

AmeriCorps Leaders in the VISTA Program

AmeriCorps leaders in the VISTA program are AmeriCorps alumni or returned Peace Corps volunteers who demonstrated exemplary skills and leadership in service. About 250 leaders serve each year throughout the country.

Purpose

AmeriCorps leaders support the success of AmeriCorps VISTA projects by supporting the successful service of members on the project. Leaders provide different functions depending on the needs of the project and individual members.

What Leaders Do

Specific responsibilities vary; most leaders are involved in supporting or expanding a new or existing project. Leaders help recruit, screen, and train members. They coordinate members and develop reporting and project management systems. Leaders promote information sharing, create a member support network, develop in-service training workshops, conduct site visits, and create model programs. Some apply for grants and conduct broad-based public awareness campaigns. In general, they set an example of leadership for members; ensure positive relations; facilitate idea sharing; and mediate issues with the community, the project, supervisors, and members.

Leaders do not supervise members (or other AmeriCorps-supported participants or volunteers). They are prohibited from preparing AmeriCorps project applications or applying for AmeriCorps grants. They are also prohibited from preparing and submitting progress reports, although they often assist in gathering information and data from members and site supervisors.

Examples of Supervisor Responsibilities and Appropriate Leader Roles

Task	Supervisor Responsibilities	Leader Support
Recruiting members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Interview top applicants▪ Nominate applicants for approval by AmeriCorps▪ Notify applicants of their selection▪ Accept applicants in eGrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Promote position▪ Assist in screening applications▪ Set up interviews for top applicants▪ Participate in interviews and provide input to supervisor

Member training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop training plan and submit for approval by AmeriCorps ▪ Finalize agenda ▪ Coordinate with leader regarding materials, speakers, logistics, etc. ▪ Implement training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft agenda based on plan ▪ Collate orientation materials ▪ Help identify guest speakers and facilitators ▪ Participate in implementing training
Reporting to AmeriCorps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicate data collection needs to members and leader ▪ Obtain data from leader ▪ Interpret data and write report ▪ Submit report to AmeriCorps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate collection of data from members ▪ Clarify points in reports with members, if needed ▪ Collate data and assist in interpretation

Requesting a Leader

AmeriCorps project sponsors with six or more members in the VISTA program who are interested in having a leader should contact their AmeriCorps Regional Office to discuss the opportunity. Coordination and planning should begin as the project is being developed or renewed for another year. Sponsors must provide a specific VISTA Leader Assignment Description with their request.