



## Guiding Opportunities AmeriCorps VISTA Member

### About Cities of Service

Cities of Service is a nonprofit organization that helps mayors build stronger cities by changing the way local government and citizens work together. We help coalition cities tap into the knowledge, creativity, and service of their citizens to help identify and solve critical public problems. Cities of Service supports a coalition of more than 280 cities, representing over 84 million people across the Americas and Europe.

With a data-driven focus on creating measurable results, Cities of Service provides counsel, expert technical assistance, and proven resources to city leaders and their staff. We bring coalition members together to share best practices, expand networks, and deepen relationships. We also design and manage competitive grant programs for cities that leverage our expertise in advising and connecting cities.

Since 2015, Cities of Service has placed AmeriCorps VISTA members in city halls across the country to build capacity and drive progress on pressing local challenges. Learn more about the impact and experience of past Cities of Service AmeriCorps VISTA members [here](#).

### About Guiding Opportunities

The Guiding Opportunities (GO) program builds capacity in six cities to engage community members in the Opportunity Zone (OZ) planning process. VISTA members develop the infrastructure for the city's OZ citizen engagement, expand partnerships with local community groups, coordinate workshops for relevant stakeholders, and support citizen-led activities in the community.

In 2019, Cities of Service awarded each winning city \$25,000 to support community visioning and volunteer initiatives that engage citizens in the OZ planning process. Two AmeriCorps VISTA members are placed in each winning city to serve as community engagement specialists. We are currently recruiting the second cohort of AmeriCorps VISTA members to support the GO program. Positions are available in:

- Atlanta, GA
- Dallas, TX
- Newark, NJ
- Oakland, CA
- St. Louis, MO
- Washington, D.C.

### Position Overview

Guiding Opportunities AmeriCorps VISTA members help ensure that the people who can benefit the most from Opportunity Zone investments have a voice in the process. This position requires a high level of community interaction, calling on AmeriCorps VISTA members to build relationships with residents and partner organizations. Guiding Opportunities AmeriCorps VISTAs report to the Chief Opportunity Zone Officer. This is a one-year, full-time AmeriCorps VISTA commitment commencing in **early September, 2020**.



Responsibilities include:

- In consultation with the Chief Opportunity Zone Officer, prioritize neighborhoods within designated OZs for engagement activities
- Conduct a landscape analysis of potential and existing partners and cultivate partnerships
- Conduct extensive outreach to ensure that community members beyond the usual suspects participate in engagement activities
- Plan and host a series of activities and events that engage citizens in a dialogue about local needs, their vision for the future, and local economic development
- Together with the Chief Opportunity Zone Officer, synthesize findings from engagement activities and apply those lessons to the city's OZ goals for those communities
- In the course of engaging stakeholders, identify local concerns that may be addressed through community-led volunteer projects
- Design and implement collaborative initiatives in partnership with community members, such as park rehabilitation, lot revitalization, or community cleanups
- Collect and report on the tangible impact of these community initiatives
- Other duties as assigned

### **Compensation and Benefits**

AmeriCorps VISTA members receive a modest living stipend set by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) based on the poverty rates for the [community where you're serving](#). After successfully completing a year of service, AmeriCorps VISTA members can receive an additional cash payment of \$1,800 or a Segal Education Award, worth approximately \$6,000. Education awards may be applied to existing student debt or future schooling and is matched by [many colleges and universities](#).

Benefits:

- 10 personal days and 10 sick days, in addition to any holidays observed by host city hall
- Deferment or forbearance on federal student loans to suspend payments during service
- Relocation assistance and settling-in allowance for members moving more than 50 miles to serve in a new community
- Participation in CNCS's Health Benefit Program
- Advantageous, non-competitive hiring eligibility status for future federal employment

### **Qualifications**

- Some college preferred
- Experience working in community engagement preferred
- Comfort interacting with community members and building relationships required

### **To Apply**

Applications will open in Spring 2020. Interested candidates should email a resume and direct any questions to [vista@citiesofservice.org](mailto:vista@citiesofservice.org).