



VISTA

50 years

Volunteers In Service To America

Community Summits & Events

★ Facilitator's Guide ★

50

The Anniversary
1965-2015

Corporation for
NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE 

AmeriCorps VISTA 50th Anniversary

Facilitator's Guide

Sample Activities

Program

As part of AmeriCorps VISTA's 50th Anniversary Campaign, the Community Solutions Summits will bring together a variety of national service and community members to:

- Identify community issues related to poverty
- Generate innovative community-based solutions

Purpose

The Community Solutions Summits are designed to:

- Build support for new and existing initiatives to address poverty at the local level
- Build relationships between AmeriCorps VISTA and other national service programs, community leaders and members, and other stakeholders interested in working together to end poverty in their community
- Build momentum & leadership for advancing community-driven solutions

As a Facilitator, your role is to:

- Establish a vision, process and set of desired outcomes for your Community Solutions Summit with input from key collaborators and stakeholders
- Invite community leaders, organizations, institutions, and engaged citizens to participate
- Adapt the sample Agenda to local skills, goals, and needs
- Facilitate Summit sessions to encourage new insights, ideas, connections, and solutions

Process [approx. 3 hours]

Meet & Mingle

[Open doors 30 min prior to start]

I. Opening [10 min]

Objective	Instructions
<i>Welcome</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome
<i>Set the tone</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions: Brief icebreaker activity. <i>Sample Activity:</i> Cluster 3-4 people to introduce themselves to each other and to share one thing they love and one thing they wish could be better about their community. Report out from a small handful of groups.
<i>Intros</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kick-off: Inspiring welcome or story from local leader and/or recording from the National Solutions Summit.

II. Impact of AmeriCorps VISTA Past and Present: [10 min]

Objective	Instructions
<i>Local History + Context</i> <i>Inspiration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AmeriCorps VISTA member/alum/sponsor/beneficiary tells a personal story about the impact of VISTA in their lives and communities. Facilitator/Organizer/AmeriCorps VISTA State Office staff/local sponsor shares the history of VISTA in our community and state.

III. AmeriCorps VISTA 50th Anniversary Campaign [5 min]

Objective	Instructions
<i>National Context</i> <i>Summit Overview</i> <i>Process Overview</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VISTA 50th Campaign Overview: Goals + Components [Why + How]. Community Solutions Summit Objectives: 1) Identify community issues related to poverty, 2) Generate innovative community-based solutions. Agenda Snapshot: Outline of the event agenda. Set a tone of openness to new people, ideas, and solutions.

IV. State of Poverty in Our Community [Discover] [15 min]

Objective	Instructions
<i>Build common understanding of key issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide global, national, or local snapshot of key issues and emerging trends. <i>Sample Activities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View selected talk(s) from National Solutions Summit. Guest speaker presents an overview of local issues, trends and data on poverty, health disparities, employment, education, environment, and other facts and conditions that have an impact on addressing poverty in the community.

BREAK

Optional: Break into small groups [5-8 people / group]

V. Community Vision [Dream] [30 min]

Objective	Instructions
<i>Identify a common vision for the room</i> <i>Envision success</i> <i>Identify a collective "Due North"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a common understanding of where the group envisions this community in the near and distant future. What underlies a shared vision of success? <i>Sample Activity: New York Times Headline</i> Facilitator describes a template with the New York Times [or local newspaper] at the top and the date five years from today. Draw this out at the front of the room or provide a template (8.5 x 17" paper) at each table. Ask all participants to close their eyes and envision their community in five years. In this future reality, major resources have materialized to tackle poverty and serious progress has taken place. People's biggest aspirations for their community are beginning to come true. This is a day where we are celebrating some big wins. Envision the front page of the newspaper. On your own, write down what you see on that front page. What is the headline? [5 min]



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share each individual headline within your small group. Discuss common elements. Rewrite the headline based on areas of overlap. [10 min] • Share each small group headline with the room. Discuss what changes and accomplishments have taken place to effectively address poverty. Facilitator helps to develop one overarching headline for the entire room. [15 min]
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VI. Solutions & Priorities [re-Discover] [45-60 min]

Objective	Instructions
<i>Brainstorm a set of solutions</i> <i>Identify common themes</i> <i>Prioritize specific solutions</i> <i>Create small workgroups</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the changes that the community wants to see, brainstorm a set of solutions that would move key issues forward in the short term (6 to 12 months) • Solutions can be new <i>or</i> current approaches, programs and strategies. <i>Remind participants they can propose projects they are already leading or supporting.</i> • Select a subset of these solutions to carry forward into workgroups. <p><i>Sample Activity: All on the Wall</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator writes this question at the front of the room: What solutions can be identified, cultivated and implemented at the local level in order to achieve our community's vision? • Participants are given 3-5 large index cards. In pairs, one person lists solutions while their partner listens and writes one idea per index card. Switch roles after 2 minutes. [5 min] • Each pair shares its best solutions with the small group, and the group clusters similar ideas together. Small groups choose 3-5 top solutions for their table. [15 min] • Each small group presents its top solutions to the room. As groups present, they post ideas to the wall and any similar ideas between groups are clustered together. [20 min] • Participants are given 5 dots to identify the top solutions they want the community to work on and advance. They can spend all 5 dots in one place or distribute them across several projects. [5 min] • Facilitator identifies top solutions based on voting. Participants choose one of these projects as their workgroup. Ideally workgroups will be 3-8 participants. [5 min]

VII. Community Solutions Work Groups [30 min]

Objective	Instructions
<i>Meet your workgroups</i> <i>Identify assets and challenges for your idea</i> <i>Develop roles and timeline</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants introduce themselves to their workgroup. Name, affiliation, and why they chose this solution. [5 min] • Capture ideas and timeline on a large newsprint or template. Identify a group scribe. • Discuss / brainstorm answers to the following questions [25 min]: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project Title ○ Project Description – <i>What is the idea you are implementing?</i> ○ Audience/Purpose – <i>Who is this serving?</i> ○ Needs – <i>What do you need to be successful? What are known barriers?</i> ○ Assets – <i>Who is already working on this issue?</i>

IX. Closing: Wrap-up + Thank You [10 min]

Objective	Instructions
<i>Share Experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report out on summit experience. Questions or Comments.
<i>Close out</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspiring closing talk from AmeriCorps VISTA member/alum/beneficiary [3-5 min]. Thank you to participants, organizers, sponsors and supporters.

X. Optional Reception

Objective	Instructions
<i>Mix + mingle</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals may want to gather after the summit to celebrate, network, and reflect.
<i>Celebrate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summit venue may be appropriate for a reception or you may wish to plan it at an informal, public space.

Place

On the walls	On the tables	Additional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City / Town / Neighborhood Map Data Visualization for Key Issues / Indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agenda Large index cards [5 per person] and colored dots [5 per person] Markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refreshments (if appropriate) Music (during mingle)

Participants

Community Solutions Summits will mobilize people in a city, town or neighborhood.

In order to build strong and sustainable projects, summit organizers should make sure that at least 5 to 10 local leaders attend to provide insight and support and potentially become a workgroup leader. Local leaders should be invited and encouraged to attend because they have a demonstrated track record and investment in their particular idea or project. That being said, the solutions summit serves as an opportunity to pull from the resources in the room.

Participants may include AmeriCorps VISTA members/Leaders/sponsors/beneficiaries/alumni and other national service program participants, community leaders, long-time as well as new residents, business owners, community group members, artists, visionaries, entrepreneurs, start-ups, non-profits, public agencies, philanthropists, and technical advisors.



Projects

Project ideas can be traditional or innovative approaches, which by design empower the community to identify and develop new ways to reduce poverty. Projects can range from ambitious, large-scale ideas to small, community-focused projects. Projects and ideas are free to evolve over the course of the summit based on group discussions.

Sample projects and potential leaders:

- Let's **improve one block** in our neighborhood | Community Association Leader
- Let's reuse a **vacant lot** for a community garden | Public Agency
- Let's make our communities more **walkable** | Local Designer
- Let's start an **arts** and storytelling festival | Arts Organizer
- Let's develop a **workforce** for veterans and military families | Business Leader
- Let's provide **wellness visits** for children aged 0-2 | Nurse
- Let's welcome new **immigrants** to our community | Migrant Advocate

Sample Templates:

Headline Activity

The New York Times

VOL. CL. XXII., No. 61,254

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NEW YORK, FRIDAY, FEB 21, 2020

\$8.00

[YOUR HEADLINE HERE]

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Community Celebrates Stunning Success Over Poverty,
Feb 21, 2020

Project Plan

<h1>[Project Title]</h1>		<h1>[Logo]</h1>														
<h2>[Project Description]</h2> <p><i>WHAT IS THE IDEA YOU ARE IMPLEMENTING?</i></p>																
<h3>[Audience]</h3> <p><i>WHO IS THIS SERVING?</i></p>	<h3>[Needs]</h3> <p><i>WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL?</i></p>	<h3>[Assets]</h3> <p><i>WHO IS ALREADY WORKING ON THIS?</i></p>														
<h2>[Project Timeline]</h2> <table border="1"><tr><td>TODAY</td><td>MONTH 1</td><td>MONTH 2</td><td>MONTH 3</td><td>MONTH 4</td><td>MONTH 5</td><td>MONTH 6</td></tr><tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr></table>			TODAY	MONTH 1	MONTH 2	MONTH 3	MONTH 4	MONTH 5	MONTH 6							
TODAY	MONTH 1	MONTH 2	MONTH 3	MONTH 4	MONTH 5	MONTH 6										
<h3>[Next Steps]</h3> <p><i>WHAT WILL YOU ACCOMPLISH IN YOUR NEXT MEETING?</i></p>		<h3>[Team Members]</h3> <p><i>OUTLINE ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES</i></p>														

