



MONTANA
CAMPUS NETWORK
FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

MCNCE VISTA Program Overview

The Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement is the practice of engaging campuses – students, faculty and staff – in service to the community, instilling long-term civic engagement habits in those serving while making a credible contribution to community life. This Request for Proposal and application provides potential host sites an understanding of what it means to be a MCNCE VISTA host site.

As the largest higher education network in Montana, MCNCE is committed to making service, service learning, volunteerism, and civic engagement programming available to students, faculty, and staff. MCNCE’s current membership includes representation from Montana’s two- year, four-year, public, private, tribal, and community colleges and universities, as well as a state network office located in Missoula.

Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement Mission Statement: The Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement (MCNCE) advances the public purposes of colleges and universities by deepening their ability to improve community life and to educate students for civic and social responsibility.

Program Goal Statement: The Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement (MCNCE) provides resources and support to campuses and community partners that seek to improve educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged students and veterans.

MCNCE VISTA: MCNCE VISTA addresses poverty utilizing campus-community partnerships. MCNCE VISTA offer organizations and campuses the opportunity to build sustainable infrastructure; including partnerships, volunteers and programs, to address poverty problems. MCNCE VISTA utilizes a 6-stage community building lifecycle, which engages students and community members in needs assessment, strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation phases of the project.

MCNCE VISTA Project Focuses
K-12 Success and School Readiness
College Access and Success
Community Resilience
Veterans and Military Families

Annually, the Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement assesses organizational priorities and aligns them with the funder's priorities to determine the scope of MCNCE VISTA programming for the year. The following section outlines MCNCE funding priorities for AmeriCorps VISTA projects.

MCNCE gives priority to host sites proposing campus-community partnerships in the focus areas of 'Education' and 'Veterans and Military Families'. For campus-based projects, this means projects must address poverty-related problems surrounding higher education i.e. support services for economically disadvantaged students to improve post-secondary completion. For community-based projects, this means developing a formal partnership with the local campus, teaming up to engage the college campus in the VISTA project, e.g. a local United Way partners with the local higher education institution to leverage college students to serve as tutors in the afterschool program.

EDUCATION: MCNCE VISTA will give priority to projects that provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children and veterans.

K-12 Success and School Readiness: Educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools (enhance college readiness in K to 12 educations).

Post-secondary Success: Preparation for and prospects of success in post-secondary education institutions for economically disadvantaged students (improve college access and retention).

Community Resilience: MCNCE will support projects that focus on developing or enhancing the resilience or sustainability of communities, with priority given to projects addressing climate resilience. The focus of these projects should be on increasing resiliency of communities or populations that are low-income or at high risk of adverse impacts from climate change.

VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES: MCNCE VISTA will support projects that either focus specifically on low-income veterans and military families as beneficiaries or that enhance existing projects to begin or better serve low-income veterans and military families.

RURAL AND TRIBAL COMMUNITY FOCUS: In the interest of increasing support for rural and tribal communities, special consideration is provided to those meeting the above criteria.

Examples of MCNCE VISTA projects:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create an adult literacy awareness campaign and recruit/train volunteer tutors;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set up a campus veterans center; set up free and affordable afterschool programs;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a recruitment campaign for college students to serve with K-12 academic success programs;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand programs to help low-income families navigate college application/enrollment;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a mentoring program for students identified as at-risk of dropping out;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop systems for organized job shadowing and internship opportunities for students;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a STEM-based educational outreach for underserved students; and
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand veterans outreach for those returning to education after service.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perform a climate change risk assessment for a town, county, or geographic area
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinate an outreach and communications strategy to educate a community on climate resiliency practices.