

Love Your Block Fellow Position Description

About Cities of Service

Cities of Service helps mayors build stronger cities by changing the way local government and residents work together. We help our coalition cities tap into resident insights, skills, and service to identify and solve critical public problems. Founded in 2009 by New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Cities of Service supports a coalition of more than 280 cities, representing more than 84 million people across the Americas and Europe. Now situated at Johns Hopkins University, you can learn more about Cities of Service at citiesofservice.jhu.edu and by following them on Twitter [@citiesofservice](https://twitter.com/citiesofservice).

Since its founding, Cities of Service has helped cities implement change through the use of its [Impact Volunteering](#) strategy. This signature strategy engages resident volunteers to identify and solve pressing public problems alongside municipal government. It is a participatory process in which residents and city officials develop a shared vision, set short- and long-term goals for their community, and then work together to achieve those goals. As partners, they communicate throughout the process and reflect on their work – discussing and evaluating what they have done and holding themselves accountable for results.

About Love Your Block

The Cities of Service Love Your Block program brings city leaders and residents together to build stronger neighborhoods, one block at a time. Typically, cities implementing Love Your Block invite community groups to identify priority projects and award mini-grants to support neighborhood-driven solutions that the community can implement. From turning vacant lots into community gardens to helping elderly neighbors with home repairs to avoid fines and safely age in place, resident volunteers are “loving their blocks” and making them, and their cities, better places to live.

The benefits of Love Your Block go well beyond physical improvements. [A 2021 Urban Institute study](#) found that social networks sparked by deep resident-to-city-hall engagement can instigate neighborhood-level improvements in addition to larger, sustainable improvements to municipal practices and policies. Love Your Block activates and builds social networks between residents, their neighbors, and city hall. This resident-to-city hall engagement can lead to collective efficacy that is often bidirectional: city officials can leverage neighborhood social capital in service of mayoral goals and residents can leverage greater responsiveness from officials to address their needs and priorities. In other words, Love Your Block is a starting point for cities to more meaningfully engage their residents and improve communities in holistic and sustainable ways.

Position Overview: The Love Your Block Fellow position is a two-year commitment that begins on **November 8, 2021**. The Fellow works collaboratively with one AmeriCorps VISTA member and under the general direction of both the Neighborhood Stabilization Coordinator and the Policy Analyst. The Fellow is expected to provide guidance and support to the AmeriCorps VISTA member in addition to receiving guidance from the Love Your Block Program Supervisor. Working closely with the Love Your Block team, the Fellow is responsible for coordinating a robust community engagement strategy and facilitating ongoing programmatic activities.

More specifically, the Fellow responsibilities include:

- Provide support to the Love Your Block Program Supervisor in onboarding new AmeriCorps VISTA members
- Provide guidance to the AmeriCorps VISTA throughout program planning and management
- Create the Love Your Block mini-grant application and timeline for potential grantees, with direction and support from the Neighborhood Stabilization Coordinator and Policy Analyst
- Lead the development of an orientation and training program for mini-grant recipients
- Develop an outreach plan to effectively engage with diverse community members and promote the program and mini-grant opportunity to potential grantees
- Manage mini-grant application information sessions and other outreach in neighborhoods of focus
- Manage mini-grant recipient and partner relationships
- Cultivate and maintain partnerships among stakeholders such as community organizations, city agencies, nonprofit organizations, neighborhood associations, and block groups
- Work collaboratively with the AmeriCorps VISTA member(s) to create promotional materials (namely program flyers, brochures, and press releases pertaining to program activities)
- Serve as the primary point of contact for all requests to volunteer/collaborate
- Ensure that before-and-after photos are taken of each mini-grant project site as well as photos of volunteer work days
- Evaluate lessons learned from the first year of implementing Love Your Block and build those lessons into the second year of programming.
- Help secure funding to sustain and expand Love Your Block
- Other duties as assigned

Duration and Compensation

This is a two-year, full-time commitment commencing on November 8, 2021. Each year, Fellows will receive up to \$30,000 in annual compensation.

Qualifications

- Must live in the neighborhoods of: Arbor Hill, Beverwyck, Delaware Area, Lincoln Park, Mansion, Mt. Hope, North Albany, Park South, Pastures, Pine Hills, Second Avenue, Sheridan Hollow, South End, Ten Broeck Triangle, West End, West Hill
- Cannot be related to city hall staff or elected officials
- Preference will be given to candidates with a working knowledge of community organizing and volunteer management
- Experience working in public or non-profit sector preferred
- Bilingual or Multilingual abilities preferred
- Must demonstrate strong interpersonal and oral communication skills
- Ability to develop and conduct presentations and training sessions
- Organization and planning skills preferred
- Ability to work collaboratively with city hall staff, AmeriCorps VISTA member(s), and community stakeholders

To Apply

Contact Samuel Wells, Neighborhood Stabilization Coordinator at:
swells@albanyny.gov or 518-694-4813

Please reach out and submit a resume no later than October 8th, 2021