



**AMERICORPS VISTA**  
**PROJECT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**  
**PART VI.1 STANDARD VISTA PROJECT BUDGET**

## **Introduction**

This document, Part VI.1, Standard VISTA Project Budget, provides detailed instructions for completing Budget Section 1 and Budget Section 2 in an already started eGrants application. The following are instructions for completing a budget for a Standard VISTA Project.

NOTE: Applicants to be a VISTA sponsoring organization must complete an application, including a budget. The application is submitted using eGrants, the Corporation's integrated, secure, web-based system for applications. Organizations must have an eGrants account to submit the Application in eGrants. The account is free and can be created online at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/egrants/index.asp>. To complete the application, applicants use the VISTA Project Application Instructions provided by the Corporation State Office. Contact information for State Offices is available at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact/index.asp>.

To complete the budget of the application, applicants use this specific budget guidance to supplement the VISTA Project Application Instructions.

## **About Standard VISTA Projects**

A Standard VISTA project is a project in which:

- The Corporation awards a certain number of VISTA positions to a sponsor and provides benefits directly to the VISTA;
- The sponsor provides local operating and logistics costs;
- No financial resources are requested by the applicant or provided by the Corporation.

While there is no specific match requirement, applicant organizations should indicate the type and level of resources they will provide to support the project. Examples of resources provided by applicant organizations include personnel costs, equipment, and supplies. Please include these resources whether they are financial contributions or in-kind contributions.

## **Application Process**

Log in to eGrants. In eGrants, you will need to:

- Select “View All.” A screen will appear that lists all the applications that are in “Grantee Initial Entry” status that are associated with your account.
- Find your application using the Application ID. It will be listed as “VISTA State” or “VISTA Headquarters” under the Programs column.
- Select “Edit” next to your listing.
- In the Application Info section, choose the correct Program Type by selecting “Standard” from the Program Type dropdown menu. Check the box next to Cost Share as appropriate. Consult your Corporation State Office if you are uncertain.
- Once you select the program type and cost share type and click save, the Budget Sections 1 and 2 will be created and added to the application.

The Budget includes two sections: Budget Section 1 deals with volunteer support expenses incurred by the project.

Budget Section 2 deals with volunteer expenses incurred by members, including living allowance and end-of-service award. Applicants for Standard VISTA Projects are only required to complete **Budget Section II. Volunteer Expenses**. *Budget Section I. Volunteer Support Expenses* may be completed, but is not required.

As you prepare your budget:

- Your detailed budget narrative must provide a full explanation of the proposed costs including their purpose and the basis of your calculation.
- For the Personnel and Travel line items, and wherever else it may increase clarity, present your calculations in the form of an equation, e.g., Two (2) VISTAs traveling @ \$25/trip for 2 trips = \$50; or, Salary \$35,000 @ 30% devoted to program = \$10,500.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).
- Your budget entries should reflect a twelve-month project period.

### **Budget Section 1. Volunteer Support Expenses (Optional)**

You are not required to complete this section; however, you may wish to complete it to document the resources that your organization will provide to support the VISTA project (personnel, equipment, etc.). To do so, enter information into the line items in the “Grantee Share” column. Do not enter any information into the “CNCS Share” or “Member Support” columns.

### **Budget Section 2. Volunteer Expenses (Required)**

You must complete certain budget line items in this section. Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your proposal narrative. You may wish to add line items to document the resources that your organization will provide to support the VISTA project.

**Full Time (Federal)**

*Only complete this line item to apply for non cost share positions. For information about cost share, contact your Corporation State Office.*

Click “add a new budget item” under Full-time (Federal) and complete the requested information to apply for VISTAs or Leaders.

For Description/sites, use a project site name and county (e.g., Crawford County Financial Fitness/Richland County).

For the “# Mbr” field, enter the number of requested members that will serve with that project component.

Select the living allowance rate. Living allowance rates are determined by county. For the current county living allowance rate, contact your Corporation State Office.

Click into the field called “Member Support” and enter the numerical figure from the “Total Amount” field that has been calculated by eGrants.

Note: If you propose to have VISTAs serving at different sites, add a new budget item and provide specific information about that component. For example, VISTAs proposed for three sites in three different counties may receive different living allowance rates, so you would complete a budget item for Site 1, then for Site 2, and then for Site 3. **Also, VISTAs and Leaders receive different living allowance rates and should be entered separately.** Add as many budget items as needed by selecting “add a new budget item.”

**Full Time (non-Federal)**

*Only complete this line item to apply for cost share positions. For information about cost share, contact your Corporation State Office.*

Click “add a new budget item” under Full-time (non-Federal) and complete the requested information to apply for cost share VISTAs or Leaders.

For Description/sites, use a project site name and issue area (e.g., Crawford County Financial Fitness/Asset Building).

For the “# Mbr” field, enter the number of requested cost share members that will serve with that project component.

Select the living allowance rate. Living allowance rates are determined by county. For the current county living allowance rate, contact your Corporation State Office.

Click into the field called “Grantee Share” and enter the numerical figure from the “Total Amount” field that has been calculated by eGrants.

Note: If you propose to have VISTAs serving in different project components at different sites, add a new budget item and provide specific information about that component. For example, VISTAs proposed for three sites in three different counties may receive different living allowance rates, so you would complete a budget item for Site 1, then for Site 2, and then for Site 3. Also,

VISTAs and Leaders receive different living allowance rates and should be entered separately. Add as many budget items as needed by selecting “add a new budget item.”

**Summer Associate (Federal) and Summer Associate (non-Federal)**

*Only existing sponsors may participate in the Summer Associate program. For information about the Summer Associate program, contact your Corporation State Office.*

**Education and End of Service Awards**

VISTAs have a choice between two end-of-service options, an education award and a cash stipend, both of which are provided after a successful completion of service. Nationally, about 80 percent of members choose the education award; 20 percent choose the cash stipend. Your budget plan may reflect that ratio or your organization’s best estimate.

Enter your estimates about how many Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards and End of Service Stipends the members on your project will select. If you applied for VISTA Leaders, enter estimates for VISTA Leader stipends under the “End of Service Stipend – Leader” line item.

**Health coverage**

Enter the total number of requested VISTAs and VISTA Leaders.

Click into the field called “Member Support” and enter the numerical figure from the “Total Amount” field that has been calculated by eGrants.

**FICA**

FICA (Federal Insurance Compensation Act) applies only to members that elect the cash stipend. Enter information about the cash stipends to calculate FICA totals.

To obtain the Stipend Amount, add the amounts of “End of Service Stipend-Regular” plus “End of Service Stipend–Leader.” Refer to the Education and End of Service Awards section and the “Total Amount” column for these figures.

Click into the field called “Member Support” and enter the numerical figure from the “Total Amount” that has been calculated by eGrants.

**Travel and Other Volunteer Expenses**

You may ignore these sections.

**Once you have entered your budget information in eGrants, you will be asked to validate your budget, and eGrants will check your submission for errors.**

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