



Department of Commerce
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
LIFE • LIBERTY • AND YOU™

AmeriCorps VISTA: City of Philadelphia Department of Commerce Business Support Coordinator

Application deadline: 6/27/14

Start date: 08/26/14

Number of positions available: 1

Interested in small business development and economic revitalization efforts in Philadelphia?

The Department of Commerce offers a comprehensive neighborhood-based economic development program to encourage neighborhood revitalization, increase the level of economic investment in Philadelphia's neighborhoods, create neighborhood jobs and improve the quality of life in underserved areas.

Commerce is seeking one (1) VISTA to build on the work of previous VISTAs by strengthening the capacity for the Office of Neighborhood Economic Development and its partners involved in revitalization of targeted commercial corridors. An AmeriCorps VISTA position within Commerce is an excellent opportunity to see local government at work in the communities, to get out in the neighborhoods and meet business owners and community stakeholders, to be part of policy and investment decisions, and to make an impact on the economic well-being of Philadelphians.

The VISTA's responsibilities fall primarily into two categories:

- 1) **Support of Commerce's "capacity-building" programs focused on strengthening the skills and impact of community-based development organizations working in low-mod income neighborhood commercial corridors.** The VISTA will be involved as needed in communications and logistical planning.
- 2) **Business organizing along selected corridors with the goal of improving the commercial corridor environment.** Several of the focused commercial corridors are at new stages and require new revitalization strategies. With the corridors, the VISTA will primarily focus on the nascent cleaning and security programs, and organizational infrastructure.

Desired skills and qualifications:

- Strong community organizing and outreach background; demonstrated leadership in a team setting
- Experience in working with diverse ethnic and linguistic communities
- Knowledge of small business development issues, including but not limited to accounting, regulatory compliance, finance, and marketing and knowledge of City, State, and Federal economic development programs and local and national economic development nonprofit organizations
- Strong oral/written communication and record-keeping; event planning and coordination skills

- Experience in working in urban settings and willingness to travel locally and to visit businesses
- Detail-oriented, multi-tasking, and able to work cooperatively and independently
- Must be entrepreneurial, collaborative, flexible, resourceful and willing to take initiative
- Marketing and communications experience preferred; familiarity with Adobe Creative Suite a plus
- Familiarity with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) preferred
- Computer literacy and some interviewing/surveying experience
- Preferred - Demonstrated fluency in speaking and oral comprehension of Arabic, French (African French), Khmer, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, or Vietnamese
- Bachelor's degree
- Must be a Permanent Resident Alien or U.S. Citizen. You may be required to submit to a federal background check
- AmeriCorps VISTAs are required to reside in the City of Philadelphia during the service term

Responsibilities:

- Frequently visit and meet with corridor entrepreneurs, Business Associations, and Community Development Corporations on assigned commercial corridors to build relationships, and collect feedback from businesses and community members to use in the implementation of strategic programs
- Collect demographic and economic data of businesses and properties in targeted geographic areas and commercial corridors to assess needs and challenges
- Provide technical assistance and business services to immigrant businesses through one-on-one counseling and guided referrals
- Assist with coordination and evaluation of capacity-building programs; including, monitoring organizations' contracting process, organizing meetings with providers; assisting with research to aid in program implementation; collecting feedback and contributing to program evaluation
- Work closely with city agencies to assist in implementation of economic development plans or to find solutions for any outstanding issues
- Contribute to the design, coordination and outreach of corridor events
- Represent the Office of Neighborhood Economic Development and Commerce through public speaking engagements, presentations, or workshops to address the targeted business community's needs and assist with creation, coordination, and facilitation of such events
- Assist in the promotion of Commerce programs along the corridor. Monitor and document the contract and implementation processes for Cleaning, Storefront, SafeCam and Corridor Management programs

How to apply?

Please submit your resume and completed 2014-2015 SERVE Philadelphia VISTA Application to servephillyvistaapplication@gmail.com. The 2014-2015 SERVE Philadelphia VISTA Application can be downloaded at <http://volunteer.phila.gov/press/view/post/362>. Applicants will be reviewed on a rolling basis; application deadline is June 27, 2014.

AmeriCorps VISTA is the national service program designed specifically to fight poverty. Founded as Volunteers in Service to America in 1965 and incorporated into the AmeriCorps network of programs in 1993, VISTA has been on the front lines in the fight against poverty in America for more than 40 years. <http://www.americorps.gov/about/programs/vista.asp>

Schedule

SERVE Philadelphia 2014-2015 VISTAs will serve full time for a period of one year, beginning August 26th, 2014 and ending August 30th, 2015. All of the VISTA positions require full time service, with occasional responsibilities in the evening and on weekends.

SERVE Philadelphia VISTAs will participate in local orientation, regularly scheduled professional development sessions and bi-monthly team meetings throughout the year sponsored by the *Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service*.

SERVE Philadelphia VISTAs are required to attend a mandatory pre-service orientation prior to beginning their year of service. The August Cohort will have their Pre-Service Orientation in Philadelphia, PA from August 26th – August 29th, 2014. All transportation and lodging costs for Pre-Service Orientation (PSO) will be covered for individuals attending PSO who do not live in the City where their Orientation will be held. In addition, a small relocation allowance will be provided to individuals who relocate more than 50 miles to serve as a VISTA in Philadelphia.

Benefits

AmeriCorps VISTAs receive an annual living allowance of \$12,312 (\$472 every two weeks), before taxes. They also have the option to enroll in the VISTA Health Benefits Program. AmeriCorps VISTAs who are part of the SERVE Philadelphia VISTA team will also receive a monthly transportation pass.

Finally, AmeriCorps VISTAs who successfully complete their year of service can choose to receive either an Education Award of \$5,645 or End of Service Stipend of \$1,500. The Education Award, which is subject to taxation, can be applied to any federally backed student loan or used to pay tuition in the future.