**Guidelines for VISTA letter of intent for NCNMEDD VISTA Subsites**

1. Address your letter to

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1. Send it via email to Felicity at [felicityf@ncnmedd.com](mailto:felicityf@ncnmedd.com). Call with questions 505-356-9098.
2. VISTA focus area or areas. VISTA seeks projects in these areas: Economic Opportunity, Healthy Futures, Education. More information below on VISTA’s priority focus areas for this year. Projects outside of these focus areas **will be** considered if they match NCNMEDD’s mission of community and economic development.
3. Your letter of intent should include:

* Project Title
* Project Goal Statement
* Objectives of the project (at least three)
* Activities that the member will do (at least three)

1. Three-year term: Explain how the project will build for the three-year term, moving towards completion and sustainability.
2. Supervision: Identify who the VISTA supervisor will be.
3. Recruitment: Discuss how you will recruit for the position.
4. Orientation: Give a brief description of how you will conduct on-site orientation for the new member.
5. Performance Measures: Identify performance measures for your program:

**Output:  *Number of organizations that will receive capacity building services.***

**Outcome:  *Number of organizations that will increase their efficiency, effectiveness, and/or program reach.***

**Describe a minimum of three service activities that will be completed through your program under these categories:  *Community assessment, financial resources, material development, program development and delivery.***

**This is my example for NCNMEDD:**

Number of organizations that will receive capacity building services: **40**

Number of organizations that will increase their efficiency, effectiveness, or program reach:  **20**

Service activities:

Community assessment:  **Assessment of capital outlay allocations per capita for counties in our service region**

Financial Resources:  **Organizations will be assisted with identifying and applying for funding**

Material Development:  **Newsletter and website will act as a resource for member organizations and others, webinars and trainings will be presented addressing community and economic development**

Program development and delivery:  **NCNMEDD will partner in the development and delivery of the USDA Rural Partners Network effort and in disaster recovery efforts related to the Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon wildfire.**

PROJECT GOAL STATEMENT

State the overall goal of the project (as opposed to the overall goal of the specific member position). The statement provides context for how the project addresses poverty and how the member activities will build capacity. The project goal must:

• Address poverty by member efforts

• Describe who (population) will be served

• Include verbs to describe the member activities

• Define how the member activities will build capacity

• State the specific product(s) or service(s) resulting from member efforts

OBJECTIVES

Articulate what the member will achieve throughout the assignment to reach the project’s goal. Include multiple objectives that link the overall project goal and the member’s activities. Use active verbs.

MEMBER ACTIVITIES

Identify the specific activities the member will carry out to achieve the objectives. Activities that include the desired outcome or deliverable are most informative and effective. Use active verbs and avoid vague statements such as, “will assist with…” Activity statements should be specific enough that someone unfamiliar with the project can understand the expectations of the member.

**More information on VISTA Focus Areas:**

**Economic Opportunity**

AmeriCorps VISTA’s commitment to addressing poverty includes focusing on projects that create or strengthen opportunities for low-income individuals to develop workforce knowledge and skills that will meet the needs of employers. In addition, projects that focus on housing are strongly encouraged to apply. Priority areas include:

* **Housing:** Transitioning individuals into or helping them remain in safe, affordable housing, with a special focus on veterans and those displaced due to COVID-19 related unemployment. VISTA also strongly encourages organizations focused on eviction prevention to apply.
* **Employment/workforce development:** Improving or creating job skills training programs that lead to increased employment.
* **Federal Benefit access:** Increasing awareness of and access to federal benefit programs such as the Child Tax Credit (CTC), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and others.

**Healthy Futures**

The VISTA program will give priority to projects that meet health needs for economically disadvantaged individuals. Priority areas include:

* **Access to health care:** Connecting economically disadvantaged individuals to preventative education and treatment/recovery services regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and opioid crisis, to include mental health services.
* **Food security:** Alleviating hunger and increasing access to nutritious food. Potential partners may include, but are not limited to, individual food banks and pantries, networks of food banks, K-12 schools, community gardens, and after-school programs.

**Education**

The VISTA program will support projects that enhance access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children. AmeriCorps VISTA will target new project development in communities with large concentrations of low-income students (e.g., Title I schools). Priority areas include: ▪

* School readiness and learning loss for economically disadvantaged children.
* K-12 success in student educational and behavioral outcomes in low-achieving schools, including remote learning program development.
* Career and Technical Education (CTE) to help students gain the skills they need to compete for employment.
* College access and success for low-income students.
* STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs as pathways for economicallydisadvantaged students.

**Environmental Stewardship**

The AmeriCorps VISTA program will support anti-poverty initiatives that focus on environmental stewardship and climate change in low-income communities. Priority areas include:

* Renewable energy and energy efficiency
* Building community resilience
* Conservation and habitat preservation