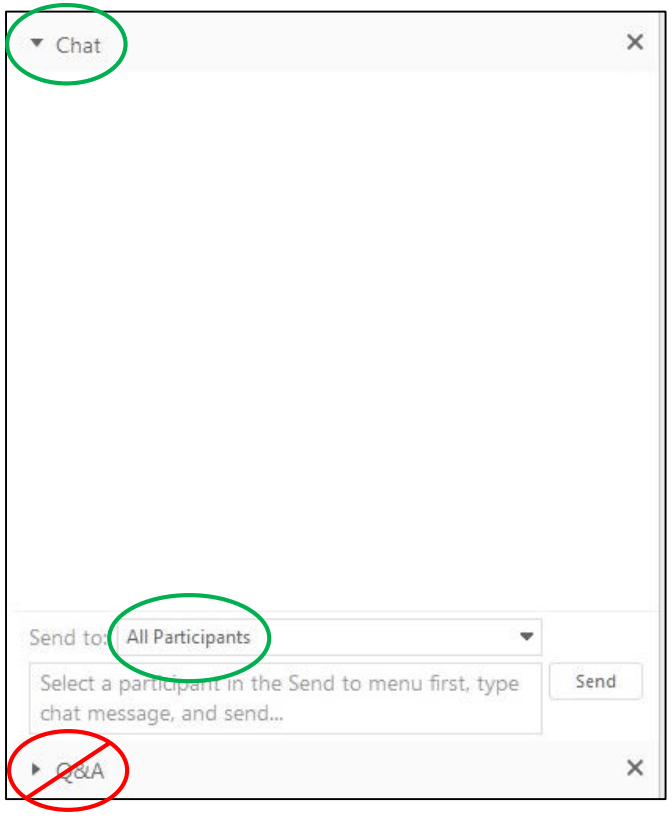

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Activity: Goal and Objectives

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The goal of the SIGNALS Project is to address the lack of science curriculum in middle schools for at-risk girls.

2nd Objective:

"Instill a love of science among middle school girls."

What is good about this or what could improve it?

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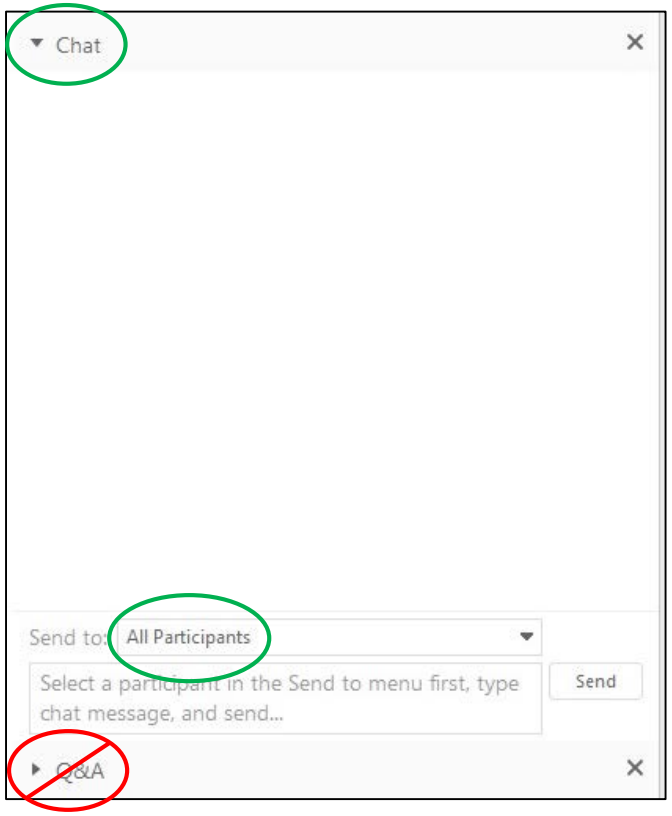

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Needs Statement [1 ½ pages]

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Expected

- Is realistic – doesn't try to solve the world's problems.
- Makes funder confident you understand the problem.
- Shows importance, but doesn't convey unsolvable gloom and doom.

Exceptional

- Quotes valid and up-to-date research.
- Shows the problem on a wide scale all the way to local scale (inverted triangle)
- Objectives are directly related to the need.
- Has a mix of research.
- Reviewer sees you as the go to organization.

Chat Activity: Needs Statement

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In his speech to the United Nations in 2015, President Obama stated that “childhood hunger is our nation’s number one priority.” Following that declaration, the state of Indiana committed $50 million toward programs fighting childhood obesity, and mandated that soda machines be removed from all elementary and middle school cafeterias. In the Indianapolis Public School systems, soda machines were removed from all schools and student blood pressure was monitored throughout the 2015-2016 school year. The result was a lowering of blood pressure for over 55% of the student body.

Methods [3 pages]

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Expected

- Complete roadmap of your program
- Methods leads to the completion of objectives
- Includes day-to-day responsibilities; personnel, timelines, facilities, etc

Exceptional

- Show how achieve objectives economically.
- Sufficient division of labor – including internal, external and new staff
- Timelines linked to milestones; periodic reviews built in to make project adjustments.

Evaluation [1 page]

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Expected

- Valid methods are used to evaluate progress
- Ties into the Needs Statement and objectives to further understand the problem.
- Includes results dissemination plan.

Exceptional

- Evaluation is valid AND creative and designed by someone with proper expertise.
- Includes how the project will be monitored, and how/what people will learn through implementation.
- Say how results will be shared; lists targeted publications

Future and Existing Funding [½ page]

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Expected

- Lists others sources of funding
- Lists how you'll seek additional funding
- Shows you understand the importance of sustainability

Exceptional

- Shows investment by others & your organization
- Includes in-kind contributions
- Discusses developed relationships, and potential funding routes with gov., industry leaders, philanthropists, large corps, etc.
- Realistic, creative and focused plan for sustainability

Budget and Budget Narrative [1 ½ pages]

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Expected

- Accurately reflects your project activity costs
- Avoids forbidden costs and large amounts under vague categories
- Separates personnel from non-personnel costs

Exceptional

- Shows both what the funder and you/others will provide
- It's easy for non-financial people to read
- Provides fuller picture of the budget with revenue and expenses
- Includes periodic examination of variances between budget/actual expenses

Sample Budget Spreadsheet

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Heritage Corps Pilot Budget for 1 Crew Leader and 4 Members for 5 weeks

	Equipment				
12	Chainsaw	1	EA	$350.00	$350.00
13	Chainsaw accessories	1	EA	$90.00	$90.00
14	Flat shovels	3	EA	$30.00	$90.00
15	Regular shovels	5	EA	$30.00	$150.00
16	Leaf rakes	3	EA	$30.00	$90.00
17	Garden rakes	5	EA	$30.00	$150.00
18	Loppers/Garden shears	5	EA	$30.00	$150.00
19	Gloves	12	Pair	$2.00	$24.00
21	Safety glasses	10	EA	$10.00	$100.00
22	Manual post hole diggers	4	EA	$50.00	$200.00
23	Wheelbarrows	3	EA	$90.00	$270.00
24	String Trimmers and accessories	2	EA	$100.00	$200.00
25	Household toolkit	1	EA	$110.00	$110.00
26				**Subtotal**	**$1,974.00**
	Contingencies				
27	Equipment	10.00%	%	$1,974.00	$197.40
28				**Total**	**$2,171.40**

- Include all the materials you may need for your project
- Don’t put all your eggs (budget) in one basket (grant)

When a grant is not funded…

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- Look for any gaps, unclear explanations, disconnects
- Evaluate if your project is a match for the funder
- Evaluate the project (is it doable, necessary, impactful, sustainable)
- Take notes, try again next time

When a grant is not funded…

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- Look for any gaps, unclear explanations, disconnects
- Evaluate if your project is a match for the funder
- Evaluate the project (is it doable, necessary, impactful, sustainable)
- Take notes, try again next time
- Thank the funder for the opportunity, ask for feedback
- Ask if you may resubmit proposal with changes
- Never complain about not being funded
- Learn from the experience

If you are funded…

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- Read grant agreements carefully before signing. Make sure they reflect your proposal.
- Re-negotiate the terms, if necessary.
- Come to agreement and determine when/how your funds arrive.

Grant and Proposal Resources

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More Resources…

- Strategizing Your Funding Search (Recorded VISTA Webinar)
- Grantsmanship Center - https://www.tgci.com/
- The Complete Book of Grant Writing by Nancy Burke Smith & E. Gabriel Works
- Shaping Outcomes: http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/
- Fundraising and Grants courses at Nonprofit Ready (https://www.nonprofitready.org/course-categories?tid=50)

Professional Networks:

- American Grant Writers Association
- Association for Fund Raising Professionals
- Local Grant Writers Networks

Next Steps

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1. Write the introductory paragraph for an LOI, using grant language.
2. Identify data sources you can use for a Statement of Need.
3. Draft a Goal Statement and several objectives for the project you want to get funded.

Evaluation

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- Please take a few moments to share your feedback through the quick poll on the right side of the screen.
- How can we improve these sessions? What topics should we include in future webinars?
- Thank you very much for your time and participation!

Questions?

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- To ask a question verbally, call in using the number on this slide and press *1

- To ask a question electronically, use the Q&A feature located in the bottom right corner of the screen. Please ask “All Panelists”

Thank You for Your Participation!

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Our next webinars:

Maximizing Your VISTA Healthcare Benefit – Sept 6
Opioid Use and Misuse, Trends and Community Impacts – Sept 10

2:00pm Eastern

Further questions? Contact us:
VISTATraining@cns.gov

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