



AmeriCorps

2023-24 ECO AmeriCorps

Communications and Outreach Coordinator

Environmental Careers and Opportunities (ECO) AmeriCorps is an AmeriCorps program within the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC). ECO AmeriCorps is funded in part by an AmeriCorps state grant provided through SerVermont from the Corporation for National & Community Service. Service sites will provide meaningful service opportunities, regular supervision with oversight of service hours and timesheets, office space and office equipment, orientation to the worksite, additional training (as needed) and mileage reimbursement. The 2023-2024 program will begin mid-September 2023 and end in August 2024.

To be considered, service sites must:

- Demonstrate a commitment to DEIJ principles and provide a pathway for involvement at the host site and program level.
- Be a non-profit, municipality, state agency, tribal government, or educational institution.
- Provide a position description showcasing activities that are appropriate to the mission of ECO AmeriCorps.
- Provide a work environment that is ADA compliant, drug-free, and carries supplies and equipment necessary for members to perform their duties.
- Be able to provide the cash match and mileage reimbursement at the federal General Services Administration (GSA) rate for service-related travel for the member.
- Attend a supervisor orientation and be available for a minimum of two subsequent site visits and check-ins from ECO AmeriCorps staff.
- Clarify any additional responsibilities to the member according to your organization's policies.
- Notify ECO AmeriCorps staff about conflicts or other issues as they arise.

Other Requirements and Responsibilities:

- Confirm member selection, on-site training, member supervision and support throughout term of service, other forms and documentation as required by AmeriCorps, mileage reimbursement for service-related travel.
- Main supervisor must attend AmeriCorps supervisor orientation (or make special arrangements).

Host Site cost based on # of full-time employees:

Full-Time (1,700 hours over 11 months)

- 0-3 \$8,000
- 4-10 \$9,000
- >10 \$10,500

Half-Time (900 hours over 6 months)

- \$5,250 regardless of size

Quarter-Time (450 hours over 3 months)

- \$2,625 regardless of size

For more information about the host site application:

- Visit the ECO Website for supporting documents: www.ecoamericorps.org
- Or contact Program Supervisor, Dustin Bowman, dustin.bowman@vermont.gov, 802-461-5222

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation is sponsoring AmeriCorps positions through its AmeriCorps Program. The State of Vermont is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Positions are open to all applicants without regard to race color, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, veteran's status, religion, or creed.

Name of Organization or Municipality:

Vermont Center for Ecostudies

Address of Organization or Municipality:

20 Palmer Court, 2nd Floor White River Junction, VT 05001

Primary Supervisor Name and Title:

Emily Anderson, Director of Science Communications

Primary Supervisor's email:

eanderson@vtecostudies.org

Primary Supervisor's phone #:

(802)989-4128

Please provide a brief description of your role at your site:

I oversee all VCE communications, which includes supporting the Communications Assistant, helping to develop print publications, coordinating communications needs with science staff and development team, building communications collaboration with other science communications professionals in Vermont, website maintenance, and media strategy.

Which hosting category are you applying to?

Full-Time (September-August)

What is the title of the position you are requesting?

Communications and Outreach Coordinator

Describe your proposed service project.

[Note: performance measures are based on improved acres of public land, improved miles of waterways or trails, number of Vermonters provided environmental stewardship education or training, and number of members placed in green jobs after completing their AmeriCorps service. Capacity- building activities are allowed. Please describe any projected impact.]

Our AmeriCorps member will have two main focuses. The first is to schedule and lead in-person talks and workshops explaining VCE's work and introducing new people to participating in community science. These will include tabling at relevant events, collaborating with school classes and community programs, hosting naturalist walks, and teaching people how to use community science tools. The AmeriCorps member's other primary focus will be developing two different series of articles, one highlighting aspects of VCE's work relevant to land owners and the other providing "from the field" updates on VCE's various research projects. The AmeriCorps member will also help develop social media content and campaigns, update VCE website pages, learn how to use communications tools (such as Constant Contact), get to see how print publications move from start to finish, and much more. Other opportunities not directly related to this position include assisting VCE staff members with data collection.

What data collection tools will the member use to record the impacts of their service activity?

Google Analytics for determining environmental stewardship education reach of writing projects, social media analytics for posts and social media campaigns (education impact), records of number of presentations given and attendees.

Please provide any additional information (data, statistics, reports, etc.) that demonstrates the compelling need for the proposed position:

As VCE grows as an organization, we have more program and content requests than we currently have capacity to keep up with. Although I don't have any specific reports, I can say that we regularly receive requests for workshops and tabling that current staff don't have time for. These broader-overview workshops are essential to recruiting more community scientists and expanding the reach of our work.

What initiatives does your organization take to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice (DEIJ)? Please include any historical data or details for on-going strategic plans, partnerships, and projects, as relevant.

Over the past few years, VCE has expanded its focus on DEIJ. Within the past few months, we have formalized our DEI committee, creating a charter and by-laws to guide our work within the organization. We have also applied to and been accepted into the Upper Valley Equity Exchange working group (UVEX). This working group brings together a handful of Upper Valley organizations to learn from a facilitator and explore how we can make our organizations and community more diverse and equitable. Last year, we also launched our Future Ecologists internship, which focuses on providing conservation and research skills to up to two BIPOC interns. We are already hiring for this opportunity again this year. We also contracted a DEI consultant last year, who has led our organization through one training so far. Finally, our board is fully supportive of our DEI focus, and we are actively prioritizing diversity with new board member additions (all

three newest members are women and two identify as people of color). Our DEI statement is available on our website: <https://vtecostudies.org/about-us/dei-statement/>

Outline how DEIJ principles can be incorporated into your organization's work moving forward. (Provide examples of any trainings, workshops, projects, partnerships, etc.)

Moving forward, we anticipate our newly formed DEI committee to guide VCE to ensure that policies and practices align with our DEI statement. Our participation in UVEX will continue until at least June (expected end date of this working group). We are actively working on identifying trainings for current staff and new employees that focus on DEI and inclusivity within the workplace. We expect to line up a few more trainings with our contracted consultant, as well as pursue new workshop opportunities and take part in regular staff-wide discussions of DEI topics facilitated by the DEI committee. Within our projects, we are also working to identify opportunities to support underrepresented biologists, including new opportunities to support our Caribbean partners.

Describe specific challenges that your organization has faced while integrating DEIJ Principles.

Our main challenge around DEI has been navigating negative responses from people outside of our organization. Specifically, we faced (and still are facing, to an extent) harassment from an individual. We have consultants who are helping us navigate this issue. The other--much smaller--issue is making sure everyone within the organization is at the same level of understanding when it comes to DEI matters and how to handle them. Every staff member supports DEI initiatives--we're very lucky to have a staff that's on-board with this as a priority. However, we're still working to bring everyone to the same level of understanding and awareness.

How will the ECO member be included or supported in on-going or future DEIJ work at the organization, if they so choose?

I personally see DEIJ as an integral component of improving and expanding VCE's public-facing communications. The ECO member will be encouraged to share their views on how new and existing communications projects can progress with DEI front of mind. The ECO member will also be invited to sit in on DEI committee meetings as a non-voting member where their perspectives will be welcomed.

Does the supervisor have adequate time and leadership experience to manage an ECO member? Please explain how:

Providing young professionals opportunities to learn and grow is one of my highest priorities. As a former ECO member, I'm familiar with the structure and responsibilities that come with the role. After my time in ECO, I spent a year working for UVM, overseeing undergraduate internships. My main role was to facilitate and support student-led research projects, book design, and policy internships. From this experience, I am quite comfortable balancing guiding someone new in their field with providing them freedom and autonomy. As a leader, I strive to create a welcoming environment where folks feel comfortable being their authentic selves. For the past 9 months, I have directly supervised our Communications Assistant and will be supervising interns this summer as well. Even though our assistant and I are both remote most days of the week, I make sure that we check in every day and keep communication open via Slack. I foresee setting aside dedicated time each day to check in with our ECO member to answer any questions and provide guidance where needed. Although I live in Burlington, I will plan to be in the office every day during the AmeriCorps member's first 4-6 weeks to ensure they feel settled and comfortable in their role.

Will the member have access to networking opportunities in this position? Please explain:

Nowadays, networking is essential to getting hired. Recognizing this, ensuring that the AmeriCorps member has opportunities to meeting other conservation professionals within the state and beyond is a high priority. I will encourage the AmeriCorps member to attend conferences, talks, and other events that will provide opportunities to meet new people in this field. When feasible, I will also invite the member to join meetings and calls with me to make new connections. I'm also more than happy to facilitate introductions between the AmeriCorps member and my vast web of Vermont environmental contacts.

Does your organization currently host or plan to host an AmeriCorps member from another program? If yes, briefly describe the duties of this other position.

N/A

Please list any clothing/equipment the member will need that you cannot provide (e.g., hiking boots, waders, raingear, etc.). Is a reliable vehicle expected? As the host site, you are responsible for providing all tools and technical equipment needed for the position (e.g., computer, phone, GPS, etc.).

Although this will largely be an indoor position, the AmeriCorps member should be prepared to spend occasional time out in the field in varying conditions. Standard outdoor equipment (coats, hiking boots, raingear, etc.) are recommended. Having a reliable car isn't essential; however, it's definitely recommended, given how spread out areas of the Upper Valley can be. We're prepared to provide any technical equipment the member might need.

Is there someone in your organization's network that might be interested in mentoring your ECO service member? *Note, 1-2 hours per month, not required

Maybe

Are you willing to search with program staff over the summer to help your ECO member secure affordable and safe housing?

Yes

Many of our members are not from Vermont and are seeking a sense of community away from home. In what ways would you be willing to help them establish community connections? (Housing, peer networks, affinity spaces, local resources, fun places to go)

Before the member starts, we will create a document providing local resources (everything from amenities, to fun things to do, to support resources). We will host a welcome event to help the ECO member meet all of our staff and can try to arrange some kind of network with local AmeriCorps members from other programs.

Provide approximate impact numbers (e.g. miles of rivers treated) in each focus area.

Water Quality and Trail Improvement - Please project Impact Numbers on miles of river/stream/trail treated and/or improved.

N/A

Land Conservation and Remediation - Please project impact numbers on acres of public parks or other public, publicly managed or tribal lands improved.

N/A

Community Engagement Outreach and Education - Please project number of individuals receiving environmental stewardship education or training.

300+

Program:

ECO AmeriCorps

Sponsoring Organization's Mission:

The Vermont Center for Ecostudies advances the conservation of wildlife across the Americas through research, monitoring, and community engagement.

Goals for the ECO AmeriCorps Position:

(1) Increase community scientist recruitment by providing workshops to diverse audiences of varying skill levels; (2) expand VCE's written resources available to the public and target audiences; (3) connect a new, diverse audience with VCE's research and programs, and (4) develop skills in science communications that will help prepare them for future employment in this field.

Essential Functions. Functions that applicant must be able to perform. These may be listed in bullet form:

- Plan and present workshops focused on community science tools and relevant natural history to diverse audiences
- Write articles communicating key aspects of VCE's research to a non-scientific audience
- Create social media content and campaigns engaging followers in VCE's projects
- Staff tables at events to raise greater awareness about VCE's projects
- Create infographics and other visual tools for displaying VCE's results to the public
- Collaborate with scientists on projects' communications needs

What are the secondary functions? These are projects or tasks that may be accomplished as time allows or applicant's interests evolve.

- Assist staff biologists with data collection and processing
- Use photo storytelling to communicate VCE's projects
- Assist with production of our monthly eNewsletter

- Help with event promotion

Desired Qualifications:

- Strong writer with a passion for communicating science to a non-scientific audience
- Comfortable with speaking to audiences of varying sizes
- Effective verbal and written communications skills
- Passion for conservation science
- Proficient at using iNaturalist and/or eBird
- Educational or relevant experience in ecology
- Familiarity with at least one graphic design tool such as Canva or Adobe Photoshop
- Eagerness to learn new communications tools
- Comfortable completing projects with quick turnaround times
- Ability to complete tasks both independently and collaboratively

Minimum Qualifications:

- Be a US citizen, a national, or legal permanent resident alien of the U.S.;
- Be at least 18 years of age upon entering the Pre-Service Orientation (there is no upper age limit);
- Be a high school graduate or have a GED certificate or be willing to work towards their GED as part of their service-year successful completion requirement. A member cannot have dropped out of high school to join AmeriCorps. If a member has a documented medical reason/professional opinion why they cannot finish high school, they might be eligible; call in this case;
- Has not been convicted of murder or sexual assault and is willing to undergo a National Service Criminal History Check;
- Must submit to Agency of Human Services checks, i.e. Adult Abuse and Child Abuse Prevention;
- Be committed to the ECO AmeriCorps program, and its ethic of service and personal and professional development of its participants;
- Have the ability and enthusiasm to drive to, attend, and participate in required trainings and events, and be prepared to drive up to 2-3 hours each way

Service Conditions (will the position be largely outside, office based, hybrid or seasonally/project dependent, in schools, etc.) *

This position will be office-based, with opportunities to serve outside and remotely

Will the member have access to "vulnerable populations"? This includes youth, elderly and individuals with disabilities.

Yes

Time Requirements:

Full time: will need to complete a minimum of 1700 service hours, serving approximately 40 hours/week over the course of the 11-month service term, September 13, 2023 - August 9, 2024

Orientation and Training:

ECO will provide members with orientation at the beginning of the service term. Host sites are expected to provide additional on-boarding training as well. Throughout the service term, ECO will provide in-person and virtual trainings to members on a variety of topics.

Benefits:

- Education award of \$6,895 (pre-tax) upon successful completion of service
- \$23,000 Living Allowance, paid bi-weekly
- Training
- Childcare assistance, if eligible
- Health Coverage
- Access to AmeriCorps Alumni Network
- Student loan forbearance and interest payments, if eligible

Evaluation and Reporting: Mid and final performance reviews, quarterly reports, weekly timesheets, and end of service survey. Thank you for your interest in AmeriCorps!