



## Request for Proposals (RFP) 2019 – 2020

### RFP Process Key Dates

Individual Technical Assistance Calls (30-mins)		Email <a href="mailto:kbarger@calstate.edu">kbarger@calstate.edu</a> to schedule
Technical Assistance Webinars Join: <a href="https://calstate.zoom.us/j/168875942">https://calstate.zoom.us/j/168875942</a>	<i>Program Overview</i>	December 17, 2018 12-1pm January 7, 2019 12-1pm
	<i>Data and Project Planning</i>	January 14, 2019 12:00-1:30pm
<a href="#">Intent to Apply Form</a>		January 18, 2019
Proposal Deadline		February 11, 2019
Award Announcement		March 1, 2019
Awardee Webinar		March 11, 2019 11:30-1:30
VISTA Member Hiring Deadline		June 7, 2019
VISTA Member Start Date		July 8, 2019

## OUR OBJECTIVE

*The CSU STEM VISTA program focuses on eliminating race, class and gender disparities in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) undergraduate degree programs.* We recognize that systems and institutions in the United States, including the California State University (CSU), were not created with people of color, low-income communities and women in mind. We are seeking dedicated CSU campus teams that aspire to improve STEM student retention and completion rates, primarily for students of color, Pell-grant recipients, women and students who are first in their family to attend college.

Our program is unique in that we do not provide grant funding, but rather a full-time individual. Campus teams will focus on the entering 2019 first-time full-time cohort as they progress to degree completion. Campuses will be awarded a VISTA position for four years (2019-2023) to enable them to track and support the 2019 cohort through their degree completion. The full-time VISTA member will help build long-term sustainability by focusing on building the capacity, leveraging resources, expanding scale and reach, and enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of your STEM student success efforts.

To do our work, we utilize sustainable, asset-based approaches to STEM education reform, including Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth Model<sup>i</sup>. The traditional models of education reform focus on the deficits of students. Our program invites campus teams that believe in and will utilize an asset-based approach over the next four years to examine and enhance institutional culture and learning environments for all students.

To track our progress, monitoring 6-year graduation rates and annual retention rates is not enough. Over the next four years, campus teams will focus their efforts on deepening their understanding of institutional barriers and identifying success indicators along STEM students' progression to degree. While the largest attrition typically takes place between the first and second year, we continue to lose students in subsequent years, with leaving patterns that vary by different groups of students<sup>ii</sup>. Campus teams should target their actions accordingly to address these leaving patterns.

Through participation in this program, CSU STEM VISTA will:

- Support campus teams in effectively using data to improve student retention and completion by identifying institutional barriers and STEM student success indicators, specifically for students of color, Pell-grant recipients, women and students who are first in their family to attend college.
- Provide a full-time VISTA member for four years to build capacity for implementing and/or enhancing opportunities for STEM students to excel in and complete STEM baccalaureate degrees.
- Share effective foundational approaches, frameworks and tools designed to engage and support students of color, Pell-grant recipients, women and students who are first in their family to attend college.
- Connect campus teams across the CSU system to share insights, expand the use of evidence-based practices and collectively achieve our shared goal of eliminating equity gaps in STEM.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

Obtaining a college degree has never been more important. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, employment in STEM occupations has and will continue to grow much faster than employment in non-STEM occupations. By 2020, about 65% of American jobs will require some form of college<sup>iii</sup> and 80% of STEM jobs will require a postsecondary degree. On average, those who have a bachelor's degree earn nearly \$1 million dollars more over their lifetime than high school graduates that have not attended college<sup>iv</sup>.

There have been many efforts over the last decade to increase the number of college degree holders, but too few students who begin college make it to graduation. In the United States, only six in 10 students who enroll in a four-year college finish within six years and the difference in degree attainment continues to be disproportionately associated with socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, and family history in higher education<sup>v</sup>. As a nation, we have made little progress in closing these gaps over the last decade; having only closed the gap between white and underrepresented minority students (URMs) college graduation rates by less than one percent<sup>vi</sup>.

STEM students in the CSU system fare slightly better than national trends, but similar gaps remain<sup>vii</sup>. In the United States, nearly half of students who start in STEM degree program fail to complete their degree in STEM in 6-years. Nearly half of White and Asian American students majoring in STEM complete a degree in 6 years, while less than one-third of Latino students, just under one-quarter of Native American students, and just over 20% of African-American students completed a STEM degree within 6 years<sup>viii</sup>. Additionally, of those majoring in STEM, one-quarter of Pell-grant recipients dropped out of college<sup>ix</sup>.

As the largest, most diverse university system in the country, the CSU plays a critical role in meeting STEM career demands. The CSU is one of California's largest producers of STEM college graduates in the state, one in ten California employees are CSU graduates, and nearly half of the state's Bachelor's degrees are awarded by the CSU. In 2016, the CSU served more than 125,000 STEM students. The students we need to meet the workforce demand are already on our campuses and have already declared majors in STEM. Campus teams have the opportunity to eliminate race, class and gender disparities in STEM and graduate all of our existing STEM students through the CSU STEM VISTA program.

## OUR FUNDER



Our funder, [AmeriCorps VISTA](#), is a national service program of the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#) (CNCS). Often referred to as the domestic Peace Corps, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) has been fighting poverty in America since 1965. VISTA projects focus on mobilizing resources in low-income communities to create lasting growth and enhance the development of organizations or projects. Our funder does not provide grant funds, but rather a full-time individual for one year, a VISTA member, who is a short-term resource to create lasting change.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

**ELIGIBILITY:** All CSUs are eligible and we invite proposals from campus teams committed to and working towards closing equity gaps in STEM degree programs. Campuses may submit multiple proposals. If multiple departments within a STEM college are interested in applying, we strongly suggest submitting a collaborative proposal. Proposals may request multiple VISTA positions if appropriate based on the scope of work.

For this RFP, STEM is defined as life and physical science, engineering, mathematics, and information technology, excluding social and health sciences.

**CONTINUATION:** Campus teams must meet the expectations outlined in the MOU and submit a continuation justification in January each year to be eligible for continuation of their VISTA award for the following academic year.

**COST SHARE:** Selected campus teams are required to pay an annual cost share of \$5,500 per VISTA member. The cost share follows common practice in CNCS funded programs and allows the program to provide professional development and support for both VISTA members and campus teams. The CSU STEM VISTA program reserves the right to increase the cost share amount by a maximum of 10% each academic year.

**CAMPUS TEAM:** Through the proposal writing process, it is recommended that campuses establish a team that can commit to participation in the VISTA program across the four years. Campus teams should promote a unified vision for their STEM students and be committed to collaborating and connecting the strengths of existing successful equity and asset-based projects. Campus teams should include representatives from the key departments, offices and programs involved with your proposed projects (deans, associate deans, department chairs, faculty members, faculty and professional advisors, financial aid representatives, student support program staff, faculty developers, institutional researchers, etc.). We strongly encourage selecting campus team members who identify with the student groups you are aiming to serve.

**SUPERVISION:** Proposals must designate a committed supervisor, who is also a campus team member (ideally for all four-years). This person will be the primary point of contact for the VISTA program and must have the capacity to attend in-person trainings, periodic webinars and provide day-to-day supervision, guidance and support for the VISTA member. At minimum, we recommend that 10% of the supervisor's time weekly (4 hours) be dedicated specifically to the management of the project and supervision of the VISTA member. Supervisors should have a desire to coach and mentor an emerging professional. We also highly recommend that the workspace provided for the VISTA member be in close proximity to the supervisor's workspace. *Campus teams may identify a different supervisor each year given the context of the planned project(s) for that academic year.*

**REPORTING:** Campus teams must submit an annual report to the VISTA program in August. Additionally, VISTA members submit quarterly progress reports. Failure to submit the required annual and quarterly reports may result in the termination of your VISTA award.

**RESOURCES:** VISTA members receive several [benefits](#) as part of their service<sup>1</sup>. Campus teams are required to work with their human resources department to give the VISTA member a designation (typically ‘CSU volunteer’) that will provide them access to the following required resources:

- Secure office/desk space with office supplies in close proximity to the supervisor
- Daily access to a computer with internet, phone with voicemail, fax, photocopier and printer
- Individual CSU email account with privileges equal to faculty/staff (not a student email)
- Access to building (codes or keys) if necessary
- Parking permit
- Campus ID with library privileges
- Travel budget to cover the costs of travel to off-site meetings as a part of their duties (reference section [VII.B.4 of the CSU travel policy](#))

**VISTA RECRUITMENT:** Campus teams are required to help advertise and recruit for the available VISTA positions. The CSU STEM VISTA program will recruit on a national and statewide level.

## PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Submit proposals via email to [kbarger@calstate.edu](mailto:kbarger@calstate.edu) by **midnight on February 11, 2019**. Proposals should be single-spaced using 12-point font and include page numbers. Submit all proposal documents as one compiled PDF.

**PROPOSAL CHECKLIST:** The PDF of your compiled proposal should include the following documents.

- I. **Proposal Cover and Signature Page:** Complete and include the [proposal cover and signature page](#).
- II. **Proposal Narratives:** The proposal narratives must follow the instructions detailed below.
- III. **Data Tables:** Complete and include the [Template Data Tables 1, 2 and 3](#).
- IV. **VISTA Assignment Description (VAD):** Complete and include the [VAD template](#).
- V. **Supervisor Commitment:** Complete and include the 2019 – 2020 [Supervisor Commitment Form](#).
- VI. **Organizational Chart:** Include an organizational chart for the division in which the VISTA activities will take place. You may need to include multiple organization charts if your proposed activities include multiple divisions. Be sure to include the campus team members and the VISTA member.

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<sup>1</sup> Campus teams can provide additional non-cash support to their VISTA member, such as meal plans, access to campus fitness center, public transportation passes, access to free or reduced courses, conference attendance, or access to free or reduced on-campus housing. Additional direct cash payments beyond the VISTA living allowance are prohibited.

## II. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- A. Campus College/Department Overview** (max 300 words): Briefly describe the college or department’s mission, goals, and key programs or services provided as it pertains to serving your identified STEM target student population.
- B. Data Informed Decisions:** Proposals must provide disaggregated institutional data as identified below using the data templates. Based on the data, proposals will identify long-term goals and first year outcomes, decide on evidence-based strategies and interventions, and develop annual projects and timelines.
- **Retention and Graduation Data Tables:** Provide first through fourth year retention rates and 4- and 6-year graduation rates for the 2011 and 2012 cohort of first-time, full-time students for your identified target group disaggregated by race/ethnicity or URM status, gender, Pell-grant and first-generation status<sup>2</sup>. To reiterate, this data should only include those students in your STEM student target group. When disaggregating, please provide the number of students and the percentage of students enrolled. Use [Data Template Tables 1 and 2](#).
  - **First-Year Student Success Indicators Data Table:** Provide additional data about barriers or success indicators in the first year for the 2017 cohort of first-time, full-time students for your identified target group. If possible, disaggregate by race/ethnicity or URM status, gender and Pell-grant and first-generation status. We provided a list of possible student success indicators<sup>x</sup> to explore. This list is not comprehensive. Provide data on at least six of the possible success indicators. Use [Data Template Table 3](#).
  - **Additional Qualitative Data** (max 350 words): Share any additional, relevant qualitative data about your identified target STEM student population (e.g. indirect assessment of student outcomes – NSSE, CIRP, CURE; student surveys and focus groups; etc.).
  - **Data Narrative** (max 500 words): Based on the data, share your observations. What stands out? Which students are succeeding? Which students are leaving? What first-year indicators can you identify that cause barriers or challenges for students? What else do you want us to know about the data you’ve shared? What data from the template tables did you not have access to and why?

### Possible Student Success Indicators:

- Fall to Spring Semester Retention Rates
- 30 Units Completed in Year 1
- Completed College/Career Success Course
- Completed GE Math/B4 Quantitative Reasoning Course Year 1
- Completed GE English/A2 Written Communication Course in Year 1
- Completed Summer Credits
- Received a DFW in at least one course in Year 1
- Registered on Time for Courses
- Math Proficient at Entry
- English Proficient at Entry
- Average High School GPA
- Average SAT Score
- Other Qualitative Data

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<sup>2</sup> We are defining first-generation as students who come from families where both parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree.

- C. **Equity and Asset-Based Approaches** (max 500 words): Proposals should include implementation-ready projects that utilize equity and asset-based approaches. Provide two successful examples of how you are currently using equity and/or asset-based strategies, interventions or programs and describe how you know these approaches are working for STEM students.
- D. **VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)**: Follow [VISTA Assignment Description](#) instructions and complete the template.
- E. **Campus Team** (max 500 words): In relation to the VISTA projects, describe the roles and responsibilities of each team member and their reason for wanting to serve on the campus team. How will their role influence and support the VISTA project(s)? During the 2019-2020 academic year, how often will the team commit to coming together to monitor and review project progress? How will the team share responsibility for convening and facilitating the meeting(s)? If you have not established a team, how will one be created by November 2019?
- **Organizational Chart**: Include an organizational chart for the division in which the VISTA activities will take place. You may need to include multiple organizational charts if your proposed activities include multiple divisions. Be sure to highlight the campus team members and the VISTA member.
- F. **Supervision**: Proposals must have a confirmed commitment from the VISTA supervisor identified for the 2019 – 2020 academic year and the 2019-20 supervisor should complete the [Supervisor Commitment Form](#). On the form, please also identify the prospective VISTA supervisor for each year thru 2023.
- G. **VISTA Recruitment Statement** (max 150 words): Summarize the position including your campus and team name, details about the project(s) and the duties of the VISTA member. Include the overall project goal, target population, desired skills, abilities, background and knowledge. You might highlight your campus/office culture. Recruitment statements are posted on our website and the national service database; therefore, it should “sell” the position. This is not an abstract of your proposal, but rather an opportunity for you to describe the position compellingly to candidates who apply to the VISTA program. You want your recruitment statement to stand out. *This recruitment statement should be print-ready.*

## REFERENCES

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- <sup>i</sup> Yosso, Tara J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8:1, 69-91, DOI: [10.1080/1361332052000341006](https://doi.org/10.1080/1361332052000341006)
- <sup>ii</sup> Yeado, J., Haycock, K., Johnston, R., & Chaplot, P. (2014). Learning from High-Performing and Fast Gaining Institutions: Top 10 Analyses to Provoke Discussion and Action on College Completion. Washington, D.C., The Ed Trust. [https://1k9gl1yevnfp2lpq1dhrqe17-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/PracticeGuide\\_0.pdf](https://1k9gl1yevnfp2lpq1dhrqe17-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/PracticeGuide_0.pdf)
- <sup>iii</sup> Ma, J., Pender, M., & Welch, M. (2016). Education Pays 2016, Trends in Higher Education Series, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections <https://trends.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/education-pays-2016-full-report.pdf>
- <sup>iv</sup> Carnevale, A., Rose, S., and Cheah, B. (2014). The College Payoff: Education, Occupations, Lifetime Earnings, Center on Education and the Workforce. <https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/collegepayoff-complete.pdf>
- <sup>v</sup> Asai, D. (n.d.). A New Strategy to Build Capacity for Creativity. Howard Hughes Medical Institute. <https://www.hhmi.org/content/new-strategy-build-capacity-creativity-science-education>
- <sup>vi</sup> Completion and Success. (2014). The Education Trust. <https://edtrust.org/issue/completion-success/>
- <sup>vii</sup> Kezar, A., & Holcombe, E. (2017). Creating a unified community of support for underrepresented students in STEM: Lessons from the CSU STEM Collaboratives project. Los Angeles: Pullias Center for Higher Education.
- <sup>viii</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2016. Barriers and Opportunities for 2-Year and 4-Year STEM Degrees: Systemic Change to Support Students' Diverse Pathways. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/21739>.
- <sup>ix</sup> Chen, X. (2013). STEM Attrition: College Students' Paths Into and Out of STEM Fields (NCES 2014-001). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014001rev.pdf>
- <sup>x</sup> Offenstein, J., Moore, C., and Shulock N. (2010). Advancing by Degrees: A Framework for Increasing College Completion. IHELP and The Education Trust. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED511863.pdf>