



Request for Proposals

Serve VISTA Equity Fellow (Contract Opportunity)

I. Introduction

The Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia and the Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service seek applications for the Serve Philadelphia VISTA Program's VISTA Equity Fellow, to implement anti-racist practices for the SERVE Philadelphia VISTA program, as outlined below. The role is grant-funded and offered as an individual contract (1099 vendor) through the Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia. The fellow will work with and report to the Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service ("OCEVS").

II. Department Overview

The Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia (the "Fund") works in close partnership with the City of Philadelphia and private sector partners to develop and run initiatives that reflect Mayoral priorities and seek to improve the quality of life for all Philadelphians. The Fund will serve as the fiscal administrator for this contract opportunity. OCEVS will serve as the project manager for this effort on behalf of the Fund.

The Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement is positioned within the Office of Public Engagement in the City's Mayor's Office. OCEVS is committed to reducing barriers, increasing knowledge and expanding capacity to promote active participation among Philadelphians so that everyone is empowered to create lasting positive change. The work of OCEVS falls into three main buckets: National Service, Community Support and Internal City Support. OCEVS runs two AmeriCorps programs; the Serve Philadelphia VISTA Corps, the Foster Grandparent Program, and supports the network of National Service Programs throughout Philadelphia. OCEVS supports community members and nonprofits through our Civic Engagement Academy which hosts regular community organizing trainings and our Volunteer Engagement Program which provides training, support and infrastructure for both non-profits and individuals to connect to and increase volunteerism across the city. Finally, OCEVS provides internal support to City departments through training, consulting, and a city-wide engagement database to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of community engagement done by all departments and the City as a whole.

III. Program Background

The Serve Philadelphia VISTA Program is an initiative of the Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service for the City of Philadelphia. Serve Philadelphia VISTAs are full-time AmeriCorps VISTA members who serve in City Departments for one year working on sustainable and community-driven solutions to the effects and causes of poverty



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in Philadelphia. The Serve Philadelphia VISTA Program has grown significantly in the past few years and is now recruiting and supporting around 50 VISTA members.

The Serve Philadelphia VISTA program provides direct support to both the AmeriCorps VISTA members and the City Departments who host VISTAs. The program acts as the intermediary between the City departments where VISTAs are placed, and the federal grantor, AmeriCorps.

The Serve Philadelphia VISTA program recognizes that many current inequities are sustained by historical structures and systems that repeat patterns of exclusion. As aligned with the City of Philadelphia's Racial Equity Strategy, the Serve VISTA Program seeks to actively dismantle policies and practices that have advanced racial inequity.

Led by staff in the Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer service, the Serve Philadelphia VISTA program is working to embed anti-racist practices into the program's structure, systems, and outcomes. This process started with a re-examining the program's core values, practices and policies with an anti-racist lens. Most recently, in December 2020, the Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service hosted focus groups with alumni, supervisors and current VISTA members to gain valuable feedback and suggestions on improving all aspects of the program with a racial equity lens. With this additional feedback to guide the work, OCEVS is at a critical point in the process to do long term strategic planning.

The Mayor's Fund and OCEVS are seeking a yearlong Equity Fellow to build capacity for the VISTA Program to implement anti-racist strategic planning initiatives, especially as it relates to member recruitment, selection and retention.

IV. VISTA Program Equity Fellow Scope:

The Equity Fellow will build capacity for the VISTA Program to implement anti-racist strategic planning initiatives as it relates to member recruitment, selection and retention. The Fellow will work closely with Serve VISTA Program staff and Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service leadership.

This position reports directly to the Serve Philadelphia VISTA Program Manager.

A. Activities and Deliverables

April-June 2021



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Conduct research and gain understanding of the Serve Philadelphia VISTA Program structure, systems, and outcomes, the Philadelphia National Service landscape by supporting the program operations and attending key meetings and events

- Provide administrative support to the Serve VISTA member application and interview process in order to review and update VISTA application process map;
- Review key documents and data related to the Serve VISTA Program including feedback from focus groups, quarterly feedback surveys from members, and AmeriCorps grant requirements;
- Review key documents related to the Citywide Racial Equity Strategy;
- Conduct research on equitable application and hiring practices utilized by other National Service Programs, especially in Philadelphia.
- *Deliverables:* VISTA application process map and a document of resources and best practices in equitable hiring.

June 2021- October 2021

Redesign the Serve VISTA application and interview process, incorporating feedback from focus group sessions as well as best practices from Human Resources and Talent:

- Review application process, timeline and materials and create a 3-year strategic plan and goals for redesign including a timeline, benchmarks for implementation and equity goals that can be used to measure success on an annual basis;
- Support implementation of redesign, supporting staff to make appropriate changes for FY23 recruitment and selection;
- Develop resources, training and provide support for City departments and supervisors to ensure equitable selection process for members;
- Create and incorporate feedback tool for applicants into the annual Serve VISTA application process.
- *Deliverables:* 3-year strategic plan for internal and external stakeholders, compilation of equitable hiring resources and trainings, and an annual applicant feedback tool.

October 2021- January 2022

Support long-term VISTA Program development, outreach, and recruitment, incorporating feedback from focus group sessions

- Review outreach plans, partners and communications and support the development of goals to achieve diversity, equity, and inclusion outcomes;
- Support development of pilot programming with new recruitment pipelines into Serve VISTA Program;
- Review Project development timeline for City departments and process materials and make suggestions for changes.



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- *Deliverables:* outline of suggested goals and outcomes for VISTA outreach plans, framework for pilot program, and outline of suggestions for our project development process.

January 2022-March 2022

Develop strategies—including annual calendar of training and support for VISTAs and Supervisors—for retention of VISTA members incorporating feedback from focus group sessions.

- Review and attend current VISTA program trainings and opportunities and work with the program staff to develop a robust, anti-racist core curriculum for VISTA members;
- Develop annual calendar of supervisor workshops, trainings and other supports for City departments who host VISTA members.
- *Deliverables:* annual training calendar for supervisors and updated core curriculum for members.

B. Competencies and Skills

The Fund and OCEVS seek applications from individuals that can demonstrate the following competencies and skills:

- Relationship-building: ability to connect with individuals and build alliances among a wide range of stakeholders, from volunteers to senior City leaders.
- Project management skills: ability to stay on top of multiple projects and manage multiple deadlines, plans backwards and anticipates obstacles, identifies and involves stakeholders appropriately, uses resources wisely.
- Written and oral communications: can communicate effectively and concisely with a variety of stakeholders, highly detail-oriented and intentional.
- Continuous improvement: looks for ways to improve processes through critical reflection and feedback.
- Action oriented: an individual not afraid to roll up their sleeves and get into the details of the operation.
- Data driven approach to problem solving.
- Excellent people-centered customer service skills.

C. Qualifications

The Fund and OCEVS seek applications from individuals that can demonstrate the following competencies and skills:



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- 2-4 years experience in strategic planning, program development or program evaluation, or a combination of at least 2 of those areas of experience
- 1-3 years' experience in diversity, equity, and inclusion implementation across large organizations.
- Volunteer management or national service program management experience
- Prior experience working in government or similar large institutions
- AmeriCorps/Peace Corps service experience a plus

D. Compensation, Hours, and Location

The VISTA Equity Fellow will be under contract with the Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia. As such, this opportunity does not include a benefit package, and the incumbent will be expected to file taxes as a 1099 contractor. It is anticipated that this role would require a time commitment of 40 hours per week over a period of 1-year. This position is grant funded and the compensation is budgeted for \$25/hour. This role is offered as a remote work opportunity due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

E. How to Apply: Applicants should submit a CV/resume, writing sample, and cover letter to Claire Healy at ServeVISTA@phila.gov using the subject "Equity Fellow Application"

We expect to be conducting interviews in the last two weeks of March 2021. The Fellow's anticipated start date is April 5th 2021.

Incomplete submissions will not be considered. The City of Philadelphia and the Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia are Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employers. Women, minorities, people with disabilities, and candidates of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply