

Planning Grant Application Review Process (GARP) Committee Meeting Minutes

September 8, 2022

11:30 am – 2:30 pm (MT)

Meeting occurred online via Zoom and at the Idaho Department of Labor 3 West Conference Room located at 317 W. Main St., Boise, ID 83735

In attendance: Amy Little, April Durrant, Destinie Hart, ~~Kimber Russell~~, Kimberly Empey, Heather Uhi, Micaela de Loyola-Carkin, Renee Bade

Meeting Called to order at 11:30 am

Welcome

Roll Call – Quorum Met

Bonneville Library District

- **Executive Summary**
 - o Did not express what they were going to do with the members – this was very vague.
- **Organizational Capability:**
 - o Applicant failed to address most of the questions within the section as indicated above with zero scores.
 - o Provided very brief descriptions. Although provided the organizational structure, did not go into how policies are implemented, the process, buy in, etc. Are volunteers administering grants or do staff oversee and ensure volunteers are following guidelines and requirements?
 - o Applicant did not follow the rubric or provide most of the requested information. It seems like the applicant hurried to write something but wasn't clear on what they were writing the grant for. No experience with managing federal grants or AmeriCorps programming.
 - o Did not address experience with AmeriCorps at all.
 - o No understanding of prior experience in proposed area
 - o Grant was sparse and did not include details as required for the grant application.
- **Program Design**
 - o Applicant failed to respond to questions within this section.
 - o This section does not provide any insight into their programming other than having potential members serve at four different library branches. It indicates members will not only provide, but also establish the programming. Would a VISTA maybe be a more appropriate AmeriCorps member to research and develop a reading program?

- It appears that the applicant isn't informed on what a planning grant is or what they are supposed to do with the funds. None of the requested information was provided in their Program Design narrative section.
- Confusion about the planning piece and implementation piece – wrote the planning grant as if it was funding the operational portion.
- **Budget**
 - No calculations included; ASC regional conference travel was not included. Unclear why reading time facilitators and class instructors would be included on this budget as they should not be part of the planning grant process as they seem to be providing direct service.
 - Calculations were not included on any line items. There are not specific unallowable expenses, but again there's also no detail.
 - Did not follow the instructions about actually input the numbers for indirect cost calculations – they were missing.
 - \$22,000 of funding toward books and materials seemed unreasonable for a planning grant.
 - Added a line for “reading time facilitators”, which I think are the AmeriCorps members. This is not allowable for a planning grant. NSCHC check costs are included, but no equation or explanation for who will be receiving them. No equations and did not include travel & costs for the ASC Regional Conference.

Idaho Drug Free Youth

- **Executive Summary**
 - Applicant clearly articulated the plan for the grant and how funds will be provided.
 - Provided good detail on the type of programming members would perform.
- **Organizational Capability**
 - Additional details on how you managed other federal grants would be appreciated but not necessary.
 - They seem to have a strong organizational structure to manage a grant and implement programming.
 - Seems that they have managed grants before and have good experience.
 - Missing description of experience with AmeriCorps.
 - Did not demonstrate they had the experience with staffing to manage the grant or experience in managing federal grants.
 - Missing details on the previous experience with AmeriCorps – what type of program and what level of experience.
 - Entirely remote organization which might make it more complicated for member experience and how will the members be supervised – something to address later.
- **Program Design**
 - Did not address how the planning grant will be utilized to develop strong fiscal/programmatic management and monitoring systems.
 - Serve Idaho staff - clarify role of members in purchasing items/reimbursement? This should be happening at the site supervisor level and not member level.
 - Did not mention the role of the site supervisor or structure. Members will report to the Program Director but current write up does not appear to have a plan in place for site supervision although this might be developed as part of the planning grant process.
 - Need more detail around fiscal, org might need some clarification and guidance around what is expected around program management, host sites, member supervision, etc.
 - Liked how each community will determine their specific needs and how programming can be developed around that need.

- Will members have more than one school to work with? Meeting one day a week and providing one six-hour training (in a year???) would not be enough for any full-time to half-time members.
- The program director is identified as being the member's direct supervisor, but they would need to have a supervisor identified at each site.
- Planning grant did not address cohesively of how they would build recruitment and training materials.
- Developing program structure – this portion was lacking.
- Did not mention how they would train staff at partner organizations.
- **Budget**
 - Will program director be 90% or 92% usage – unclear in current calculation. Clarify details in fringe calculation.
 - Need some clarity on budget items. Equations for travel costs. For an ASC conference they would also need to include food costs, airline tickets or mileage reimbursement, etc. same goes for PD quarterly meetings.
 - Do not have an audit – provided a profit and loss statements. First year net income was \$10,000; Second year net income was \$14,000. Would have to look at the possibility of advancements as opposed to cost reimbursement style. Have concerns about ability to meet match requirement.
 - Need to include costs for criminal history checks for all staff on the grant.

Idaho Hispanic Foundation

- **Executive Summary**
 - Did not clearly follow the format.
 - Unclear the tie between supporting small businesses and affordable housing. Would recommend removing sentence and focusing on the priority area of serving rural communities. Ensure the focus is the creation of better paying jobs and not in solely supporting for profit businesses.
 - The community is rural and diverse communities, needs to be a little more specific.
- **Organizational Capability**
 - Applicant did not clearly articulate the role of the board of directors, staff, etc... in the community planning process.
 - Applicant has received CARES funding but did not articulate how they have managed this funding effectively.
 - Organization does not have previous experience with AmeriCorps, with the exception of a board member who has served as a member and will provide good insight.
 - Already have established a hub/host site programming model that they can replicate.
 - Excellent community partnerships and financial support.
 - Clarify that CARES and SBA are federal grants.
 - One of their board members might be contracting on the grant – this would be a conflict of interest.
- **Program Design**
 - Program serves a diverse population including Latinx, National American, African America, veteran and women owned businesses in rural communities which is a focus of the grant.
 - Applicant did not answer many of the questions around how they build the infrastructure for the program including the framework, performance metrics, selection of sites, or how they will build a strong fiscal/program management systems/monitoring.
 - Does not go into detail regarding what types of activities members will perform.
 - Does not address how systems will be developed.
 - Confused about what the planning grant should accomplish.
 - Did not address program performance measures/tools.
 - Would have to clarify that the application would need to benefit employers and not businesses.

- **Budget**
 - o Calculation for computer is incorrect; Both staff included on the budget should have criminal history checks.
 - o Fringe should be included in section B.
 - o Would be leveraging federal grants that are specific for building small businesses.
 - o Have a single audit and no there were not cross cutting findings or internal control concerns.
 - o Unallowable cost – contracting consultant services with a board member would be a conflict of interest.
 - o Did not include match costs.

Idaho Nonprofit Center

- **Executive Summary**
 - o Indicates that INC members will increase their ability to recruit and manage volunteers, not what members specifically will be doing.
- **Organizational Capability**
 - o Applicant has prior experience in job board management but does not have specific experience in the area of programming (volunteer engagement/recruitment) or in federal grants management. All sections had adequate responses to address the items in the grant application.
 - o Included all required elements.
 - o Do not address they have the experience and management structure to operate the grant.
 - o Did not talk about the community/key organizations being involved in the planning process.
 - o The only programming, they specify is developing a volunteer job board similar to VolunteerMatch or their job board. Is this enough programming for 10 members?
 - o Have no experience with AmeriCorps or federal grants.
- **Program Design**
 - o Clarify within grant application that these are not AmeriCorps VISTA members who serve a different purpose. Within application they refer to the AmeriCorps member (singular). Should clarify that if they receive this planning grant the requirement of an operational grant is to host 10 AmeriCorps members. From existing application, it appears they would want 1 member as a result of this application. Unclear from the current application if the organization intends to host the 10 members at the site or to serve as an intermediary.
 - o From the application the applicant has a history of on-boarding new staff, but it is unclear from the narrative how they will utilize the planning grant to develop a TTA plan and member compliance monitoring tools.
 - o Within application the applicant has a strong plan for performance measurement outlined.
 - o Unclear from application how their program ties into the AmeriCorps performance areas of education and economic opportunity or how they will serve rural communities.
 - o Need to clarify how many members they will have. Will member be developing the program (more like a VISTA) or providing direct service to nonprofit organizations through training, ongoing support, etc.?
 - o Page 3 – copy and pasted something from the regs that references AmeriCorps VISTA which is not the purpose of this grant application.
 - o As written – this does not feel like an AmeriCorps program. Do not see where members fit into this process.
- **Budget**
 - o Need to include calculation for Executive Director salary and fringe (how much of their time will be spent on the grant).
 - o Did not include any travel costs as is required by the grant NOFO.

- Need to include calculations for all supplies.
- Unclear why some of the contractual/consultant services would be included from application for example the videographer and graphic design and communications. How does this relate to the planning grant program?
- Provided a financial statement review – full audit was no conducted, but review of financial statement there were no material findings. – No concerns

Ready & Math Inc.

- **Executive Summary**
 - No feedback
- **Organizational Capability**
 - Has an established AmeriCorps program that is being expanded to other states – planning grant is utilized to ensure they are familiar with the state landscape and the Commissions requirements.
 - Out of state organization, currently has support with Senator Semmelroth and Governor Little’s office but other community leadership is limited but anticipate based on previous models will expand as they hire a staff in Idaho.
 - Mention of things they have done nationally, little about organizational capacity here in Idaho. Budget of \$50 million so why do they have a planning grant?
 - Role of community in building the program out.
- **Program Design**
 - Very comprehensive, answered all questions.
 - Narrative focused on the national model and does not have a site in Idaho. Did not clarify what partners they have in Idaho. Felt like a lot of duplicate activities are taking place. They do not the schools or counties where they are focused on – missing the local component.
 - Want to conduct a field audit and stakeholder analysis – was appreciated to determine if the design was viable.
- **Budget**
 - Update the mileage reimbursement rate.
 - Clarify within budget who is the fringe benefit calculation for? It appears it is a total of the salaries above but clarify within line item. Mileage rate is currently .50/mile. Is this an internal policy or should it align with the federal mileage reimbursement rate? Should include cost for Serve Idaho conference under staff training.
 - Have a single audit – zero findings including zero AmeriCorps findings. No concerns about fiscal situation.
 - Qualified as a low risk auditee by the auditor.

	Total Scores
Bonneville Library District	218
Idaho Hispanic Youth Foundation	407
Idaho Nonprofit Center	429
Idaho Drug Free Youth	575
Reading & Math Inc.	576

Committee voted to recommend Idaho Drug Free Youth and Reading & Math Inc. for funding to the full commissions vote.

Meeting adjourned at 1 pm (MT).

Minutes submitted by Renee Bade.