



## Arizona Food Bank Network (AzFBN)

### AmeriCorps VISTA Program

**Wish there was a way to affordably get additional full-time staff to increase your organization's impact?  
Hosting an AmeriCorps VISTA might be for you!**

AmeriCorps VISTA is a federal program that provides national service volunteers to local agencies to combat poverty. Think of it like a domestic version of the Peace Corps! People who serve through AmeriCorps VISTA agree to work for 40 hours per week for one year. During this time, they get a modest living allowance and other benefits including medical coverage (paid by AmeriCorps).

In 2017, AzFBN started a statewide AmeriCorps VISTA program to combat food insecurity. AzFBN now offers low-cost national service members (VISTAs) to hunger fighting organizations throughout the state! These organizations are called "Host Sites" and they develop projects for VISTAs to work on full-time.

#### VISTA Project Requirements

The VISTA's efforts must contribute to solutions that combat food insecurity. They carry out projects you put together that follow these guidelines. The projects:

- Help you (the host site) to better combat hunger long-term by increasing capacity. There is a lot of flexibility, so talk to AzFBN about potential project ideas!
- Activities can't include "intern work" or take the place of paid employees.
- Projects must last for at least a year, with a maximum of 3 years.
- VISTAs can't serve with organizations indefinitely, so the project needs to be sustainable – in other words, your organization will need to be able to continue the project without VISTA support within 3 years.
- Host sites (you!) can have multiple projects and VISTA members.

#### Who are AmeriCorps VISTA members?

- Caring people who agree to serve full time (40 hours per week) for one year.
- Everyone from recent college graduates to retired professionals, with desired qualifications and skills set by the host site (you!).
- People from across the nation, with a variety of different backgrounds. In exchange for service, AmeriCorps provides VISTAs a modest stipend (about \$17,600 per year), healthcare, loan forbearance, relocation allowance, and an end of service award of several thousand dollars. The host site **does not pay any portion of the stipend or benefits** to the VISTA.
- Learn more about VISTAs here: <https://americorps.gov/serve/fit-finder/ameri-corps-vista>



**AmeriCorps**



**Arizona  
Food Bank  
Network**

### Host Site Criteria and Requirements

Does this sound too good to be true? It is! Of course, there are things the Host Site will need to do in order to qualify and to make sure that VISTA service will be successful, both for you and for the volunteer, and criterion to apply. This includes:

- Being a federal, state, or local government agency; a government of an Indian nation; or a private or public nonprofit organization
- Developing and implementing a specific project that combats food insecurity.
- Paying a ‘cost share’, your **ONLY** cash obligation for a VISTA.
  - The host site *does not* pay the VISTA for any of their benefits. AmeriCorps pays the VISTA directly.
  - **Total cost share for 1-year for one full-time VISTA: \$5,000.00.**
    - A deposit of \$500 must be paid within the first 15 days of recruitment for the VISTA position. This \$500 paid will be deducted from the overall cost share, leaving \$4,500 to be paid within 90 days of the start date of the VISTA Member.
    - There are a limited number of scholarships for VISTAs that are available to host sites who have financial need. If you would like to host a VISTA, but cannot afford the full cost share, contact us about a scholarship!
- Providing everything the VISTA needs to do their work, including office space, a computer, and other office supplies.
- Reimbursing the VISTA for work-related travel (this does *not* include their daily commute).
- Providing orientation and training to the VISTA about your organization, their job, and the tasks they’ll need to accomplish to be effective.
- Providing daily supervision.
- Giving the VISTA access to professional development opportunities.
- Completing all required documentation, including:
  - An application form – AzFBN can provide this to you and help! Admittance is granted on a first-come, first-serve basis.
  - A Memorandum of Understanding that outlines your commitment to all of the above, as well as information about your organization and project.
  - Other reporting that happens several times during the course of the service year, in coordination with AzFBN staff.

### Interested? Here’s what you do now:

- Set up a time to speak about hosting a VISTA! Just email: [americorps@azfoodbanks.org](mailto:americorps@azfoodbanks.org)
- Things to think about before the call:
  - Your needs
  - Project ideas (Don’t worry, AzFBN staff can help you build your project!)
  - The \$5,000 cost
  - Who on your staff the VISTA will report to, the model of the position (remote, hybrid, or on-site), supplies needed for a full-time staff member, etc.

**Email [americorps@azfoodbanks.org](mailto:americorps@azfoodbanks.org) today and start your AmeriCorps/VISTA journey with help from AzFBN!**