

**NC Hunger Corps  
AmeriCorps VISTA Project  
Request for Proposals 2021-2022**

**A COMPLETE AND SUBMITTED PROPOSAL SHALL INCLUDE:**

- [Submitted Online Proposal Form](#)
- Host Site Letter of Support (example on page 11)
- Community Partner Letter of Support (if applicable)
- Host Site Supervisor Resume
- Up to 3 pages of additional supporting document (optional)

**ABOUT THE NC HUNGER CORPS**

The NC Hunger Corps supports programs and organizations that address food access and healthy eating among low-income children, families, individuals, and college campus communities (students, staff, faculty) while developing opportunities for higher education civic and community engagement. Food insecurity among low-income children and families in North Carolina is well-documented. Approximately 170,200 people in our state receive emergency food assistance weekly while almost a third of NC food pantries have turned people away for lack of available food.

Hunger among low-income children and families in North Carolina is well-documented. According to Feeding America, 1 in 7 people in North Carolina struggle with hunger and 1 in 5 children struggle with hunger. According to the Budget & Tax Center's "Hunger in the Tar Heel" report (October 2016), North Carolina has the 8th highest rate of food insecurity in the nation. Approximately 170,200 people in our state receive emergency food assistance weekly while almost a third of NC food pantries have turned people away for lack of available food. Of families served by food banks, 42% have had to choose between buying food and heating their home, and 35% have had to choose between paying for food or their rent.

Hunger is also a prevalent issue among college students. In an April 2018 report from the University of Wisconsin's HOPE Lab, "Still Hungry and Homeless in College," researchers found that 42 percent of community college students said they were food-insecure within the last 30 days of taking the survey, and just under one-third said they skipped a meal within the last 30 days because they did not have enough money.

This data grew when the Hope Center conducted the “#RealCollege Survey” in the fall of 2018 at 123 two and four-year institutions across the United States. Results from that survey revealed that 45% of the 86,000 student respondents were food insecure in the prior 30 days while 56% of student respondents were housing insecure in the previous year, an issue intersecting and contributing with food security. This survey data is outlined in the April 2019 report, “College and University Basic Needs Insecurity: A National #RealCollege Survey Report.”



In 2013, a study conducted by a UNC Pembroke sociology class found that 45.5% of the students in the study were experiencing "very low food security" in which they reported multiple indicators of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake. In April 2014, the Washington Post reported that college administrators are finding hunger on campus, especially at schools enrolling many low-income and first-generation students. A January 2014 study of Western Oregon University students put this number at 59%.

NC Hunger Corps VISTAs may support on-campus or off-campus food security programs, including programs that target low-income and/or disadvantaged college students and staff. These programs may include campus or community gardens, food recovery efforts modeled on the Campus Kitchen Project or the Food Recovery Network, campus-based or community-based food pantries/banks, and fresh produce distribution (mobile markets). Hunger Corps members may also work to raise awareness about nutrition and healthy eating.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Colleges and universities in the North Carolina Campus Compact network or community-based, 501c(3) non-profit organizations (with a member college/university partner) may apply to host an NC Hunger Corps member for the 2021-2022 project year, with expectation for renewed placement in subsequent project years.

## **ABOUT NC CAMPUS COMPACT & AMERICORPS VISTA**

The NC Hunger Corps is a project of [North Carolina Campus Compact](#), a collaborative network of colleges and universities committed to educating students for civic and social responsibility, partnering with communities for positive change, and strengthening democracy. The NC Campus Compact state office fosters connections between campuses, shares best practice information and resources, recognizes outstanding work, and champions civic and community engagement in higher education.

Corps members will be part of [AmeriCorps VISTA](#), a national service program sponsored by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) members serve full-time for one-year to build the capacity of non-profit, governmental, and educational organizations and programs designed to lift individuals and communities out of poverty.

## **PROJECT AND PROPOSAL GUIDANCE**

### **PROJECT GOALS**

NC Hunger Corps members will work with host and partner sites to accomplish these project goals:

1. Increase human and financial resources to build capacity of food security and healthy eating programs that serve low-income individuals, families, and communities.



2. Increase opportunities for college and university students, faculty, and staff to engage with and support local programs and partners that address hunger.

## **BECOMING A “HOST SITE”**

The following types of organizations may apply to become an NC Hunger Corps host site:

1. College or university that:

- Operates or seeks to develop a campus-based food security or healthy eating program serving low-income individuals, including students or community members.
- Supports or seeks to support a community-based food security or healthy eating program serving low-income individuals or communities.
- is a current member of NC Campus Compact.

2. 501c(3) non-profit or governmental organization that:

- Operates or seeks to operate a community-based food security or healthy eating program serving low-income people or communities.
- **Applies in partnership** with a college or university member of NC Campus Compact.

## **ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP APPROACH**

A VISTA's time and effort may be directed to building the capacity of a community-based food access/food security organization, in which case both the campus and community partner will play a role in directing, supporting, and evaluating the project. One partner will be designated as the Host Site (or the project lead) and one will be designated as the Partner Site.

The organizations should assign a staff member to serve as the Corps member's **supervisor** (“host site”) or **adviser** (“partner site”), and both organizations may collaborate in clarifying the Corps member's work plan and activities.

The host site should complete and submit the proposal, in collaboration with the partner site. **Both** organizations should also submit a letter of support. A sample support letter is provided at the end of this packet.

## **HOST SITE EXPECTATIONS**

### **How do host sites benefit from hosting an NC Hunger Corps member?**

- Select and supervise a full-time VISTA volunteer to build organization and program capacity during a 1-year, full-time term of service, with option to renew placement
- Increase resources to address local food access and security
- Increase community awareness of food security programs/issues and national service programs.
- Increase opportunities for community engagement of college students, faculty, and staff
- Build or strengthen campus-community partnerships



## What commitments do host sites make?

- **For four-year institutions and community organizations, an administrative fee of \$5,000 per Corps member to NC Campus Compact.** The administrative fee, which is paid to North Carolina Campus Compact, goes to cover program costs including cost share payments required by AmeriCorps VISTA.
- **For two-year institutions, an administrative fee of \$3,000 per Corps member to NC Campus Compact.** The administrative fee, which is paid to North Carolina Campus Compact, goes to cover program costs including cost share payments required by AmeriCorps VISTA.
- **Provide housing support of \$200 - \$400 per month**, or in-kind housing support, such as on-campus housing. Per CNCS guidelines, this support may not be paid to the member directly. **Additional info below.**
- **Reimburse member for “service-related travel”** (not commuting) required by host site, according to host site’s travel reimbursement policy. Alternatively, the host site may provide the VISTA member a pass to utilize public transportation where available.
- Provide the VISTA with office space, computer, phone access, email account, and office supplies.
- Participate in the recruitment and selection of Corps member candidates.
- Develop the VISTA member VAD work plan and set performance goals.
- Review, sign and abide by terms of the Memorandum of Agreement.
- Designate a **supervisor** to coach, advise, and oversee the VISTA member. The supervisor must:
  - **attend supervisor orientation** prior to service term and participate in supervisor calls
  - conduct weekly supervision meetings with the VISTA
  - monitor the VISTAs work hours, leave, and progress reports
  - conduct 3 performance evaluations during the service year
  - participate in a site visit at least once per year

**PLEASE NOTE:** It is possible for a host site to request the **placement of more than one member**. Placement of multiple members depends on the nature and extent of the projects planned by the site and on the availability of positions in our cohort. Placement of a second member does not require a separate application, but the role/activities of each member should be clarified in the relevant application narratives. The site must pay two administrative fees and prepare two member VADs.

## VISTA MEMBER HOUSING SUPPORT

NC Campus Compact strongly encourages host sites to provide housing support to the VISTA member. The Compact recommends support in the range of \$200-\$400/month depending on local housing costs. If this support does not cover the entire monthly rent, the VISTA must use a



portion of their living allowance to make up the difference. Some campuses choose to provide on-campus housing, either at no-cost to the member or at a subsidized rate, with the VISTA member paying the difference. More info on VISTA housing support is provided in the [VISTA Member Handbook](#):

“One of the three fundamental assumptions of AmeriCorps VISTA is that the skills and energies of AmeriCorps VISTA members are used most effectively when they live and work with the low-income people they are serving. In keeping with this philosophy, members are expected to secure housing using their living allowance (and any additional provided support), which is provided to cover the basic costs of food, housing, and utilities. Members should look for housing within the community to which they are assigned. Because members' living allowances are limited, they are allowed to accept offers of free or low-cost housing made by community members, local organizations, educational institutions, or sponsoring organizations.

Some examples of housing that VISTA members may accept include:

- A community resident offers unused free housing space to the member because he or she is proud to have an AmeriCorps VISTA member in the community.
- A local business wants to offer a vacant apartment over the shop area.
- A national housing company offers reduced-rate housing for volunteers who are serving in a given community and the member meets the eligibility requirements.
- A local, state, or federal government agency provides free or low-cost housing in areas with limited housing opportunities.
- A sponsoring organization rents housing space on the member's behalf.
- A sponsoring organization allows the member to occupy a portion of existing space the sponsor already owns or rents.

Under no circumstances may the VISTA member accept money directly from a host site to supplement their living allowance or pay for rent or mortgage. All housing support must be paid directly to the landlord, leasing agent, or mortgage holder.

Accepting free or reduced-cost housing may increase the amount of the member's reportable income for tax purposes. If the member receives housing assistance they may receive a 1099 form to aid them in reporting this on their tax return.

Members are also fully responsible for any legal or financial issues with their landlord (e.g., the project closes and you owe money on your lease).” (Source: [VISTA Member Handbook, Chapter 14](#))

## **ADMINISTRATIVE FEE SCHEDULE AND REFUND POLICY**

To cover program costs, NC Campus Compact charges host site organizations an administrative fee. The 2021-2022 fee is \$5,000 (four-year institutions and community organizations) and \$3,000 (two-year institutions) and the fee schedule is:

- \$500.00 – First payment due with signed Memorandum of Agreement by April 5, 2021.
- \$4,500.00 or \$2,500.00 – Balance due by July 5, 2021.



**The initial \$500 installment is non-refundable and is required before NC Campus Compact will begin screening potential VISTA candidates for a host site.**

NC Hunger Corps members serve for 12 months, and the federal VISTA program incentivizes this commitment by making the End-of-Service benefits (e.g. education award) contingent on completing a full term. Still, a member may choose to exit the program early. To account for these situations, NC Campus Compact will follow this policy when members exit early *and are not replaced*:

Four-Year Institutions and Community Organizations:

- If the site is unable to recruit a member, \$4,500 will be refunded.
- If time served is greater than 1 week, but  $\leq 3$  months, site will be refunded  $\frac{3}{4}$  of \$4,500.00 = \$3,375.00
- If time served is greater than 3 months, but  $\leq 6$  months, site will be refunded  $\frac{1}{2}$  of \$4,500.00 = \$2,250.00
- If time served is greater than 6 months, but  $\leq 9$  months, site will be refunded  $\frac{1}{4}$  of \$4,500.00 = \$1,125.00
- If time served is 9 months or greater, no portion of the fee will be refunded.

Two-Year Institutions:

- If the site is unable to recruit a member, \$2,500 will be refunded.
- If time served is greater than 1 week, but  $\leq 3$  months, site will be refunded  $\frac{3}{4}$  of \$2500 = \$1,875.00
- If time served is greater than 3 months, but  $\leq 6$  months, site will be refunded  $\frac{1}{2}$  of \$2500 = \$1,250.00
- If time served is greater than 6 months, but  $\leq 9$  months, site will be refunded  $\frac{1}{4}$  of \$2500 = \$625.00
- If time served is 9 months or greater, no portion of the fee will be refunded.

## THE VAD AND CORPS MEMBER ACTIVITIES

The service of VISTA members is guided by the VAD – the VISTA Assignment Description. The VAD is a work plan that provides a broad outline of VISTA member’s objectives and associated activities. The VAD should break down the goals identified in your proposal into a realistic set of activities.

According to federal guidelines, AmeriCorps VISTA members, including NC Hunger Corps members, generally may NOT provide **direct** service. This means our Corps members cannot – as a general rule – work directly with service “beneficiaries” or clients, including providing one-on-one assistance, distributing food, or providing similar services.



Instead, Corps member activities should build organization or program capacity through activities related to process improvement, program development, needs assessment, volunteer recruitment and training, resource development and fundraising.

**CAPACITY-BUILDING vs. DIRECT SERVICE**

Direct Service provides immediate, hands-on solutions to help people in need. These can include activities like tutoring, performing manual labor, teaching, doing clerical work, or counseling. Below are examples of tasks performed by two different AmeriCorps programs. These two task lists illustrate the difference between a capacity-building AmeriCorps VISTA position and a direct service AmeriCorps State position.

<p>SHARECorps AmeriCorps VISTA members work on capacity-building initiatives that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruiting and training new community trainers who will train benefits counselors across the state</li> <li>• Creating educational materials</li> <li>• Writing grants and soliciting in-kind donations</li> <li>• Recruiting and coordinating volunteers for multiple projects, including community gardens, donation bins, and food banks</li> </ul>	<p>HarvestCorps--AmeriCorps State members work on direct service activities that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completing Benefit Bank applications for program participants</li> <li>• Assisting with free electronic tax filing</li> <li>• Delivering food to clients through childhood anti-hunger initiatives such as the Backpack program</li> <li>• Offering evening meals, tutoring, and enrichment activities for the Kid's Cafe program</li> </ul>
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According to VISTA program guidance, VISTA members may perform direct service in certain circumstances: “VISTAs focus on capacity-building activities. On occasion, they may perform limited direct service activities which are deemed a necessary component to completion of the VISTA’s overall capacity-building assignment; these activities may be written into the VISTA Assignment Description (VAD) if known at the beginning of the VISTA’s term of service but is not a requirement. VISTAs may also participate in direct service activities as part of term-limited special initiatives such as National Days of Service.” .

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

When designing your VISTA project, you must consider which performance measures will be used to track progress. The AmeriCorps VISTA program defines a number of performance measures which may be applied to your project. Members will report their progress monthly, with support from campus and community partners.

**NC HUNGER CORPS MEMBER TERMS & CONDITIONS**

All VISTA members, including NC Hunger Corps members, commit to 1 year (12 months) of full-time service at a host site. VISTAs keep the regular work hours of the host site but may be



called on to work evenings and weekends as the project demands. VISTAs typically serve a 40-hour week, but must serve a **minimum** of 35 hours per week.

To serve in the NC Hunger Corps program, candidates must be a U.S. Citizen or lawful permanent resident and should have at least a two-year college degree. Candidates may be recruited from the local community by host and partner sites, by NC Campus Compact through state networks, and from applicants to the position via the national AmeriCorps.gov online portal.

All VISTAs are part of the AmeriCorps National Service initiative and receive the following benefits provided:

- **Living allowance** of \$36.71/day, paid in bi-weekly installments of \$513.94 – Elon University, as NC Campus Compact’s fiscal agent, manages the disbursement of the living allowance.
- Upon completing service, **Segal Education Award** of \$6,345.00 or **end of service stipend** of \$1,800.
- **Paid sick leave** (10 days) and **personal leave** (10 days), **plus holidays observed by the host site.**
- **Health care benefits** provided by AmeriCorps
- **Loan deferment/forbearance** while enrolled in the program (depending on lender)
- **Relocation bonus** if moving more than 50 miles to serve
- **Professional training opportunities**

Corps members may also receive housing assistance from the host or partner site, will have access to training opportunities offered by NC Campus Compact, and become part of a network of more than 200 NC Campus Compact VISTA alums.

While serving as a VISTA, members **MAY NOT**:

- be a full-time student (they may take classes with supervisor and NC Campus Compact permission)
- hold outside employment that interferes with VISTA duties. They may pursue part-time employment **with supervisor and NC Campus Compact permission**, as long as the 2<sup>nd</sup> job is not with the host or partner site.
- provide direct service (except in VERY limited capacities)
- provide services that would displace or supplant paid staff, contractors, or existing volunteers
- engage in restricted political activities, including non-partisan voter registration, lobbying, labor organizing, and political fundraising
- provide religious instruction or conduct worship as part of their VISTA duties
- receive any direct payments from host site or partner, or than permitted travel reimbursement
- perform duties that fall outside the scope of the VISTA work plan
- provide general support for “service-learning programs.” VISTA guidance states:



The use of service-learning as a pedagogy for improving the success of economically disadvantaged students is appropriate. However, service-learning as a single focus program area is not permissible. The placement of VISTAs at colleges and universities to only serve their [general] student populations or to build the capacity of the college or university is not appropriate.

All VISTA projects working in this area, including service-learning projects, must: (1) focus on building the capacity of low-income communities, schools, and organizations; and (2) support them to develop sustainable connections to the resources available at institutions of higher education.

[More information about VISTA Key Terms and Conditions.](#)

## **PROPOSAL SELECTION**

Proposal selection is competitive, based on alignment with NC Hunger Corps project goals and evidence of host site commitment. Applicants must complete all sections and submit all documents for consideration. Please note: **submitting an application does not guarantee a VISTA member placement.**

NC Campus Compact may identify alternative host sites if appropriate.

Selected sites will be required to attend trainings intended to prepare host sites to write the VISTA member work plan and to develop a site-specific orientation and training plan to guide onboarding at the host/partner site. Selected sites will also sign a Memorandum of Agreement outlining terms and conditions of the member placement and a Housing and Other Support Agreement outlining the support host site will provide to the VISTA throughout the service year.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Placement of Corps members is contingent on NC Campus Compact's successful grant application, on availability of federal funds, and on timely recruitment and selection of an eligible Corps member.

## **SITE / MEMBER SELECTION AND PLACEMENT TIMELINE**

- Host site application released – January 11, 2021
- Host site application & supporting materials due – February 12, 2021 (for best consideration) or on a rolling basis after initial due date.
- Host sites announced – March 2021
- VISTA Recruitment Begins – March 15, 2021
- Memorandum of Agreement and \$500 initial installment due – April 5, 2021
- Priority Deadline for VISTA candidates to apply – May 1, 2021
- (Final) date for VISTA candidate selection – June 2021
- \$4,500.00 or \$2,500.00 admin fee balance due – July 5, 2021
- Host Site Supervisor Orientation – June 2021 (date to be announced)
- VISTA Orientation at Elon University or virtual – July 15-16, 2021



- First day of VISTA service on site – July 19, 2021

The above are expected dates. Actual dates may vary slightly.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Any institution or organization needing technical assistance or additional support with the host site application process should contact Erin Odoyo, VISTA Program Coordinator at [eodoyo@elon.edu](mailto:eodoyo@elon.edu).

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- Host Site Supervisor Resume
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SAMPLE HOST / PARTNER SITE LETTER – TO BE SUBMITTED BY DIRECTOR OR  
HIGHER-LEVEL REPRESENTATIVE WITH AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO  
AGREEMENTS ON BEHALF OF ORGANIZATION.



(Your campus or organization letterhead here)

Month Day, 2021

Leslie Garvin, Executive Director  
North Carolina Campus Compact  
2257 Campus Box  
Elon, NC 27244

Dear Ms. Garvin,

I am writing to express my full support for the NC Hunger Corps Project Proposal. We are excited by this opportunity to work with HOST/PARTNER SITE to support the work of an AmeriCorps VISTA member who will assist us in strengthening food security programs in our community and creating more opportunities for college students, faculty, and staff to engage in community-based service and learning.

**This project is important to HOST/PARTNER SITE because ... .**

**Through our organization's participation in the NC Hunger Corps project, HOST/PARTNER SITE expects to accomplish ... .**

Sincerely,

Jane Doe  
Vice Chancellor for Community Engagement  
State University

