



MSF Job Description 2026

Maine Service Fellow: Van Buren Fellow, Van Buren, Maine

About the position

The Van Buren Maine Service Fellow will help build the entrepreneurial ecosystem for the Town of Van Buren's new Connectivity HUB & Small Business Incubator, a \$1.78 million federally funded downtown revitalization project. Working directly with the Town Manager, the Fellow will engage aspiring entrepreneurs, connect them with regional resources, and develop the education and support systems needed for the incubator to succeed before the renovated facility opens.

This position supports Maine Won't Wait climate goals by promoting rural economic resilience and sustainable development. The project revitalizes an existing historic building rather than constructing new space, reducing environmental impact while strengthening the local economy. By helping residents create businesses close to home, the Fellow will support local job growth and a more walkable, vibrant downtown.

Van Buren offers an exceptional quality of life for the outdoor enthusiast with year-round outdoor recreation, community events, affordable housing, and a welcoming Acadian culture. It is an ideal setting for a young professional seeking meaningful work and strong community connections.

Position duties:

This position will focus on building the human and organizational infrastructure needed for the new Small Business Incubator to thrive. The Fellow will be a hands-on community builder, organizer, and connector.

The Fellow will:

- Conduct outreach to identify and engage residents interested in starting or growing small businesses
- Design and implement an intake process to assess entrepreneur needs and readiness
- Meet one-on-one with aspiring entrepreneurs to refine ideas and connect them to resources
- Create and maintain a database of potential incubator participants
- Develop educational programming focused on business planning, marketing, and finance
- Organize and deliver workshops, networking events, and information sessions
- Build partnerships with regional service providers such as Small Business Development Centers, community colleges, and economic development organizations
- Coordinate referral systems that link entrepreneurs with technical assistance and funding opportunities
- Work with Drexel University's College of Media, Arts & Design Creative Interiors Lab to translate design concepts into practical incubator programming and space planning
- Assist the Town Manager with implementation of related grant projects including a USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grant and a GrowSmart Maine planning initiative
- Document best practices, create operational procedures, and develop a long-term roadmap for the incubator
- Evaluate program effectiveness and prepare reports summarizing progress and outcomes

- Help create marketing and communication materials promoting entrepreneurship in Van Buren
The most important skills for this position include strong communication, community engagement, organization, creativity, and an interest in rural economic development.

Minimum requirements: (*you can add to this if you have requirements – these are the MSF minimum requirements*)

- Must be at least 20 years of age.
- Within the last 5 years, have completed a college degree (associates, bachelors, or graduate).
- Be eligible to work in the United States and pass a background check that includes a criminal history record check.
- Commit to devoting full-time effort to the assignment (1700 hours total over 43 weeks).
- Agree to live in the community impacted by the project.

Strong applicants will enjoy and have relevant experience in:

- Community outreach and relationship building
- Organizing workshops, meetings, and public events
- One-on-one communication and interviewing
- Working with entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Program development and project coordination
- Researching and connecting people to community resources
- Networking and partnership development
- Public speaking and group facilitation
- Writing reports, summaries, and outreach materials
- Independent, self-directed work in a small-town environment
- Creative problem solving and collaboration
- Interest in economic development, downtown revitalization, and rural communities

About Us:

Maine Service Fellows is a statewide service program designed to help rural communities tackle their most critical needs, with a focus on building climate resilience. The program increases the opportunities for recent college graduates to devote a year of service, use their skills to make a difference, and strengthen civic engagement and community resilience through engaging community residents in volunteer-based solutions. Maine Service Fellows recruits individuals who completed a post-secondary degree with the last 5 years.

Compensation and benefits:

- Living allowance of approximately \$27,100 per term (10 months)
- Educational award for student loans of ~\$5,420
- Full health care coverage
- Paid time off
- Housing allowance of \$950 per month (10 months)

Start Date: mid-May to mid-June, 2026