



**AmeriCorps**

## **Rochester Youth Year 2025-2026 Call for Proposals**

In partnership with AmeriCorps, the University of Rochester Center for Community Engagement (CCE) is pleased to announce the availability of awards for the 2025-2026 Rochester Youth Year (RYY) AmeriCorps VISTA service term. We invite your organization to apply.

RYY engages and empowers local graduates to strengthen the capacity of community organizations in an effort to alleviate the effects of poverty for Rochester youth and families. They do this through indirect, capacity-building service – building systems, resources, and partnerships to advance the missions of their host organizations.

RYY AmeriCorps VISTA members can be invaluable resources in the development and implementation of new projects. Their service can increase the capacity of your organization to more efficiently meet its goals, advance its mission, implement innovative solutions, and promote equity in the community. VISTA members mobilize volunteers, leverage resources, expand partnerships, and more.

Since our inception in 2007, RYY AmeriCorps VISTA members:

- Leveraged **over \$8,413,272** of cash and in-kind resources
- Mobilized **13,193** volunteers, and coordinated **117,185** hours of volunteer service
- Increased the capacity of **70** host sites

### **Application Instructions & Timeline**

**January 20, 2025:** Email [hgbaguid@ur.rochester.edu](mailto:hgbaguid@ur.rochester.edu) indicating your intent to apply

**February 10, 2025:** Submit a complete project proposal application

1. Prepare Narrative section (3A – 3D) in **one comprehensive PDF document**.
2. Prepare a VISTA Assignment Description using the template provided.
3. Apply online at: <https://bit.ly/RYY-Proposal-25-26>
  - a. Submit sections 1 and 2 of this application directly through the online form.
  - b. Submit sections 3 and 4 as PDF attachments through the online form.

For more information, please visit [www.youthyear.org](http://www.youthyear.org). If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Halima Therese Gbaguidi by email at [hgbaguid@ur.rochester.edu](mailto:hgbaguid@ur.rochester.edu) or by phone at 585-274-0311.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glenn C. Cerosaletti".

Glenn Cerosaletti  
Director  
Center for Community Engagement  
University of Rochester

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Halima Therese Gbaguidi".

Halima Therese Gbaguidi  
Associate Director  
Center for Community Engagement  
University of Rochester

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Murphy".

Sarah Murphy  
Program Manager  
Center for Community Engagement  
University of Rochester



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**The full project proposal application is due **Friday, February 10, 2025.****

## **1. AGENCY & PROJECT INFORMATION**

Agency, contacts, and supervisor information will be submitted via the online form.

Will the project require the Rochester Youth Year AmeriCorps VISTA member to have a valid driver's license or personal vehicle? If so, please describe the nature and purpose for this project-related travel. Please also indicate whether this is a preference or a necessity. **Many Rochester Youth Year AmeriCorps VISTA members do not have access to a personal vehicle**, and we do take transportation needs into consideration when matching members to host organizations. Host organizations are required to reimburse members for project-related travel costs.

Select one or more priority area(s) under which this project falls:

- **Economic Opportunity:** VISTA will give priority to projects that support housing access, employment/workforce development, or financial literacy.
- **Education:** VISTA will give priority to projects that support school readiness, K-12 success, or postsecondary education.
- **Healthy Futures:** VISTA will give priority to projects that address obesity, food insecurity, health education, or access to health care.

## **2. DIRECT AND IN-KIND SUPPORT**

In the online form, please confirm that your organization will provide the following:

- ☐ Daily supervision and participation/cooperation with mandatory events (orientation, quarterly training, Annual Meeting, Closing Ceremony, site visits, ...)
- ☐ A robust orientation to the agency and the populations it serves
- ☐ Reimbursement of VISTA for service-related travel (mileage, etc.)
- ☐ Work space and equipment (including computer and phone)
- ☐ This is the cost share payment for 2025-2026, due by the end of the service term
  - **First-year projects: \$11,000**
  - **Second-year projects: \$12,000**
  - **Third-year projects: \$13,000**

Cost share payments allow Rochester Youth Year to meet the cost share requirements of our AmeriCorps grant. The amount corresponds with the AmeriCorps VISTA living allowance rate, which has increased significantly in recent years (although it's still well below New York's minimum wage).

**\*\* Please note that the cost share rate is subject to increase each year as a result of federal increases to the AmeriCorps VISTA living allowance \*\***



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### 3. PROJECT NARRATIVE

Please address sections A through D in a single PDF document.

If the project has hosted a member in the past, please reference previous accomplishments and explain how a new Rochester Youth Year AmeriCorps VISTA member could build upon these. Second- and third-year projects should advance the same overall goals that were identified for the first-year project.

#### A. Executive Summary

Provide a narrative of your proposed project, outlining the overall goals and project model you intend to move forward. (500 words maximum)

Include:

- Measurable, **poverty-related needs of the community you serve**. Focus on needs that will be *specifically* addressed by this project. Indicate how these needs were identified and how they relate to your organization's overall mission.
- At least **three objectives** for the project
- The **strategies** you envision implementing to achieve these objectives/goals
- How these goals and strategies address the **poverty-related needs** outlined above
- The **constituent population** the project will serve and collaborate with to achieve goals

#### B. Strengthening Communities

- i. How will the strategies implemented by the Rochester Youth Year AmeriCorps VISTA member build capacity for the project or organization? Describe how this capacity contributes to efforts that aim to bring families out of poverty. Proposals that actively and respectfully involve the community will be awarded additional points. (250 words)
- ii. Describe how the VISTA member will collaborate with other local agencies, community groups, or government offices in order to support the proposed project. Proposals that collaborate with area colleges will be awarded additional points. (250 words)

#### C. Project Management

- i. Provide a bullet point list of the skills and qualifications that the Rochester Youth Year AmeriCorps VISTA member should possess to successfully complete the proposed project.
- ii. Describe plans for daily supervision of the Rochester Youth Year AmeriCorps VISTA member. Be sure



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to identify any additional supervisors, close collaborators, and the department/office that the VISTA member will work with most directly. (250 words)

- a. If secondary or satellite sites will host/supervise the Rochester Youth Year AmeriCorps VISTA member, please list the names of those organizations and the names, titles, and contact information of staff members who may serve as satellite site supervisors. Describe the structure of their relationship to your organization.
- b. Describe plans to provide the Rochester Youth Year AmeriCorps VISTA member with a robust professional development experience. Particular attention should be paid to their on-site orientation training throughout the first month of service. (250 words)
- iii. Describe your plans for evaluating progress made on project goals. What are (measurable) key outcomes? What data will demonstrate the impact of the project? What deliverables, or tangible products, will be created? (250 words)

You can use the list of AmeriCorps VISTA performance measures as a resource. They can be found here: <https://bit.ly/VISTAPMs>.

#### **D. Organizational Capacity**

- i. Rochester Youth Year values accessibility. Describe how your organization is able to accommodate AmeriCorps VISTA members with disabilities. A description beyond “the organization is ADA-compliant” is required. (100 words)
- ii. Describe your agency’s work environment and culture. For example, what are your agency’s shared values? How do you promote collaboration and connection on your team? How are meetings structured? (250 words)

#### **4. Draft VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)**

Complete the VISTA Assignment Description template by listing objectives for the project and the activities needed to accomplish these objectives. VISTA assignments typically have 3-5 objectives. Please refer to the sample VAD provided as you consider style and content.

The VAD **should not include** direct service activities, administrative activities, or work that is overtly political/religious in nature. It should also not include activities or duties that would otherwise be carried out by employed workers, supplant the hiring of, or result in the displacement of employed workers.

Note that this is a draft assignment description. If your project is selected, our staff will work with your organization to develop this into a meaningful guide for service.