



AmeriCorps

Project Continuation Instructions

For Use with eGrants
AmeriCorps VISTA
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GENERAL INFORMATION

WHAT IS A PROJECT CONTINUATION?

A Project Continuation is the process to receive AmeriCorps VISTA resources for an additional project year. The amount of resources (Volunteer slots, and if applicable, grant funds) may change from year to year.

If you wish to continue receiving VISTA resources for another year, you will be invited to complete a Continuation Application. Your Continuation Application details your previous year's activities and progress, as well as your plans towards successful implementation and sustainability of your project.

If you do not wish to continue receiving resources, contact your [AmeriCorps Regional Office](#) to discuss extending your project to allow your current VISTA Volunteers to complete their year of service.

CONTINUATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

The continuation application process begins at least one hundred and twenty days (120) prior to the expiration of your current Memorandum of Agreement (MA). At that time, you will receive communication notifying you that it is time to begin your continuation application if you wish to continue receiving VISTA resources for another year. Projects are not guaranteed an additional year of resources and resources are subject to funding availability.

The communication from your AmeriCorps regional office will list the deadline for submitting your continuation application and may include updated information on the current availability of VISTA resources.

More information about the continuation timeline can be found in the [Deadlines section below](#).



Figure 1 Flow chart of AmeriCorps VISTA Continuation Process

WHAT IF YOU ARE A NEW STAFF MEMBER FOR YOUR AMERICORPS VISTA PROJECT?

You will need to create your own account for [eGrants](#). Staff may not share a single sign-on for any AmeriCorps system.

Prior to beginning the Continuation, you should familiarize yourself with your organization's initial concept paper and project application, as well as any continuations or amendments. The expectation of each continuation application is that it builds off the service done in previous years and leads to a successfully sustained anti-poverty project.

PURPOSE OF AMERICORPS VISTA PROGRAM

[AmeriCorps](#) (pronounced "uh-mEH-rih-CORE") is the federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. AmeriCorps brings people together to tackle the country's most pressing challenges through national service and volunteerism.

Founded in 1965, VISTA (pronounced "vis-tuh") is a federal anti-poverty national service program designed to provide resources to nonprofit organizations and public agencies to address poverty and poverty-related problems in the United States. In 1993, VISTA was incorporated into the AmeriCorps network of national service programs, then known as the Corporation for National and Community Service.

AmeriCorps VISTA addresses poverty by providing opportunities for Americans, 18 years of age and older, from a diverse range of backgrounds, to dedicate a year of full-time service with an organization ("partner") on a project that creates, strengthens, or expands efforts to empower individuals and communities in addressing poverty. Volunteers focus on [capacity building activities](#), that create systems, leverage resources, and develop processes, as opposed to providing service directly to individuals.

WHAT RESOURCES CAN THE VISTA PROGRAM PROVIDE?

AmeriCorps VISTA provides partners with a certain number of Volunteers and, on a limited basis, grant funds.

The following outlines the types of resources the VISTA program can provide:

- **AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteers**

AmeriCorps Volunteers in the VISTA program support an organization to make sustainable change in areas that affect poverty, including education, public health, climate, access to benefits, and more. Through activities such as community asset mapping, fundraising, grant writing, program development, and volunteer recruitment, VISTA Volunteers gain professional experience and leadership skills. Their role in alleviating poverty is to mobilize community resources, strengthen efforts of local agencies and organizations to address poverty, and to support local agencies and organizations in sustaining project activities. Please visit the AmeriCorps website for more information about [Volunteer benefits](#).

VISTA Volunteers are not staff members, employees, or interns of the partner or service locations to which they are assigned. VISTA Volunteers may not engage in activities at partnering organizations that would displace or replace paid staff, contractors, or existing community volunteers. VISTA Volunteers are prohibited from requesting and managing other AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors grants, projects, and AmeriCorps Volunteers or community volunteers.

There are three types of Volunteer positions:

- **Full Time Volunteer**

VISTA Volunteers make a full-time, one-year commitment to alleviate poverty in a particular community. They assist in building capacity in nonprofit organizations and public agencies to generate financial and in-kind resources, encourage volunteer service at the local level, and empower individuals and communities.

- **Leaders**

Leaders assist partners and Volunteers in achieving project objectives and developing new project activities and sources of community support. Leaders are sometimes assigned to larger projects or to specific regions. As such, not all projects will have Leaders. Leaders are individuals who have successfully completed a full term of AmeriCorps service (with the VISTA, State and National, or NCCC program), or returned Peace Corps volunteers, who have demonstrated exemplary skills and leadership in community service. Leaders provide support and coordination for Volunteers to increase the project's impact. Due to the additional requirements of this position, Leaders receive a small increase in their living allowance when compared to full-time Volunteers. Leaders are not permitted to perform administrative or supervisory functions for their partner or for AmeriCorps regional offices. They do not supervise other AmeriCorps Volunteers.

- **Summer Associates:**

Summer Associates support the goals of an existing, approved project for a short term during the months of May - August. Summer Associates can engage in capacity building activities or in direct service activities. Only current partners are eligible to participate in the Summer Associate program. The Summer Associate program is subject to resource availability. Once you are operating your VISTA project, you can consult with AmeriCorps if your organization is interested in developing a Summer Associate program.

- **Grant Funds**

For most projects, AmeriCorps VISTA only awards a certain number of Volunteers positions, and the partner is responsible for the local operating and logistics costs. This is referred to as a standard project. However, in limited instances, a partner may apply for a support grant from AmeriCorps VISTA. Support grants provide financial resources to help partners effectively manage their VISTA project. Support grants are primarily used to support supervision, training, and on-site travel costs. Support grant funding is awarded on a limited basis.

- **Cost Share**

The VISTA program uses cost sharing as a strategy to expand the number of Volunteers that can be placed each year. Through cost sharing, a partner reimburses AmeriCorps for the living allowance of one or more of its Volunteers (including full time Volunteers, Leaders, and/or Summer Associates). The VISTA program covers other costs associated with each Volunteer, such as training, a health benefit, a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award/cash stipend upon successful completion of service, and travel or relocation costs. You will need to consult with your regional office to determine if cost share option is right for your organization.

WHAT IS THE FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGNING YOUR VISTA PROJECT?

Projects must be developed in accordance with (1) AmeriCorps VISTA's Core Principles and (2) AmeriCorps' programming focus areas. This section reviews both.

AmeriCorps VISTA Core Principles:

- Anti-poverty focus
- Community empowerment
- Sustainable solutions
- Capacity building

AmeriCorps VISTA's core principles are defined below:

- **Anti-Poverty Focus**

The founding purpose of AmeriCorps VISTA is to strengthen and support efforts to alleviate poverty and poverty-related problems in the United States. VISTA Volunteer activities are shaped by multiple factors, including the actual conditions of poverty, the expressed needs of the local community, and the partner and Volunteers' perspective on what is necessary and feasible.

Partners supported with AmeriCorps VISTA resources may address poverty by:

- Focusing on social determinants of health and well-being (e.g., improving education, neighborhood resilience, access to health care, and healthy food).
- Approaches that increase a household's income and assets (housing, connection to benefits like cash and in-kind transfers, financial savings, and asset development).
- Addressing larger regional systemic barriers to community development.

All VISTA Volunteer service activities must be designed to support one or more specific anti-poverty projects at a service location. Applications must clearly define the anti-poverty initiative being created or enhanced and not focus solely on capacity building for the organization.

- **Community Empowerment**

Community empowerment aims to increase the influence and control that communities have over their own lives as well as programs and structures in communities that impact their lives. Partners must engage people of the communities they plan to support through the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the project. The project design must be responsive and relevant to the lives of community residents and must tap into inherent community assets, strengths, and resources. To foster community empowerment, projects may choose to:

- Form an advisory council that engages community members while strengthening relationships;
- Use systems to solicit regular feedback and conduct regular reviews to address feedback;
- Invite local leaders and community members to join in initial needs assessments
- Involve leaders in decision-making;
- Recognize community customs, norms, and values; involve community members in identifying these contextual factors.

- **Sustainable Solutions**

VISTA Volunteers serve as a short-term resource to help build the long-term sustainability of antipoverty efforts. Partners must design their project with a plan to phase out the need for VISTA Volunteers as resources. The goal is for the work of the project to continue without AmeriCorps VISTA resources.

Projects make a lasting difference through:

- The commitment, energy, and initiative that **Volunteers** bring to the community;
- Involvement of the **partner** in supervising and supporting the Volunteers, and assessing the progress of the project toward meeting its established goals;

- Participation of the **project beneficiaries** in all phases of project development and implementation; and
- The continued involvement of **community members** by providing needed resources such as community volunteers, material and financial resources, and expertise.

- **Capacity Building**

Projects expand the scale, impact, and resource-leveraging ability of specific anti-poverty initiatives. VISTA Volunteers create systems that remain long after their term of service ends. Volunteers strengthen partners' efforts by expanding community partnerships, securing cash and in-kind resources, recruiting and managing community volunteers, and addressing specific local needs. All activities must focus on creating pathways out of poverty for individuals and communities. The primary pathways include:

- **Increased effectiveness:** Partners have improved their abilities to achieve better success rates or better quality of outcomes.
- **Increased efficiency:** Partners have improved outcomes with the same level of resources or with fewer resources.
- **Increased scale/reach:** Partners have increased the scope of a program or expanded services by serving to new people, new populations.
- **Increased resources:** Partners have leveraged resources such as funding, community volunteers, in-kind support, and partnerships.

AmeriCorps' Focus Areas:

AmeriCorps VISTA seeks project applications for programming in any of the following six focus areas (identified in the [Serve America Act](#)):

- **Economic Opportunity** projects create or strengthen pathways for low-income individuals to develop vital work skills. These areas include, but are not limited to housing, employment / workforce development, and federal benefits access.
- **Healthy Futures** projects that meet health needs for economically disadvantaged individuals. These areas include, but are not limited to, access to health care and food security.
- **Education** projects that enhance access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children. These areas include school readiness, K-12 success, increasing high-school graduation rates, as well as expansion of college enrollment and post second support for careers.
- **Veterans and Military Families** projects assist veterans and military families experiencing poverty and connect them with education opportunities, jobs, and benefits.
- **Environmental Stewardship** projects support anti-poverty activities that focus on environmental initiatives and climate change in low-income communities.

- **Disaster Services** projects help repair homes, assist survivors, and restore communities when disasters strike.

These priority programming areas are outlined in greater detail in our Annual Program Guidance. The [Annual Program Guidance](#) can be found on our website at under the 'Guidance and Instructions' section.

WHAT IS THE ANNUAL VISTA PROGRAM GUIDANCE?

The AmeriCorps VISTA Annual Program Guidance for current and potential partners that directs the development of new projects and outlines national programming priorities for each fiscal year. The annual guidance should be reviewed in collaboration with these instructions.

The [Annual Program Guidance can be found on our website](#) under the 'Guidance and Instructions' section.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

- [AmeriCorps VISTA Resource Opportunity website](#)
 - Visit this site for technical assistance resources about AmeriCorps VISTA and the project application process.
 - You will find information on program guidance, resource opportunities, FAQs, and program regulations.
- eGrants instructions.
 - These will assist you with navigating the steps of [eGrants](#), our online application system.
 - We recommend you document your responses to the application's narrative sections in a word processing document first, then copy and paste them into the narrative fields of the eGrants. This method provides you with an offline record.
- Performance Measures
 - [Performance Measures Instructions](#)
 - This document provides definitions and data collection protocols for capacity building and anti-poverty programming.
 - Visit the [AmeriCorps National Performance Measurement Core Curriculum](#).
- [AmeriCorps' Evidence and Readiness Resources](#).
 - Visit this site for tools to assess your organization's capacity
- [AmeriCorps VISTA Campus](#)
 - Online training center where partners and Volunteers can access mandatory and optional courses and supporting resources.

For additional opportunities to partner with AmeriCorps, other than VISTA, please visit the [AmeriCorps Funding Opportunity website](#).

WHO DO YOU CONTACT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

- Questions about becoming a partner or your project design?
 - AmeriCorps regional offices are responsible for reviewing applications and making awards. You can reach out to [AmeriCorps region office staff](#) to ask questions, discuss project proposals, and to request technical assistance throughout the continuation process.
- Need technical assistance with [eGrants](#)?
 - For technical questions and problems with the eGrants, call the AmeriCorps Hotline at (800) 942-2677. Or submit a question at the [AmeriCorps Hotline's website](#). Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the name of the resource opportunity to which the organization is applying.
- General questions about the VISTA program?
 - Organizations can email vista@americorps.gov.

WHAT ARE THE DEADLINES?

Deadlines vary based on the start date of your Memorandum of Agreement (MA). Continuation notices are typically sent 120 days in advance before the end of your current MA. The continuation application is due approximately 90 days before the end of your MA. Project continuations are awarded approximately 15 days before the start of your new MA.

You will work with AmeriCorps regional staff throughout the continuation process.

PROJECT CONTINUATION

HOW DO YOU COMPLETE AND SUBMIT A PROJECT CONTINUATION?

Use the following AmeriCorps VISTA project continuation instructions if you are a current partner seeking to continue your current and approved project.

This section provides instructions for the steps to complete the project continuation. Below is a submission checklist to guide you through the steps of the process. The instructions break down the components of the project continuation.

All project continuations must be submitted through [eGrants](#). Additional eGrants instructions can be found on the [Resource Opportunity website](#).

To begin a continuation, you will log into your account and select “Create Continuation” and then select the appropriate resource opportunity.

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Please use the checklist below to ensure you have completed each step of the continuation process:

- ☐ Receipt of continuation notice from an AmeriCorps regional office
- ☐ Confirm your Unique Entity ID (UEI) from the federal System for Award Management ([SAM.gov](#)) is up to date.
- ☐ Confirm your [eGrants account login](#).
-  You may not create an organization account used by multiple staff. Individuals must have their own account tied to their individual email address.
- ☐ Read the [General Information section](#) in this document.
- ☐ Complete Continuation in [eGrants](#)
 - ☐ Applicant Info
 - ☐ Confirm the information you entered in SAM.gov exactly matches the information you input into eGrants.

- ☐ Application Info
- ☐ Narratives (Maximum of 15 pages)
 - ☐ Summary of Accomplishments
 - ☐ Continuation Changes
 - ☐ Executive Summary
 - ☐ Need
 - ☐ Strengthening Communities
 - ☐ Organizational Capability
 - ☐ Project Design
 - ☐ Project Management
 - ☐ VISTA Assignment
 - ☐ Volunteer Management
 - ☐ Intermediary Justification
 - ☐ Budget/Cost Effectiveness
 - ☐ Summer Associates
 - ☐ Other (Only if directed to complete)
- ☐ Service Locations
- ☐ Performance Measures
- ☐ Project Budget
- ☐ Requested Number of Volunteer Slots
 - ☐ Confirm the number of Volunteers is consistent throughout your application (narratives, performance measures, etc.)
- ☐ Supporting Documents
- ☐ Review
 - ☐ Is my continuation application responsive to the questions?
 - ☐ Are we showing progress towards our needs, project goals, and achieving sustainability?
 - ☐ If you have a cost share agreement, are you up to date on your cost share payments?
- ☐ Authorize and Submit
 - ☐ Confirm the person authorizing and submitting the continuation has the legal authority to enter into an agreement with the federal government.



Tip: Compose your narratives in a word processing document first, then copy and paste them into the narrative fields of eGrants. This method provides you with an offline record as well as a page count.

APPLICANT INFO

Information Copied Over: The information you input in the Applicant Information is copied from your project application.

Certain fields are not editable.

APPLICATION INFO

Information Copied Over: The information you input in the Applicant Information is copied from your project application.

Certain fields are not editable.

NARRATIVES

As part of the project application process, you completed a set of narrative fields. In eGrants, the narrative fields will carry over to your continuation application for easy reference.

The narratives section is your opportunity to demonstrate to AmeriCorps staff reviewers that your proposed project aligns well with the AmeriCorps VISTA's [Core Principles](#) and the [agency's focus areas](#). The narratives elaborate on how program resources would be utilized and managed by your organization.



Note: Your project design scope from your approved project application cannot change. You can update applicable information, but you should **NOT** be changing or altering the previously approved goals and objectives of your project application.

If significant changes are needed, you will need to work with your assigned AmeriCorps region office to submit a new proposed project design.

The table below indicates which narrative topics you may edit in your continuation.

Narrative Topic	Fields that are editable in eGrants:
Summary of Accomplishments	✓
Continuation Changes	✓
Executive Summary	✓
Need	
Strengthening Communities	
Organizational Capability	
Project Design	
Project Management	✓
VISTA Assignment	✓
Volunteer Management	
Intermediary Justification	✓
Budget/Cost Effectiveness	✓
Summer Associate	✓
Other	

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Purpose: In the Summary of Accomplishments narrative, you will provide an update on your project's progress in terms of achievements, timelines, and development towards sustainability.

This narrative helps reviewers understand your project's accomplishments over the previous award period and your plans to ensure the continuation of the project.

Answer the following questions:

- What progress did you make in achieving the goals related to poverty alleviation and capacity building needs identified in the concept paper and project application?
- How much longer will your project continue?
- How close are you to achieving sustainability for continuing the project without program resources?

CONTINUATION CHANGES

Purpose: In the Continuation Changes narrative, you will provide a summary of the major updates to your project continuation narratives and content.

This narrative helps reviewers get a high-level view of any updates as well as understand where to look within the document for more details about any project changes.

Specific project changes should still be documented within the relevant narrative section, as listed below. All fields from the previous application will be displayed, however you may only update [fields where edits are allowed](#).

Below are examples of updates that may be detailed in this field. Project changes may include, but are not limited to:

- Adding or deactivating service locations
- Modification to VISTA Assignment Descriptions (VADs)
- Changes of supervisor/supervision plan (Also documented within the Project Management narrative)
- Plan for Summer Associates (Also documented with the Summer Associates narrative and Performance Measures section)
- Number of Volunteers Requested (Also documented within the Executive Summary, Slots, and Performance Measures sections)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Information Copied Over: The information you input in the Executive Summary has been copied from your project application.



Note: This field is editable. During your continuation application, if there are changes to this narrative, enter them in this section and summarize the changes in the [Continuation Changes narrative](#).

Information from the project application:

Purpose: The Executive Summary narrative provides the reviewer(s) a general summary of your project.

Complete the template below by replacing the bolded text with your information.

You **must** use the following template for the executive summary exactly. You **may not** alter the paragraph besides adding the requested information.

[BEGIN TEMPLATE]

[**Organization Name**]'s mission is [**Mission Statement**]. The proposed VISTA project aligns with the [**Choose one or more [AmeriCorps Focus Area](#)**] focus area(s). The VISTA project will seek to [**enter goal(s)**] and expects to benefit [**enter type and estimated number of beneficiaries**]. [**Enter number of Volunteers**] VISTA Volunteers will contribute to the goals of the project by performing activities such as [**enter activities**] over the course of [**enter expected length of project**].

[END TEMPLATE]

NEED NARRATIVE

Information Copied Over: The information you input in the Need narrative has been copied from your project application.



Note: This field is **not** editable. During your continuation application, no significant changes should be made to this narrative.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES NARRATIVE

Information Copied Over: The information you input in the Strengthening Communities narrative has been copied over from your project application.



Note: This field is **not** editable. During your continuation application, no significant changes should be made to this narrative.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY NARRATIVE

Information Copied Over: The information you input in the Organizational Capability narrative has been copied over from your project application.



Note: This field is **not** editable. During your continuation application, no significant changes should be made to this narrative.

PROJECT DESIGN NARRATIVE

Information Copied Over: The information you input in the Project Design narrative field has been copied over from your project application for easy reference as you complete other sections.

This field is not editable.

Your project design scope from your approved project application cannot change. In your continuation, you should NOT be changing or altering the previously approved goals and objectives of your project application.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT NARRATIVE

Information Copied Over: The information you input in the Project Management narrative has been copied from your project application.



Note: This field is editable. During your continuation application, if there are changes to this narrative, enter them in this section and summarize the changes in the [Continuation Changes narrative](#).

Information from the project application:

Purpose: In the Project Management narrative, you will explain how you plan to provide daily supervision to the VISTA Volunteers assigned to the project. You will also describe how you will track and measure the progress and impact on the capacity building of your organization as well as the anti-poverty project's outputs.

This narrative helps reviewers understand how you plan to manage the day-to-day project operations.



Tip: To assist you in writing this section, you should familiarize yourself with our [project progress reporting](#) requirements.

There are three subsections in the Project Management narrative. Answer the following questions:

- **Project Management: Supervision**
 - How will you provide daily supervision for your VISTA Volunteers?
 - If your project will have VISTA Volunteers at other service locations belonging to your organization **or** to other independent organizations (as

an intermediary partner), how will you ensure that there is ongoing local supervision for those Volunteers?

- Will the project supervisor(s) and if applicable, site supervisor(s) be full-time or part-time employees?
- How will you train staff about the goals and objectives of the project as well as VISTA Volunteer management? If your project has multiple service locations, describe how you will do this for each supervisor.

- **Project Management: Service Locations**



Note: Do not list your service locations in this narrative. You will add all your service locations later in the ["Service Location" section](#).

- If your project has multiple service locations (and you are not an intermediary partner) tell us how VISTA Volunteers will be properly supervised at the location where they are serving?
- If your project will have one or more service location(s) that is/are not co-located with the project director and/or supervisor, how will you oversee the VISTA Volunteers and VISTA Volunteer management at each service location?
 - If those service locations are at other nonprofit or government organizations then your own, what is your relationship with those other organizations?
- Who will be supervising VISTA Volunteers for your project and if applicable, at each service location?
- How will you communicate with service locations?

- **Project Management: Assessment of Project Performance**

- How will you track and assess the overall project performance?
- What instruments will you use to collect data to track and measure the progress toward achieving the capacity building goals of your organization identified in the "Project Design" narrative? For example, databases, data tracking logs, attendance lists, surveys, questionnaires, interviews, observations, other measurement tools, etc.
- How will you measure the success of your anti-poverty approach?
- If your project has one or more service location(s), how will you coordinate the tracking and assessment of progress across these locations?
- How do you plan to monitor service locations for compliance with the VISTA program rules and regulations and hold them accountable for reporting and supervising VISTA Volunteers?

VISTA ASSIGNMENT NARRATIVE



Note: This field is editable. During your Continuation Application, if there are changes to this narrative, enter them in this section and summarize the changes in the [Continuation Changes narrative](#).

Information Copied Over: The information you input in the VISTA Assignment narrative has been copied from your project application.

Information from the project application:

Purpose: In the VISTA Assignment narrative, you will address the key objectives and activities of the VISTA Volunteers and/or leader's assignment as it relates to the proposed project.

This narrative helps reviewers understand how the VISTA Volunteer(s') activities align with your project's goals and ensure activities are robust enough to engage a VISTA Volunteer full-time in a full year of service.

VISTA Volunteers focus on building the capacity of the anti-poverty activities you propose in the project application, and not on general capacity building for the partner or its service locations. While VISTA Volunteers focus on capacity-building activities, they may, on occasion, perform limited direct service activities when deemed necessary to complete their overall capacity-building assignment.



Note: LIMITATIONS ON VISTA VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES AND DUTIES

Volunteers may not:

- Provide religious instruction, engage in religious activities, or proselytize as part of their service.
- Engage in lobbying efforts, electoral activities or participate in political rallies, meetings, or demonstrations while on-duty.
- Solicit, accept, or receive political contributions.
- Perform activities or duties that would displace employer workers or supplant the hiring of employed workers.
- Assist, directly or indirectly, any labor or anti-labor organizing activity.

For more in-depth information on these prohibited activities, refer to the [AmeriCorps VISTA Member Handbook](#), Chapter 15, Basic Laws & Federal Regulations.



Answer the following questions:

- What are the key objectives of the VISTA assignment(s)? Provide a summary.
- What activities will the full-time VISTA Volunteers(s) and Leader(s) perform to implement the proposed project? What skills or qualifications are needed to perform these activities?



Note:

- Volunteers and Leaders serve for an entire year; therefore, ensure that the activities are enough to engage a Volunteer in a one-year, full-time commitment.
- The tasks and activities should logically align with the project goals you propose in the Performance Measures and the Needs sections.
- The service activities described in your project's application will later be developed into VISTA Assignment Descriptions (VAD) if your application is awarded.
 - The VAD is developed by the partner and is a critical tool for recruitment and programming because it clearly states the goals, objectives, and activities of a Volunteer during their service term as part of the project.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT NARRATIVE

Information Copied Over: The information you input in the Volunteer Management narrative has been copied over from your project application.



Note: This field is **not** editable. During your continuation application, no significant changes should be made to this narrative.

INTERMEDIARY JUSTIFICATION NARRATIVE



Note: The Intermediary Justification narrative applies only to applicants whose project model includes having VISTA Volunteers serve at multiple, independent partnering organizations. Definitions and additional information are below.

If your project model is a single service location or multi-service location model, and does not include these criteria, please write "Not Applicable" in this narrative field.

Definitions:

❖ **Intermediary Project Design**

An intermediary partner (“intermediary”) is a partner that operates a project and provides AmeriCorps resources to other eligible entities that are also part of the project. Intermediary partners are the legal entities that apply for and receive the federal / VISTA resources. Intermediary partners are responsible for ensuring full compliance with applicable rules and regulations of the VISTA program.

The intermediary partner is often, but not always, a large organization that has the capacity to develop and support service locations across a wide geographic area or among a group of organizations that address a common need. The intermediary provides administrative services, technical support, training, and oversight to organizations where VISTA Volunteers are assigned, referred to as service locations. The eligible entities or service locations that participate in an intermediary project are often small organizations that otherwise might not have access to such resources. The intermediary may operate a service location with assigned VISTA Volunteer(s) in addition to providing support to external service locations.

• **Multi-Service Location Project Design**

Projects that plan to have VISTA Volunteers serve at different locations under their organization (meaning all service locations are under the same Employee Identification Number (EIN)) would be considered multi-service location projects. Multi-service location projects do not need to complete this narrative section and can write “Not Applicable” in this narrative field.

Information Copied Over: If you are an intermediary partner, the information you input in the Intermediary Justification narrative has copied over from your project application.



Note: This field is editable. During your Continuation Application, if there are changes to this narrative, enter them in this section and summarize the changes in the [Continuation Changes narrative](#). If you would like to become an intermediary partner, please consult with AmeriCorps regional staff.

Information from the concept paper:

Purpose: In the Intermediary Justification narrative, you will explain how your organization will perform as an intermediary partner.

This narrative helps reviewers understand how your organization is prepared to support multiple independent, eligible partners as they place VISTA Volunteers, and work on their own capacity building and anti-poverty goals. Your responses help reviewers understand

how you will manage the oversight and monitoring of your service locations and their day-to-day supervision of their VISTA Volunteers.

Answer the following questions:

- Will your service locations have a shared programmatic focus, objective, and / or performance measures (such as food security)? Or will your organization serve only an administrative function (for example, your service locations will have various programmatic focus areas)?
- Describe your proposed service locations. Are there any identified partners for the project? Who are they? How will these service locations and partners fit within the overall project goals of addressing your identified poverty need(s)?
- How many service locations do you plan to have? Where are service locations located geographically (across a city, county, state, or multi-state)?
 - You do not need to list each service location at this stage. The concept paper will help reviewers understand your project model.
- What is your organization's experience partnering with other entities (provide an example)? How have you successfully managed those relationships?
- How will your organization oversee and manage the intermediary project?

Questions from the project application:

- Have you already identified your potential service locations that are separate from your own organization?
 - If no, how do you plan to identify them?
 - If yes, indicate that in this narrative. Then, you will need to enter service locations' information in the [Service Location](#) section of the application.
- Will your proposed service location be required to provide Site Support Payments (SSPs)?
 - If yes, what SSP amount do you need for each service location?
 - How would those funds be used to support the project?

BUDGET/COST EFFECTIVENESS NARRATIVE



Note:

- This field is editable. During your Continuation Application, if there are changes to this narrative, enter them in this section and summarize the changes in the [Continuation Changes narrative](#). If you would like to apply for a support grant, please consult with AmeriCorps regional staff.
- The Budget/Cost Effectiveness narrative only applies to applicants who are applying for a support grant.

If your project is a [standard project](#), and you are not applying for a support grant, write "Not Applicable" in this narrative field.

Information Copied Over: If your project receives a support grant, the information you input in the Budget/Cost Effectiveness narrative has copied over from your project application.

Information from the project application:

Purpose: In the Budget/Cost Effectiveness narrative, you will explain your ongoing needs for a support grant, if applicable. In eGrants, you may wish to complete the [Budget](#) section first and then return to complete this narrative.

This narrative explains and justifies each projected cost, linking expenses to project objectives and demonstrating their necessity and reasonableness. It plays a crucial role in providing transparency and clarifying the connection between the anticipated expenses and the proposed project's implementation. Write your narrative so that someone not familiar with the project can conceptually understand the rationale, purpose, and calculation of the estimated costs.

The costs associated with your budget must be reasonable, allowable, and necessary as well conform with AmeriCorps guidance. Refer to the [Support Grant Budget Guidance and Instructions](#) for what the funds can be used for.

Include the following information:

- Describe the line items that you included in your budget that you are requesting from AmeriCorps VISTA.
- Elaborate on any financial or in-kind (non-cash) costs your organization will be contributing to the project, such as staff time, travel, etc.



SUMMER ASSOCIATES NARRATIVE



Note: The availability for Summer Associate slots is determined by overall funding and regional resource allocations. Prior to completing this section, please contact your AmeriCorps regional office to see if Summer Associate slots will be available in the upcoming summer seasons.

Definition:

The Summer Associate component of the VISTA program provides short-term service Volunteers from May through September for the purpose of supporting and supplementing your full-year project.

Only projects in their second year or beyond are eligible to place Summer Associates.

While Summer Associates can be assigned capacity building tasks, they most frequently are assigned “direct service” tasks focused on implementing a project’s antipoverty goals and objectives.

You may not request Summer Associates for programming that is not part of your overall project and will not lead to the antipoverty outcomes described in your original application.

The rules and regulations that apply to full-term VISTA Volunteers apply to Summer Associates, for instance, Summer Associates may not supplant staff or community volunteer positions. For more specific information on the Summer Associate program, please contact your AmeriCorps regional office review the [AmeriCorps VISTA Sponsor Handbook](#).

Example:

For instance, VISTA Volunteers, developing a financial literacy program aimed at students and their parents, would be able to use Summer Associates to deliver financial literacy classes, make presentations at outreach opportunities set up by the VISTA Volunteers and deliver one-on-one mentoring to program participants.

Purpose: In the Summer Associates narrative section, you will describe your proposed Summer Associate component of the project, how it aligns with your full-year project, and what service activities your Summer Associates would perform.

Answer the following questions:

- Do you wish to have a Summer Associate component for your project?
 - If no, please enter “Not Applicable.”
 - If yes, complete the narrative section by addressing the following questions:
 - Which component(s) of your full-year project will the Summer Associates support?
 - What activities will the Summer Associates be assigned?



- How will those activities move your full-year project towards programmatic success and sustainability?
- How will you recruit, orient, and supervise your Summer Associates?

OTHER

Do not complete this section unless you are directed by AmeriCorps staff. Please enter N/A.

SERVICE LOCATIONS



Note: This section is editable. During your Continuation Application, if there are changes to your service locations, enter them in this section and summarize the changes in the [Continuation Changes narrative](#).

Purpose: In the Service Location section, if necessary, you will update the various service locations that will receive one or more VISTA Volunteers/Leaders.

If your organization is the only service location, and no other service locations will receive VISTA Volunteers, your organization's information should be listed.

Verify the information below for each service location. If you need to add or remove service locations, please consult with your AmeriCorps regional office. Be sure to include updated contact information for the service location supervisor. Indicate sites that are no longer active.

- Legal name of organization
- Physical address including the full zip code
- Supervisor name
- Supervisor email
- Supervisor phone number
- Employer Identification Number (EIN)



Note: Failure to provide an EIN or providing a fake EIN will result in the rejection of your application.

- Additionally, there is a drop-down menu to indicate the type of service location:

- **Performance Measurement Service Location:** Beneficiary service location, a project location that may benefit from service performed in a different location.
- **Placement Service Location:** Project location in which VISTA Volunteers will be physically serving.
- **Both:** Project location in which Volunteers can physically serve, and that may also benefit from service performed in its location.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES



Note: This section is editable. During your Continuation Application, if there are changes to your performance, enter them in this section and summarize the changes in the [Continuation Changes narrative](#).

In a previous section of the application, you provided information about your project in narrative form. In this section, you will navigate through screens in eGrants to update information about performance measures related to your project. Your project was approved for its particular set of activities and you should not dramatically change them in your continuation.

The performance measures you update in this section will be used for future [progress reports](#), if your continuation is approved. The performance measures are used to assess the impact and success of your project. Reporting on the measures that you enter is required.

The Performance Measure module in eGrants contains two screens for you to enter information about the two conceptual components of a project.

1. Capacity Building
 - On the Performance Measures screen, you (or your predecessor) indicated how VISTA resources will build the capacity of your project.
2. Anti-Poverty
 - On the Anti-Poverty screen, you (or your predecessor) indicated how the project helps individuals and communities out of poverty.

What is a Performance Measure set?

A performance measure “set” is made up of your capacity building outputs and outcomes as well as your anti-poverty outputs at a specific service location.

If your project has multiple service locations, you will enter more than one performance measure set. Each service location will have at least one performance measure set. If you have multiple capacity building or anti-poverty measures, each service location can have multiple performance measure sets.

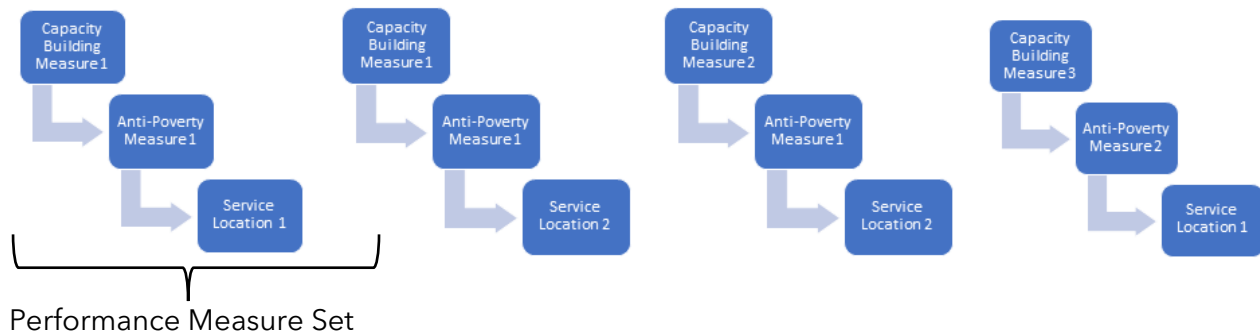


Figure 2 The combination of a capacity building measure, an anti-poverty measure, and a service location make a Performance Measure set.

Use these resources to complete this section:

- AmeriCorps VISTA [Performance Measures Instructions](#)
 - This document provides definitions and data collection protocols for capacity building and anti-poverty programming.
- [AmeriCorps National Performance Measurement Core Curriculum](#)

PERFORMANCE MEASURES MODULE HOME PAGE

Below are the eGrants instructions for navigating the Performance Measure module home page:

- To start the module, click the “Begin” button on the home page.
- As you proceed through the module, the home page will summarize your work and provide links to edit the parts of the module you have completed.
 - You may also navigate sections of the module by using the screen feature at the top of each page.
- Once you have started the module, click “Continue Working” to return to the screen you were on when you last closed the module.
- After you have created at least one set of performance measures, the home page will display a summary chart of your measures.
 - To edit a performance measure listed in the chart, click the “Edit” button.
 - To delete a measure, click “Delete.”

PERFORMANCE MEASURES SCREEN

On the Performance Measures screen, enter information about the capacity-building aspects for each proposed service location(s) for the project year. These measures indicate how the project will build the capacity of your organization’s ability to sustain your proposed project. For each service location that will benefit directly from the capacity-building efforts of the Volunteer(s), you will provide information about:

- The capacity goal you hope to reach at the service location
- The number of Volunteer(s) (or Leader(s)) you are requesting at the service location and the focus of their service activities
- At least one capacity-building output, and
- At least one capacity-building outcome.

You will also provide information about data collection plans.

For applicants requesting Leader(s), you may either include information about Leaders in a performance measure set with the VISTA Volunteer(s), or you may create a separate performance measure set for the Leader(s).



Note: If you are applying for Summer Associates and you checked the “Summer Associate” indicator as instructed earlier in the section “Service Location”, you will see the question, “Are you creating this Performance Measure for:” and an adjacent drop-down menu for you to “Select VISTA Type”. Choose “Full Time”.

- **Select a Service Location**

In this section, you will provide information about your project’s “service locations,” which refer to the organizations that will benefit most directly from the capacity-building efforts of the Volunteer(s).

eGrants Instructions:

1. Select a service location to begin.
 - The “service location Name” drop-down menu lists any service location you entered into eGrants, following instructions above in the section [Service Locations](#), and identified as a **Performance Measurement Service Location** or **Both**.
 - You will not see service locations that you identified as a **Placement Service Location**.
2. You will need to complete performance measure information for each service location in the list, one at a time.

- **Select a Capacity Goal from the List**

In this section, you will provide information about your capacity building goals. AmeriCorps defines capacity building as a set of activities that expand the *scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness* of projects and organizations. Activities may also increase the ability of the project or organization to leverage resources. For example, capacity-building activities may expand services, enhance delivery of services, or generate additional resources. These activities achieve lasting positive outcomes for the beneficiary populations served by AmeriCorps-supported organizations.

eGrants Instructions:

- Choose one of the following capacity goals that best reflects your intent at this service location:
 - **Scale/reach.** You aim to increase your project's ability to serve more people, serve new groups of people, or provide new or expanded types of services.
 - **Effectiveness.** You aim to increase your project's ability to achieve better outcomes for beneficiaries.
 - **Efficiency.** You aim to increase your project's ability to provide improved outcomes for beneficiaries with the same level of resources, or to improve or maintain consistent quality of services with fewer resources.
 - **Leveraged Resources.** You aim to increase your project's ability to generate additional resources or assets, such as funding, community volunteers, in-kind support, and partnerships.



Note: Community volunteers are defined as unpaid citizens from the local community that are recruited and/or managed because of the project and VISTA Volunteer activities. VISTA Volunteers are **not** considered community volunteers.

If none of these goals represents the capacity you aim to build at this service location, you may check the last box in the list and create your own capacity-building goal in the text box. If you have multiple capacity goals at this service location, you will create a separate performance measure set for each capacity goal.

- **Select Project Year**

eGrants Instructions:

- Select the year (1, 2, 3, etc.) that reflects the upcoming project year for which you are requesting VISTA Volunteer resources at this particular service location and for this specific capacity goal.
- If this service location has never received VISTA Volunteer resources for this capacity goal, select "1" for the project year.

- **Select Service Activities**

In this section, you will provide information on the VISTA Volunteer activities for this service location and its capacity-building goal during the proposed project year. (Refer to the table below for descriptions and examples of Service Activity categories.)

eGrants Instructions:

- Select Service Activity categories that apply to the VISTA Volunteer(s) during this project year at this service location for the specific Capacity Goal you identified above.

- In the text box next to any Service Activity category you selected, briefly describe the VISTA Volunteer activities related to this category. The table below lists examples of VISTA Volunteer activities for each Service Activity category.
- If none of the Service Activity categories listed represent the activities of the Volunteer(s), you may check the last box in the list and create your own Service Activity category in the text box.
 - Click the “Add User Service Activity” button to enter additional Service Activity categories as needed. This option should be used sparingly.

Service Activity Categories:

Service Activity	Description	Examples of VISTA Activities
Community Assessment	Environmental scan of community context and need	– Help design a community assessment plan – Help complete a survey of neighborhood or a report of need/recommendations based on findings – Help incorporate into project service delivery – Help update community assessment to monitor the most pressing community challenges
Community awareness and engagement	Expand community knowledge and support of the project effort	– Help complete a public relations media plan – Help conduct community outreach or organizing meetings – Help develop presentations, newspaper articles and PSAs
Expand/strengthen partnerships/networks	Initiate efforts with other organizations, for example, through applying jointly for funding, collaborating on programming or referrals, sharing staff and resources, developing training and materials that are shared	– Identify potential collaborators and plan informational meetings – Help improve communication about community projects among partner organizations – Help establish intra-organization systems (e.g. linked database, common forms) – Help develop commitments among collaborators to the project and formalize partnerships, e.g. MOUs, budgets
Financial resources	Develop/expand a diversified funding stream	– Develop fundraising plan – Recruit fundraising committee – Help establish fundraising unit – Identify resources for fundraising

Service Activity	Description	Examples of VISTA Activities
		– Help develop capital campaign or approach donors – Draft and submit proposals – Plan ongoing fundraising
Material development	Improvement or expansion of materials that support programming (e.g. toolkits, curricula, worksheets)	– Assess current materials – Develop or modify materials to strengthen programming – Develop and/or training materials – Develop manuals – Train staff in the use of newly developed materials
Outreach	Participant recruitment	– Develop an outreach plan for target beneficiaries/ participants – Help ensure project is relevant to potential participants – Develop/improve presentations, communication tools and methods of conducting outreach to potential participants
Performance measurement	Assessing results of project offerings	– Help develop or improve a performance management system for the anti-poverty programming – Help train staff to use performance management system routinely to continually improve measures – Help staff use findings from performance measurement efforts to inform improvements of existing and new project offerings
Project development and delivery	Improvement or expansion	– Help expand existing project or develop new project design – Help implementation of new/expanded project
Technology use	Develop systems for organizational effectiveness	– Develop, pilot, revise database (community volunteer, client) or internal or external knowledge management system – Develop social media tools – Pilot new tools – Train staff to do updates and maintain database or knowledge management system – Develop on-going staff/community volunteer/community technology resource

Service Activity	Description	Examples of VISTA Activities
Community volunteer recruitment and management system	Establish or expand pool of community volunteers to assist with service delivery	– Help organization and other stakeholders recognize need for and use of community volunteers – Help clarify community volunteer roles – Develop community volunteer generation plan – Develop partnerships for recruiting community volunteers – Develop community volunteer unit, volunteer manual/training/curriculum – Recruit/manage community volunteers – Develop/pilot community volunteer training – Develop community volunteer intake/tracking/recognition system – Train staff to manage community volunteer plan – Resource plan for ongoing support of systems (recognition, training, supervision)

- **Select Outputs**

In this section, you will provide information on your project's capacity building outputs. You will gather and report data for each capacity building output you select (see Data Collection below), following the definitions and protocols identified for that measure.

eGrants Instructions:

- Select at least one capacity-building output that best reflects the results of VISTA Volunteers capacity-building activities at this service location for this project year.
 - You may select more than one output.
 - If none of the capacity building output in the list represents the outputs at this service location, you may check the last box in the list and create your own capacity building output in the text box. Click the "Add User Output" button to add blank fields as needed.

- **Select Outcomes**

In this section, you will provide information on your project's capacity building outcomes. You will gather and report data for each capacity building outcome you select (see Data Collection below) following the definitions and protocols identified for that measure.

eGrants Instructions:

- Select at least one capacity-building outcome that best reflects the results of the VISTA capacity-building activities at this service location for this project year.
 - You may select more than one outcome.

- If none of the capacity-building outcomes in the list represents the outcomes at this service location, you may check the last box in the list and create your own capacity-building outcomes in the text box. Click the “Add User Outcome” button to add blank fields as needed.

- **Enter Data Collection Information**

For measures (output or outcome) you selected from a list, you will collect data for future reports. The data collected for a specific measure must be consistent with the definitions and protocols identified for that measure, as identified on the [AmeriCorps Performance Measures Instructions](#).

eGrants Instructions:

- Enter information for any capacity-building output and outcome measures you identified.
- For each output and outcome measure, select a “Method” for collecting the data from the drop-down list. Then, enter an “Instrument Description.” Describe how the instrument will be used, including how and when data will be collected and by whom.
- Add the “Target Number” you expect to reach for the project year.
 - The “Unit of Measure” automatically appears if you selected a measure from the “Output and Outcome” lists.
 - If you created your own capacity-building output or outcome measure, you need to create a corresponding unit of measure.

- **Enter Number of Volunteers Requested**

eGrants Instructions

- Enter the number of VISTA Volunteers/Leaders you are requesting at this service location for this capacity-building goal for this project year
- Once you have entered all the capacity-building information for this service location, click the “Add Anti-Poverty Info” button to advance to the Anti-Poverty screen.

ANTI-POVERTY SCREEN

On this screen, you will enter information about how the project will help alleviate poverty for individuals and communities. At the top of the Anti-Poverty screen, a table titled “Performance Measure” summarizes the service location and capacity-building information you entered in the previous section.

You will be required to report on these measures in your progress report. This is a change from previous instructions.

eGrants Instructions:

- Enter only the anti-poverty programming components that specifically relate to the project's service location and the capacity-building activities you identified previously on the Performance Measure screen.
- You will select:
 - an anti-poverty output including the REQUIRED target number;
 - an anti-poverty outcome with the OPTIONAL target number; and
 - an anti-poverty program strategy/intervention.
- You will also enter the number of VISTA Volunteers you are requesting related to each anti-poverty programming area. Entering information about data collection plans is required.
- If you have more than one anti-poverty program for which you plan to build capacity at this service location, you must enter information about each anti-poverty program separately.
 - For example, if you request VISTA resources to increase your organization's ability to connect economically disadvantaged individuals to housing resources and to health care, you will input separate information about the housing-related project and about the health care project.



Note:

- You will be asked to demonstrate how you tracked your project's outputs and optional outcomes, we do not recommend that you include more than four or five performance measures sets. For multi- service location and intermediary projects, we do not recommend more than one performance measures set per service location.
- Limiting your performance measures sets does not mean your project cannot include other allowable activities. You should describe those in the appropriate narrative sections of the application and if awarded, report on your results in the narrative sections of the [Project Progress Report](#).

In the Anti-Poverty section, enter the following information:

- **Select Focus Area Type**

This section collects information about type of focus area. A [focus area](#) is one of a set of six issue areas (identified in the [Serve America Act](#)) that relate to improving communities and individuals. "Priority Focus Area" refers to the Focus Areas that best correspond with the VISTA anti-poverty mission. These include: Economic Opportunity, Education, Healthy

Futures, and Veterans and Military Families. The type “Other Focus Area” refers to focus areas that are not priorities of the VISTA program.

eGrants Instructions:

- Click on “Select Focus Area Type” and choose “Priority Focus Area” or “Other Focus Area” from the dropdown menu.
- When you select a Focus Area Type, a list of corresponding focus areas appears.

- **Select Focus Area and Objective**

eGrants Instructions:

- Click “Select Focus Area” to choose one from the drop-down menu. When you select a Focus Area, a list of agency-defined corresponding Objectives appears.
- Click “Select Objective” to choose one from the drop-down menu. An objective is a specific set of project activities within each focus area.
- Select “Other” for the objective if your program activities do not fall within one of the AmeriCorps-defined focus areas.
- When you select an Objective, a list of corresponding Anti-Poverty Outputs and Anti-Poverty Program Strategy/Interventions appears.

- **Select Anti-Poverty Output**

eGrants Instructions:

- Select one anti-poverty output that best reflects the intent of your anti-poverty project activities at this service location for this project year.
 - If none of the anti-poverty output options in the list represent your project activities, check the last box in the list and enter your own anti-poverty output in the text box.

- **Select Anti-Poverty Outcomes (optional)**

eGrants Instructions:

- Based on the anti-poverty output you selected above; a list of anti-poverty outcomes appears.
- You may select the anti-poverty outcome that best reflects the results of your anti-poverty project activities at this service location for this project year.
- If none of the anti-poverty outcome options in the list represent your project activities, check the last box in the list and enter your own anti-poverty outcome in the text box.

- **Select an Anti-Poverty Program Strategy/Intervention**

eGrants Instructions:

- Select at least one anti-poverty program strategy/intervention from the list and enter a brief description, including (to the extent known) the design, frequency, and intensity of the proposed intervention.

- If none of the anti-poverty program strategy/intervention options in the list represent your programming, check the last box in the list and enter your own strategy/intervention in the text box.
- If you are still developing your anti-poverty program strategy/intervention, check the last box in the list and write "To be developed" in the text box.
- **Enter Data Collection**
eGrants Instructions:
 - Enter information for the anti-poverty outputs and outcomes measures you identified.
 - For each measure, select an Instrument for collecting data from the drop-down list and then enter a Description.
 - Add the "Target Number" you expect to reach for the project year. The "Unit of Measure" appears if you selected an "Output and Outcome" measure from the list. You will need to enter this information if you have user created measures.
- **Enter Number of Volunteers**
eGrants Instructions:
 - Enter the number of VISTA Volunteer/Leader slots you are requesting to help accomplish the capacity building activities and these anti-poverty performance measures.



Tip: To add another anti-poverty programming area related to this capacity building set, click "Add New Anti-Poverty Info" at the bottom of the screen. A new "Anti-Poverty" screen will appear for this capacity building set. To complete the new screen, follow the preceding instructions for the "Anti-Poverty" screen.

When you have entered information for all the anti-poverty programming areas related to this capacity building set, click "Done Adding Anti-Poverty Programming". You will be returned to the Performance Measures screen, where you can add capacity building information for other service locations or capacity-building goals.



Tip: If you have multiple service locations conducting similar programming, click the "Duplicate" button in the Summary of Performance Measures chart (top of the screen) to create a copy of this performance measure set. You can also change individual fields.

When you are done adding performance measure information for the project, click on "Summary" to go to the Summary screen.

SUMMARY SCREEN

The Summary screen shows all the information you entered in the module.

Editing Options:

- To edit a particular performance measure, expand the panels for the measure you are interested in and click “Edit Performance Measure” to return to the Performance Measure screen
- Select “Edit Data Collection” to return to the Data Collection section of the Performance Measure screen.

eGrants Instructions:

- Select “Validate Performance Measures” to verify this module prior to submitting your application.
- When you are finished entering performance measures and have validated them successfully, select “Back to eGrants Application” to return to the main application and complete any remaining sections in the application instructions.

Printing Options:

- To print a summary of all performance measures at all service locations, click “Print All Performance Measures”.
- To print a summary from previous applications, click “Print PDF (By Project Year)”.
- To print a particular performance measure, expand the panels for the measure you are interested in and click “Print This Measure”.

SUMMER ASSOCIATES (IF APPLICABLE)

Summer Associates serve for a summer-long term of service and can be engaged in capacity building activities or in direct service activities. If you are applying for Summer Associates, you must provide performance measurement information about your proposed Summer Associate programming.

Skip this section if you are not applying for Summer Associates.

You will enter performance measurement information differently depending on whether the activities are capacity building or direct service, as described in the following section.

SUMMER ASSOCIATES: PERFORMANCE MEASURES MODULE HOME PAGE

If you are applying for Summer Associates, below are the eGrants instructions for navigating the Performance Measure Module home page:

- To start the module, click the “Begin” button on the home page.
- As you proceed through the module, the home page will summarize your work and provide links to edit the parts of the module you have completed.
- Once you have started the module, click “Continue Working” to return to the screen you were on when you last closed the module.
- After you have created at least one set of performance measures, the home page will display a chart summarizing your measures.
- To edit a performance measure, click the “Edit” button.
- To delete a measure, click “Delete.”

SUMMER ASSOCIATES: PERFORMANCE MEASURES SCREEN



Note: You will see the question, “Are you creating this Performance Measure for:” and an adjacent drop-down menu for you to “Select VISTA Type”. Choose “Summer Associate”.

(If you do not see this question, you will need to click “Back to eGrants Application” at the top of the screen and check the “Summer Associate” indicator box.)

eGrants Instructions:

- Once you select “Summer Associate,” a new drop-down menu labeled “Summer Associate Service Type” will appear.
- The “Summer Associate Service Type” drop-down menu includes two selections from which you must choose one of the following:
 - **Capacity Building**
 - Select this option if the Summer Associates will primarily perform capacity building activities.
 - Since the steps for entering capacity building Summer Associates are the same as those for Volunteers (full time), refer to the instructions above for [Volunteers/Leaders \(full time\)](#) to enter performance measure information for capacity building Summer Associates, substituting Summer Associates for Volunteers/Leaders where appropriate.
 - **Direct Service**
 - Select this option if the Summer Associates will primarily perform direct service activities.
 - Direct service refers to any form of assistance provided directly to the individuals or targeted groups and communities that make up the beneficiary population.

- For example, Summer Associates who spend most of their term repairing houses, tutoring children, or providing financial coaching to individuals are performing direct service activities, not capacity building.
- Once you select “Direct Service”, the fields on the screen will change to allow you to enter performance measure data for direct service. Proceed to the instructions in the “Direct Service” section below.

SUMMER ASSOCIATES: DIRECT SERVICE



Note: Skip this section if you are **not** requesting Summer Associates to perform direct service activities. This section is only required if you selected Summer Associates on the Application screen and you indicated “Direct Service” as the Summer Associate Service Type.

For each service location where individuals or the community will benefit from the direct service efforts of Summer Associates, you must provide information about:

1. the poverty-related issue you intend to address at the service location using Summer Associates
2. the number of Summer Associates you are requesting at the service location and their service activities, and
3. at least one anti-poverty output and anti-poverty outcome. You must also provide information about data collection plans.

eGrants Instructions:

- In the Performance Measures section for Direct Service, enter the following information:
- Select a “Service Location Name Primary Focus Area” and “Focus Area” from the drop-down menus.
- Select an “Objective” from the drop-down menu.
- Enter a “Description” describing the poverty-related need for Summer Associates.
- Select a “Service Activity” from the Service Activities list and enter a brief description that best reflects the activities of Summer Associates.
 - If none of the service activity options listed represents the activities of Summer Associates, you may check the last box in the list and create your own service activity category in the text box.
- **Select at least one Output**
 You will collect and report data for any anti-poverty output you selected (see Data Collection below) in accordance with the definitions and protocols identified for that measure.

eGrants Instructions:

- Select at least one anti-poverty output that best reflects the results of the Summer Associates direct service activities at this service location for this project year.
 - You may select more than one output.
- If none of the anti-poverty output options listed represents the programming of Summer Associates, you may check the last box in the list and enter your own anti-poverty output.

- **Select Outcome**

You will collect and report data for any anti-poverty outcomes you selected (see Data Collection below) in accordance with the definitions and protocols identified for that measure.

eGrants Instructions:

- Based on the anti-poverty output you selected above, a list of anti-poverty outcomes will appear. Select the anti-poverty outcomes that best reflects the results of the Summer Associates direct service activities at this service location for this project year.
 - You may select more than one outcome.
- If none of the anti-poverty outcome options listed represents the programming of Summer Associates, you may check the last box in the list and enter your own anti-poverty outcomes.

- **Enter Data Collection Information**

eGrants Instructions:

- For each output and outcome measure, select a "Method: for collecting the data from the drop-down list. Then, enter an "Instrument Description." Describe how the instrument will be used, including how and when data will be collected and by whom.
- Enter the "Target Number" you expect to reach for the project year.
 - The "Unit of Measure" automatically appears if you select a measure from the list.
 - If you created your own output or outcome measure, you will need to create a corresponding unit of measure.
- For measures you selected from a list, you will collect and report data on future reports in accordance with the definitions and protocols identified for that measure in the [Performance Measures Instructions](#).

- **Enter the Number of Summer Associates**

eGrants Instructions:

- Enter the number of Summer Associates you are requesting to serve at this service location related to these anti-poverty performance measures for this year.
- Enter the number of Summer Associates in the box labeled "# of VISTAs Requested".

Once your selections have been made, click “I’m Done With This” to complete the set of performance measures.

Repeat to enter any additional anti-poverty performance measures for Summer Associates at this service location or other service locations.



Tip: If you have multiple service locations conducting similar programming, you can select “Duplicate” at the chart in the top to create a copy of this performance measure set and you can change individual fields. This is a shortcut to creating a whole new performance measure set.

When you are done adding performance measure information for the project, click on “Summary” to go to the Summary Screen.



Note: The Anti-Poverty screen is not applicable if you are requesting Summer Associates to perform direct service activities.

SUMMER ASSOCIATES: SUMMARY SCREEN

The Summary Screen shows all of the information you entered in the module.

- To print a summary of all performance measures at all service locations, click “Print All Performance Measures”.
- To print a summary from previous applications, click “Print PDF (By Project Year)”.
- To print a particular performance measure, expand the panels for the measure you are interested in and click “Print This Measure”.
- To edit a particular performance measure, expand the panels for the measure that interest you and click “Edit Performance Measure” to return to the Performance Measure screen.
- Select “Edit Data Collection” to return to the Data Collection section of the Performance Measure screen.
- Select “Validate Performance Measures” to verify this module prior to submitting your application.
- When you have finished entering performance measures and have successfully validated them, select “Back to eGrants Application” to return to the main application and complete any remaining sections in the application instructions.

BUDGET

[Standard projects](#) are not required to have a project budget.

Project budgets are only required for projects that receive [support grants](#). View the [Appendix](#) for additional instructions if directed by AmeriCorps staff.

REQUESTED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER SLOTS

Purpose: In this section, you will indicate how many VISTA Volunteers you are requesting.

As a reminder:

- The Standard/Federal “cost type” Volunteers are those whose living allowance is covered by the VISTA program.
- Cost Share/Non-Federal cost type Volunteers are those whose living allowance is either reimbursed (cost share) or directly funded (non-federal) by your organization.
 - For more information on cost-sharing Volunteers, visit our **Cost Share FAQs**.
- You must request at least one or more full-time Volunteers.
- You can request a Leader for every five full-time Volunteers.

The table below is an example of a completed request for slots:

Cost Type	Full-Time Volunteers	Leader	Summer Associates	Total Volunteers (Full-Time + Leader)	Total Positions (Slots)
Standard / Federal	20	1	N/A	21	21
Cost Share / Non-Federal	0	0	N/A	0	0
TOTAL	20	1	N/A	21	21

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Purpose: As part of your project application, you are required to email certain documents to your [AmeriCorps regional office](#) to verify your organization’s eligibility to be a partner.

If any of these documents have changed, email your [AmeriCorps regional office](#) with the subject line “VISTA Continuation Supporting Documents.”

After submission, please change the document’s status to “sent” in eGrants and document the change in the [Continuation Changes narrative](#).

- Copy of Financial Statement Audit or SF-990, if applicable
- Copy of Articles of Incorporation (not applicable to public entities)
- List of Board of Directors or governing body (not applicable if public entity)
- Organizational chart of the organization applying for resources
- Tax exempt status: IRS determination (not applicable to public entities)
- [AmeriCorps Applicant Operational and Financial Management Survey](#) (OFMS) (applicable only to Support Grant Project Type applications; found under the “Pre-Award Resources” of the [Manage Your Grant page.](#))

REVIEW

Prior to submitting the continuation application, you can navigate to each section to review or change what you have entered.

Please review the following:

- The [Submission Checklist](#) to confirm you have completed each step of the continuation application process
- Carefully read the information you have entered for the continuation:
 - Applicant Information
 - Application Information
 - Narratives
 - Summary of Accomplishments
 - Continuation Changes
 - Executive Summary
 - Need
 - Strengthening Communities
 - Organizational Capability
 - Project Design
 - Project Management
 - VISTA Assignment
 - Volunteer Management
 - Intermediary Justification
 - Budget/Cost Effectiveness
 - Summer Associates
 - Other (Only if directed to complete)
 - Service Locations
 - Performance Measures
 - Project Budget
 - Requested Number of Volunteer Slots
 - Supporting Documents

You can also view and print the information you have entered in the project application. The document opens as an Adobe PDF read-only file. You may print the project application in PDF format or save a copy of it onto your computer.

Once you submit the project application, you may not make changes unless it is returned to you by an AmeriCorps staff member in eGrants.

AUTHORIZE AND SUBMIT

Carefully read the Authorization, Assurances, and Certification sections.

Complete the following sections in eGrants:

- Authorization
- [Assurances](#)
- [Certification](#)

Authorized Representative:

- The individual who authorizes the application must be the applicant organization's authorized representative.
 - An authorized representative has the legal authority to enter into an agreement with the federal government and commit resources for your organization.
- To complete this section, the authorized representative must login to their account and go to the "Authorize and Submit" section.
 - The authorized representative must have their own eGrants account. To create an account, visit the [eGrants "Create an Account" page](#).

Verify & Submit:

You are required to verify your entire project application before submitting it in eGrants. Select "verify this project application," and eGrants will generate a list of any sections that need correction. When everything is complete and accurate, select "submit grant application to CNCS" from the available actions to finalize your submission.



Note: Submission of a continuation application does not guarantee an award of AmeriCorps VISTA resources.

Post Submission:

Once your continuation application is submitted, you will receive an automated notice from the system indicating your submission was successful.

Once a review is conducted, the regional office managing your application will contact you about next steps.

If you have questions regarding the review process, [contact the regional office](#) managing your application.

IF YOUR CONTINUATION IS AWARDED, WHAT ARE YOUR ONGOING RESPONSIBILITIES?

Reporting: Approved projects will be responsible for timely submission of periodic reports.

The reporting requirements are as follows:

- **Partner Verification Forms**

- Every pay period, the system generates a list of your active VISTA Volunteers. You must certify that they were serving during the previous pay period or indicate if a Volunteer left the project and the reason.

- **Progress Report**

- You must complete and submit Project Progress Report (PPR) via eGrants. The Project Progress Report describes your project's progress toward achievement of performance targets. Refer to the [Project Progress Report instructions](#) for current due dates. (Also, see the Memorandum of Agreement.)



Tip: To assist you in writing this section, you should familiarize yourself with our [Project Progress Reporting](#) requirements.

- **Progress Report Supplement:**

- You will also complete a VISTA Progress Report Supplement (VPRS) annually in November, or within sixty days of your project closing. This report collects information about your project's activities during the federal fiscal year (October - September) as opposed to your project year.

- **Federal Financial Reports** (applicable only to projects with cash grants):

- The Federal Financial Report (FFR) is a statement of expenditures associated with a support grant. More information can be found on the ["Manage Your Grant"](#) webpage.

Monitoring: AmeriCorps' Office of Monitoring ensures that AmeriCorps award recipients comply with the terms of their award, the memorandum of agreement, and if applicable, the Notice of Grant Award. They may monitor projects remotely or by conducting in-person site visits. You may hear directly from the Office of Monitoring, or regional office staff may contact you if your project is selected for a monitoring site visit.



APPENDIX

- Support Grant Budget Guidance and Instructions
- Memorandum of Agreement Provisions
- [Terms and Conditions for Support Grants](#)
- [Member Handbook \(English & Spanish\)](#)
- [Sponsor Handbook \(English & Spanish\)](#)

