

Award Justification Statement
RFA 202502028- Maine AmeriCorps Standard Formula Grant

I. Summary

Volunteer Maine, the state service commission, awards *grants* of federal AmeriCorps program resources to community-based agencies (public and nonprofit). This RFA solicited proposals from organizations that requires at least 13,600 hours of service by AmeriCorps members in each of the 3 grant years. The grant period is three (3) years with 12-month annual budget periods serving as the basis for adding funds. Programs serving rural areas were a priority along with programs that addressed community issues related to public health, workforce development, housing, climate action, or community resilience.

II. Evaluation Process

The Commission uses selection criteria and a process that incorporates the mandatory AmeriCorps weighting and scoring of various criteria published in the Code of Federal Regulations as well as Commission policies on funding and performance, and the requirements of state contract selection rules.

All AmeriCorps Standard Formula Grant proposals are assessed by the Commission's Grant Selection and Performance Task Force using a two-phase process. The text that follows is quoted from pp 38 and 39 of the RFA.

Phase One. Peer Review of application narrative, budget, and performance measure components using federally required scoring system. Reviewers are community service practitioners, educators, administrators, and specialists in the areas of environment, public safety, education, and other human needs who evaluate the quality of the proposals.

Volunteer Maine uses the mandated AmeriCorps weighting and selection criteria during this phase: 50% for Program Design, 25% for Organizational Capability, and 25% for Budget Adequacy and Cost Effectiveness for a possible total score of 100 Peer Reviewer points.

Peer Reviewers express their consensus recommendations to the Commissions' Grant Selection and Performance Task Force by assigning each proposal to one of the following categories:

- Strongly Recommend for Further Review (A comprehensive and thorough proposal of exceptional merit with numerous strengths; total score between 90 and 100)
- Recommend for Further Review (A proposal that demonstrates overall competence and is worthy of support; it has some weaknesses. Total score between 80 and 89)
- Recommend for Further Review with Hesitation (A proposal with approximately equal strengths and weaknesses. Total score between 60 and 79.)
- Do Not Recommend for Further Review (A proposal with serious shortcomings. There are numerous weaknesses and few strengths. Total score 59 or below)

Phase Two: Applications recommended for some level of review will undergo further assessment by the Grants Selection and Performance Task Force. The Task Force will include in its review documents submitted as part of this competition plus data from publicly available information systems including SAM (the federal System for Award Management).

It also will consider information gathered in a structured interview of representatives of the grant applicant. The representatives must include the proposed project director plus personnel responsible for finances and human resources. The interview will be conducted through remote technology and recorded. Task Force members will review the recording as part of their assessment tasks. The Task Force will use the following weighting and selection criteria during this phase: 25 points Funding Priority Alignment, 10 points Program Model, 15 points Commission Preferences (rural, partnerships, marginalized communities), 10 points Financial Plan, 15 points Fiscal Systems, 10 points Past Performance, and 15 points for Grant Readiness for a possible total of 100 points. Upon completion of the Task Force review, the scores from Phase One and Phase Two will be combined to produce a single review score. The Grant Selection and Performance Task Force then makes its final recommendations to the full Maine Commission. Proposals that address Commission priorities and preferences will be considered first for awards. If there are sufficient funds remaining, proposals in other categories will be considered.

III. Qualifications & Experience.

(excerpt pg 25 of RFA) Applicants must operate an AmeriCorps program only in Maine. Eligible types of organizations are public or private non-profits, State/county/local units of government, higher ed institutions, faith-based organizations, labor organizations, federally recognized Tribes, and regional organizations. All applicants must have an existing physical presence in the community where AmeriCorps members will serve. Organizations must have an official IRS employer identification number. Applicants will need to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier with the federal System for Award Management and have an active registration. Eligible organizations that are primarily female or minority managed or led, and agencies within or primarily recruiting from designated labor surplus areas are encouraged to apply.

Not Eligible: Organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime are disqualified from receiving assistance under an AmeriCorps grant. Pursuant to the Lobbying disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Sections 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 USC 501(c)(4), which engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply.

IV. Proposed Services. Operate the AmeriCorps program approved in the application for up to three years.

V. Cost Proposal. This grant program awards a flat amount per 1700 hours of service by AmeriCorps members. The amount for this competition was \$27,000 per 1700 hours.

VI. Conclusion. The sole proposal submitted addressed the RFA priority for mental health and was deemed to have met the criteria for funding eligibility.



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Pender Makin
Commissioner**

June 12, 2025

Steve Niles
34 Hutcherson Dr
Gorham, Maine 04038

**SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP # 202502028,
MAINE AMERICORPS STANDARD FORMULA GRANTS**

Dear Steve,

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Education for MAINE AMERICORPS STANDARD FORMULA GRANTS. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award to the following bidder:

- Goodwill Industries of Northern New England

The bidder listed above received the evaluation team's highest ranking. The Department will be contacting the aforementioned bidder soon to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFA, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

As stated in the RFA, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFA are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jamie McFaul".

Jamie McFaul
Grants Officer
207-624-7790

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).

Peer Reviewers -- Consensus Process Worksheet

Strong: This section of the application is a thorough, compelling, and convincing response to criteria; additional information is relevant and enhances or strengthens argument significantly; the argument shows this element shows high levels of success or highly likely

Adequate: This section of the application responds to all criteria-- no omissions or additions. The argument shows this element has had some success or could possibly succeed as described.

Weak: This section responds to many but not all the required elements/criteria. Some text is not relevant or does not add to the argument. The argument does not demonstrate this element

Substandard: This section barely responds to the criteria, has a significant flaw, or lacks any indication this element could succeed as described.

Incomplete/Nonresponsive: This section of the application does not respond to the criteria

APP ID: 25E5276400 PROGRAM NAME: Goodwill		INITIAL COMMENTS: LINK TO DOC	
FUNDS REQUESTED: \$46,200 APPLICANT NAME: England		East Summary Confirms?	
Below are the initial ratings submitted by reviewers after their independent reading and assessment of the proposals. These are the starting points for your determination of a final rating of the application narrative. After peer reviewers discuss each section's quality and responsiveness to requirements, record the group's consensus rating for each section in the "Consensus Rating" column (from top down row).			
--- RATER, Initial Ratings ---			
Program Design (10 total possible)	Anne Louise Rice	Ben Lewis	De-Tiffany North
The Community and Need	Weak	Adequate	Substandard
Logic Model	Substandard	Adequate	Substandard
Evidence of Effectiveness	Weak	Adequate	Weak
Funding Priority and Preferences	Weak	Adequate	Weak
Member Training	Adequate	Adequate	Weak
Member Supervision	Substandard	Adequate	Adequate
Member Experience	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate
Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification	Adequate	Weak	Strong
Program Design Score			31.5
--- RATER, Initial Ratings ---			
Organizational Capability (25 total possible)	Anne Louise Rice	Ben Lewis	De-Tiffany North
Org Background & Staffing	Weak	Adequate	Strong
Commitment to O&M	Adequate	Weak	Adequate
Org. Capability Score			18.75
--- RATER, Initial Ratings ---			
Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 total possible)	Anne Louise Rice	Ben Lewis	De-Tiffany North
Member Recruitment	Weak	Weak	Weak
Member Retention	Adequate	Weak	Adequate
Data Collection	Adequate	Weak	Adequate
Budget Alignment to Program Design	Weak	Weak	Adequate
Cost and Budget Score			12
FINAL SECTION TOTALS AND RECOMMENDATION			
Program Design			31.5
Organizational Capability			18.75
Cost Effectiveness/ Budget Adequacy			12
Final Consensus Score			62.25
Recommendation: 60-75, Recommend for Further Review with Revision			
End Peer Reviewer Work - Task Force Work Recorded Below			
INITIAL RATINGS-- Below are the initial ratings offered by GTF Members after their independent reading and assessment of the proposals. These are the starting points for your determination of a final rating of the application narrative.			
LINK TO COMMENTS			
Proposal Alignment (25%)	Conry	Ed Barrett	0
Alignment with Funding Priorities	Strong	Strong	0
Consensus rating			25
Section Score			25
--- RATER -- Initial ratings ---			
Program Model (10%)	Conry	Ed Barrett	0
Service communities described in 2522-4530a	Adequate	Weak	0
Proposed adds to goal of being proenvironmentally, demographically, and geographically diverse	Adequate	Adequate	0
Potential for innovation and/or replication	Adequate	Adequate	0
Strength of evidence planning process will succeed	Strong	Strong	0
Consensus rating			7.5
Section Score			7.5
--- RATER -- Initial ratings ---			
Preferences from RFP Announcement (15%)	Conry	Ed Barrett	0
the proposal is from a partnership or coalition whose members represent local generations working together	0	Weak	0
Exclusion by an organization solely or primarily supporting rehousing participants from historically marginalized communities and/or people	Strong	Adequate	0
Consensus rating			3.75
Section Score			5.625
--- RATER -- Initial ratings ---			
Past Performance (10%)	Conry	Ed Barrett	0
Prior Grant management experience, volunteer management, business, financial management, etc	Strong	Adequate	0
applicant effectively used the human resources allocated on AmeriCorps Member positions	0	0	0
applicant effectively used the financial resources allocated	0	0	0
applicant implemented the program effectively	0	0	0
Consensus rating			0
Section Score			0
--- RATER -- Initial ratings ---			
Financial Plan (10%)	Conry	Ed Barrett	0
Strong	Adequate	0	
Consensus rating			7.5
Section Score			7.5
--- RATER -- Initial ratings ---			
Fiscal Systems (15%)	Conry	Ed Barrett	0
capacity of financial management system to comply with federal requirements	Adequate	Strong	0
strength of the sponsoring organization's financial management practices	Adequate	Strong	0
strength of the sponsoring organization's financial sustainability	Adequate	Strong	0
Consensus rating			3.75
Section Score			5.625
--- RATER -- Initial ratings ---			
Grant Readiness (15%)	Conry	Ed Barrett	0
The applicant's start-up plan is detailed, complete, and demonstrates ability to start up the program on time with resources in place (including staff leadership)	Strong	Strong	0
The applicant's systems, policies, experience, partnerships, leadership support, financial and personnel resources, etc. are fully prepared to implement the program as of the start date.	Adequate	Strong	0
Consensus rating			7.5
Section Score			11.25
GTF Total Score: 78.075			
Peer Reviewer Score: 62.25			
Combined Score: 140.325			
of possible 200			
Recommendation: Forward or fund with no corrections			

*Worked pre-programmed

Contributions funded fee.
Task force can choose to fund no applicants
If the task force chooses to fund, then final scores guide funding (as below)

State procurement rules say highest score ranks #1, next highest score #2, and so forth.
Funding distributed by providing full allowable request to applicants, in order of rank until funding runs out.

Grant Proposal Report to Commission from Task Force

Recommendation: Forward or fund with no corrections

Legal Applicant: Goodwill Industries of
Northern New England

Project Name: Good Health Works
AmeriCorps

Category: ☒ AC Formula -- Standard
☐ AC Formula -- Rural State
☐ AC Competitive
☐ Other Competition

Type: ☐ Planning
☐ Operating
☒ Fixed Amount
☐ Cost Reimbursement
☐ Ed Award Only

Applicant type: ☒ New (no prior AC experience)
☐ Re-compete (# of yrs: __)

Proposed Dates: 8/25/2025 to 8/24/2025
Submitted request is for Yr [1]

Federal Focus Area:

Commission priorities:

Local Share Required in Budget: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Source of Funds detail required: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Requested Resources: Funds and Slots (*indicates sections with calculation errors)

	CNCS		Local Share
Operating			
Member Support			
Indirect (Admin)			
CNCS Award amount	\$546,200	Total Local Share (cash + in-kind)	N/A
% sharing proposed			
% share required			
Cost-per-member proposed	\$ 24,125		
max allowed	\$27,000		

Total AmeriCorps Member Service Years: 20.23

	Slot Types Requested						
	1700	1200	900	675	450	300	Total
Slots With living allowance	16					20	
Living allowance proposed	24,125						
Slots with only ed award							

Program Description (executive summary):

Goodwill Northern New England (Goodwill) proposes to have 36 AmeriCorps members in communities experiencing public health inequities in Maine. AmeriCorps members will expand the capacity of state, county, or local public entities and community-based organizations (CBOs) that are delivering a variety of public health services. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will have gained hands-on experience and training in public health leading to post service employment while implementing evidence-based public health interventions to help 18 organizations increase their capacity. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 100 community volunteers who will be engaged in implementing evidence-based public health interventions. The AmeriCorps investment of \$546,200 will leverage \$160,000 comprised of \$60,000 in public funding and \$100,000 in private funding to support the project.

Service locations: Goodwill Industries of Northern New England

Other than the legal applicant, please list the agencies or organizations that appear to be the major collaborators or partners in this grant. Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Will the applicant place AmeriCorps members with other agencies? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Applicant proposes to deliver services:

☐ Within a single municipality ☐ Within a single County but not covering the entire County
☐ County-wide in a single County ☒ Multiple Counties but not Statewide ☐ Statewide

Performance measures (targets proposed for Year 1; targets for years 2 and 3 set in continuations):

SERVICE ACTIVITIES

OUTPUT: Number of organizations that received capacity building services

Proposed target: 18

OUTCOME: Number of organizations that increase their efficiency, effectiveness, and/or program reach

Proposed target: 14

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

(measures listed in the RFP not entered and targets were not proposed because CNCS does not allow them)

To be entered in state award if selected nationally for funding.

CAPACITY BUILDING

OUTPUT: Number of hours contributed by volunteers recruited and/or managed by AmeriCorps member

Proposed target: 2000

OUTCOME: Additional service activities

Proposed target: 450

Scoring Detail:

Peer Reviewer Consensus Score. *Assessment of narrative using point distribution from federal agency. Major categories (Program Design, Organizational Capability, Budget and Cost) are dictated by CFR rubric for scoring.*

CATEGORY	Rating	Points
Rationale & Approach/Program Design Section (50%)		
The Community and Need	Weak	4
Logic Model	Weak	4
Evidence of Effectiveness	Weak	4
Funding Priority and Preferences	Adequate	2.25
Member Training	Adequate	4.5
Member Supervision	Adequate	4.5
Member Experience	Adequate	4.5
Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification	Adequate	3.75
Organizational Capability Overall Rating 25%		
Organizational Background and Staffing	Adequate	13.5
Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility	Adequate	5.25
Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy 25%		
Member Recruitment	Weak	3.5
Member Retention	Adequate	5.25
Data Collection	Adequate	3.75
Budget Alignment to Program Design	Weak	3
Total		62.25

Task Force Consensus Score. *The Task Force reviewers assess the additional technical criteria that states are directed to consider by the CFR.*

	Quality Rating	Score
Program Alignment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment with funding priorities 	Strong	25
Program Model		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve communities described in 2522.450(c) 	Weak	1.25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal adds to goal of being programmatically, demographically, and geographically diverse 	Adequate	1.875
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for innovation and/or replication 	Adequate	1.875
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength of evidence program can be sustained over time. 	Strong	2.5
Preferences from RFP Announcement		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From a partnership or coalition whose members represent local organizations working together 	Weak	3.75
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal submitted by an organization led by or primarily supporting or recruiting participants from historically marginalized communities and/or people. 	Adequate	5.625
Past Performance		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can comply with requirements, info consistent with other grant administrator's info, consistent with externally verified past performance 	Adequate	1.875
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RECOMPETE ONLY: applicant used member positions 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RECOMPETE ONLY: used financial resources allocated 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RECOMPETE ONLY: implemented program effectively 		
Financial Plan	Adequate	7.5
Fiscal Systems		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity of Financial mgt system to comply with fed requirements 	Strong	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength of orgz financial mgt practices as evidenced by audits, etc. 	Strong	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength of sponsor orgs financial status/stability per audit, 990, etc. 	Adequate	3.75
Grant Readiness		
Total Task Force Score		78.075
Peer Review Score		62.25
Final Score for Applicant (200 possible)		140.325

Final Assessment of Application:

- ☒ Forward or fund with no corrections/modifications
- ☐ Forward or fund with corrections/modifications
- ☐ Do Not Forward or fund

Referenced Conditions/Corrections

The following proposal issues need to be clarified or, in the case of missing required elements, added.

Peer Reviewer Notes and Appraisal Summary:

Section: Program Design (50 %)

Need

While the application effectively cites the need for more health focused services in rural areas, there is absolutely no quantification of either historical or projected efficacy of the GTO intervention program on actual patients. Data collected since 2022 on patient outcomes in the other public health programs referenced should have been included. Further, the applicant merely claims that 18 site locations have agreed to accept the GTO program without any support letters, only an unattributed quote. The applicant would strengthen the application by addressing these two issues: 1) quantifying the efficiency of GTO on patient outcomes and 2) providing support letters from organizations (i.e. sites that have agreed to use the GTO framework).

Applicant describes the goal is to improve public health outcomes for vulnerable populations. Public health services target substance abuse recovery, access to health care and mental health services, support for youth with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE). Need more information describing the evidence based public health interventions and how they improve volunteer management, increase capacity for community partners, develop job skills to make members better prepared for potential careers in public health. Maine has health care workforce shortages, scarcity of public health in rural areas and urban communities attract marginalized, underserved populations including unhoused/homeless, persons in recovery, justice system involved, and immigrants. Support Maine Dept of Health/Human Services to support community-based organizations, partnerships and relationship building for innovation, collaboration, and strengthening health care delivery system. Recruit community volunteers for both basic operations and as appropriate provide mentoring and peer to peer coaching.

The applicant is stating that it is working with vulnerable populations and has identified some of the key indicators of Maine such as age of the residents, unemployment and workforce shortages as well migration rates. The applicant, however, fails to give specifics of the vulnerable population that it is serving, to show need. Additionally, the applicant does not show the amount or type of services given by current agencies that are currently working with this population in the hub and the need for similar services in rural areas. This would show a baseline and the impact of this initiative. The applicant is also focusing on rural communities and have identified that they conduct listening sessions to identify the unique needs of this population. It is unclear who was involved with this listening session and how participants were informed of this session. Additionally, the applicant has mentioned that current service hubs are in urban areas where they are dealing with the underserved population such as those in recovery or immigrants. The applicant does not mention how it will specifically identify, redirect and impact those individuals who cannot be served in the current service hub. The applicant does identify how it will engage service providers and will identify host sites but neglects to make the connection to its existing data to ensure host sites are accessible to the population it is intended to serve. This is a new application with an existing model that will be used to have an impact on public health intentions. The applicant is very general of the roles and responsibilities of community volunteers, and it would help to ensure that this is clearly defined to ensure outcomes are met.

Theory of Change, Evidence of Effectiveness, Logic Model

While inputs including number of sites, volunteers and specific trainings are identified, the core activities, including duration of intervention, dosage of intervention and target population are missing, along with measurable and meaningful outputs for target population. Additionally, there are multiple references to 16 stipended AmeriCorps volunteers which aligns with only the 5% of the MSYs by objective. This is patently unclear and reinforces the point that there is questionable planning behind this application. Finally, there is a mention of 415 other activities to be conducted by volunteers without any explanation. Such an untethered comment again raises serious questions about the lack of planning effort behind this grant application. This applicant would garner more points by identifying

and quantifying core activities, including duration of intervention, dosage of intervention and target population are missing as are measurable and meaningful outputs for target population. Creating a list of tasks by MSY and objective would help explain where the 52 AmeriCorps volunteers will be resourced. Explaining the purpose and connection to delivering the GTO framework arrayed against 415 other activities may also help secure more points.

Applicant describes the goal is to improve public health outcomes for vulnerable populations. Public health services target substance abuse recovery, access to health care and mental health services, support for youth with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE). Need more information describing the evidence based public health interventions and how they improve volunteer management, increase capacity for community partners, develop job skills to make members better prepared for potential careers in public health. Maine has health care workforce shortages, scarcity of public health in rural areas and urban communities attract marginalized, underserved populations including unhoused/homeless, persons in recovery, justice system involved, and immigrants. Support Maine Dept of Health/Human Services to support community-based organizations, partnerships and relationship building for innovation, collaboration, and strengthening health care delivery system. Recruit community volunteers for both basic operations and as appropriate provide mentoring and peer to peer coaching.

The applicant has named 18 public health host sites in its inputs; however, only 14 of those sites will be provided with training and support so clarification would be helpful on what is occurring at the other 4 sites. The applicant has also neglected to elaborate more on the target population in their logic model as well as neglected to expand on the delivery of services outside of the host sites which would mitigate one of the barriers to the rural population to ensure accessibility which is a main issue for the rural population. The number of members is clearly defined as 36 members that will be trained on the Getting to Outcomes 10 steps for 1-3 hours per week for each member, but it is not clear for how long. It is assumed there are prescribed timeline is considering this is evidenced based model. The applicant is also very specific in regard to the dosages for training that lead to certification in either Recovery Coach, Emerging Youth Development Leaders Fellowship or Men Health Community Worker but again lacks duration. Also, it is unclear how the members are recruited and if a baseline is established for transfer of learning. The applicant has a personalized training plan but does not know how this plan is developed and evaluated. The applicant has also identified long-term outcomes such as increased economic opportunity and stability but is not clear how this is defined and how this is quantified as in percentages. Without the baseline of participants, it is hard to show the impact such as increased knowledge or skills. Also, some of the short-term outcomes need to be quantified to be better evaluated.

Evidence of Effectiveness

The applicant does not provide adequate quantification of GTO framework delivery outcomes and why they are preferable to other intervention programs. The application merely references a study and its authors, not its content on this critical point. Further, the applicant simply states as support for GTO efficacy, a retention number without providing a total number. This providing the numerator (number of volunteers retained) but withholding the denominator (total number of volunteers) is weak at best and non-transparent at worst. This application would do well to: 1) quote relevant content from studies it references; 2) provide complete statistics and; 3) quantify how AmeriCorps members will add significantly to existing community efforts. Getting to Outcomes (GTO) has been operational and researched for 20+ years, using evidence based processes, evaluating impacts including impact on capacity building, program fidelity, accountability, replication. If the

application gave more specifics about the evidence based process, this reviewer would have more confidence in their ability. GTO used for programs/services for positive youth development, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, sexual assault prevention, emergency preparedness, homeless veterans. GTO demonstrated to increased individual and organizational capacity and can be used for community health programs, behavioral health, prevention activities and evaluating program/service impacts toward sustainability. Goodwill managed public health AmeriCorps program in 2022, using the GTO model showing host site improvement impact and efficiency. They say 18 of 36 members are still employed in health care but don't give any specifics such as who the employers are, the work they're doing and wage.

The applicant does not specify if these programs that they are using as host sites are in rural areas which is their targeted population as well as have not established outcomes in relations to the ten steps associated with the GTO model to show its implementation and impact on the target population. For instance, one of the steps step 1 in identifying the need has not been completed for this area except for a listening session that has minimal information on how and who it was done on. Additionally, another step identifies best practices and ensures the fit of the structure implemented is appropriate for the target community and organization. This is not identified in the theory of change or logic model. There is a lack of this applicant to show the impact of the actual target population and how some of the activities that will be measured which are not shown in the logic model.

Funding Priority

Requesting more than half a million dollars and meeting only one Americorps funding priority and two Commission preferences out of a combined total of 13 criteria, yields a 23% match rate. A strong application would identify other priorities, such as Healthy Futures and explain qualitatively and quantitatively how the grant proposal connects to them.

Goodwill "Good Healthworks America" (GWA) supported Capacity Building for National Service and Public Health, and Workforce Development for Volunteer Maine. AmeriCorps members get hands on experience and training, learning new skills which can be used in future public health employment. The applicant aligns with the capacity building Focus area for national service and the public health volunteer Maine. The applicant also aligns with Maines Workforce development priority. The applicant is showing how they will increase the capacity of members to assist public health organizations who then can further assist the community. The applicant is also showing that they are indirectly impacting the workforce and this would be better shown if they had specific outcomes.

Member Training

The application identified several relevant certifications that will be offered and demonstrated sufficiently that they are relevant for the proposed project as well as future employment.

Application information shows members get orientation on day 1 including AmeriCorps history, program policies, benefits, time management, reporting requirements and specific host site training. Supervisors and members develop a "Member Work Plan" showing duties, long term projects, trainings and professional development goals. Ongoing training in GTO for planning, implementation, evaluations, volunteer management, public health interventions. Receive technical assistance in evidence based public health and foundational training for public health AmeriCorps.

Members receive a personalized learning plan that is created but is not revealed how this is assessed and revised if necessary or shows transfer of learning skills. There is, however, ongoing training in the GTO model as well as staff identified to assist in this endeavor such as the AmeriCorps on Evidenced Based Public Health that will support the fidelity of the model. The training tracks are identified in the logic model however the applicant neglects to show thresholds or quantify increases in skill development. It however shows the amount of hours

that members are trained in and the amount of members to be trained. There is also additional evidence to support that members participate in career development training to help support member development including specific certification pathways that can be taken in various areas.

Member Supervision

The application offers no description of AmeriCorps training for the site location supervisors. Equally concerning is the proposal for having only one AmeriCorps program coordinator in direct line for responding to up to 18 site location staff; 52 AmeriCorps volunteers; and another up to 100 community volunteers is too short-staffed. This individual will be inundated with questions and will not have sufficient time to respond, even with supervisors who are already Goodwill employees with strong experience. This resourcing and reporting arrangement needs to be completely reworked in order to garner sufficient points

Application describes daily supervision from host site supervisors; one for intervention and another for professional development. Bi-weekly check-ins with AmeriCorps program coordinator to assess progress, challenges and support. Host site supervisors get orientation about AmeriCorps regulation, compliance, activities and expectations, handbook, branding resources training in best practices, managing evidence based services, member support & compliance. Supervisors supported by Goodwill's workforce services model, integrating education and employment.

The applicant is implementing a dual supervision model with supervisor overseeing the intervention and as it mentor focusing on professional development. There is plan for bi weekly check ins and there is an extensive orientation that outlines regulations, prohibited activities and expectations. It would be helpful if this as also measured to show transfer of learning and understanding and any corrective action or feedback plans that support learning and promote growth when there is a concern. The applicant is also using existing best practices from its existing partner organizations to assist with supervision and training. Additionally, some of these outcomes for growth are in the mid term outcomes of the logic model but not quantified to show percentages or progress.

Member Experience

The application sufficiently discusses recruitment of talent that represents the community and offers experience in this area, noting 78% of hires in similar programs were local. It also articulates commitment to provide resources, including alumni.

Goodwill tries to recruit members: from local areas with knowledge of community and population, diverse backgrounds, talents and capabilities. Since 2022 nearly 80% of members in Public Health recruited from geographic and demographic communities served. Members participate in AC initiatives including Service Year Alliance/AC Building and Belonging, ongoing service project and training. Connect with AC Alumni on "National Days of Service" and calls to cohorts to discuss success, challenges.

It is unclear how members will be recruited and how they will reflect the community that they serve which is rural. There is no clear plan or strategy for recruitment even though the applicant has a history of doing such as they mentioned that "78.8% of AmeriCorps members in the prior PHA program were recruited from the geographic and demographic communities they served". It would be helpful to outline and build on what strategies were used to show that a strategic effort was made to ensure this occurred. Also as part of its logic model this can be an outcome that can be quantified and evaluated. The applicant has also provided additional opportunities for its members to connect with other members and alumni such as national service days where all members connected and regular cohort calls for reflection. It would also be helpful to outline how this reflection is used and learning occurs as result of this. There are also opportunities to ensure that diversity, equity and including are incorporated as Goodwill as a DEI Committee to assist with inclusion efforts and

consistently gathers feedback on its efforts of supporting staff and ensuring they feel safe. Also staff is trained on Recovery ready and disability inclusion.
Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification

Organizational Capability.

Organizational Background and Staffing

The applicant sufficiently describes its 16 years of experience with AmeriCorps programs, noting its strong experience with AmeriCorps leadership roles embedded in the Goodwill organization. The organizational chart is strong with key individuals and their years of experience identified. However, this application would have garnered more points if it added an additional resource to manage this proposed program with one coordinator responding to seemingly 170 individuals in the field (18 sites, assume one representative per site), 52 AmeriCorps volunteers and 100 community volunteers. Even at half that number, it is too many for a single coordinator who is not even identified as full-time – a requirement of this program. Finally, this application does not mention any internal documentation – policies or financial accounting systems dedicated to ensuring compliance with federal grant requirements.

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The applicant has submitted an organization chart that includes both the positions and names of the individuals who will lead, provide oversight, manage finances, and monitor the program. The funded positions and time is also included in this description. The organization has had a history of implementing programs, with AmeriCorps at least 16 years and has focused on workforce development which ties into the mission and strategic goals. The applicant has defined their internal structure to show roles and responsibilities, as well as the infrastructural support at Goodwill. The applicant has also included a AmeriCorps needs assessment that shows they have met the readiness criteria in all areas except if employee performance appraisals were done annually. Additionally the program has included a start up plan and timeline with the specific activity outlined, responsible parties identified and completion date. Some of these activities occurred prior to this application as were necessary to have internal structures in place. The applicant has also outlined their programmatic and administrative structure to show their internal structure. The applicant did not include specific information regarding specifics of operating a federally funded program such as targets achieved, duration etc. The applicant has briefly demonstrated how they have engaged volunteers previously through their programs, as well as the amount of volunteers that they have worked with in their various programs.

Data Collection

The application identifies sufficient and reliable data collection methods and uses.

Applicant references having a system in place for monthly reports, data collection training, and electronic timesheet process. The applicant indicates there is a consultant to train staff on data collection, interpretation. Applicant references using an evidence-based model to collect and analyze data but doesn't provide sufficient info on what the specific evidence based models are and whether the consultant or staff is responsible for evaluation. Applicant could have provided names types of software used and database management.

The applicant has budgeted for an external; evaluation to assist with their program. Additionally there are budget allocations that support the interventions and measurements needed to evaluate the program,, There is data training and support for the program as well as dedicated staff for the website to ensure data management and collection fidelity. There are ample opportunities for feedback as there are monthly check ins and activity tracking. The data collection is also implemented in the timeline.

Budget Alignment to Program Design

The requested funding amount for 52 AmeriCorps positions meets the requirement of the program, however, local funds are not described as secured. Finally, the Face Sheet does not include the \$160,000 in local funds.

Applicant references having a system in place for monthly reports, data collection training, and electronic timesheet process. Applicant indicates there is a consultant to train staff on data collection, interpretation. Applicant references using a evidence based model to collect and analyze data but doesn't provide sufficient info on what the specific evidence based models are and whether the consultant or staff is responsible for evaluation.

The applicant has a cost per MSY of \$26,999.51 and total MSY of 20.23. There is a required match of 24% from its other host sites with \$60,00 being public funding an \$100,000 being private. The grant is seeking \$546,200 which is 20.23 multiple day \$27,000 a little over the needed \$546,189.77 total budget required,

SUMMARY APPRAISAL 1. Having reviewed all elements of the proposal provided to you, do you think that this applicant would be effective in this category of grant? Yes (X) No ()

Task Force Review Notes and Appraisal Summary:

Proposal Alignment and Program Model

Meets significant need; multiple sites both rural & urban; many years of experience with AmeriCorps; unsure of degree of community engagement in program design

Program addresses two VM priorities: Public Health and Workforce Development •While program may serve some in disadvantaged communities, it is not totally focused on them. As a result, just gave the program partial credit. •Does add to program diversity due to its geographic extent, potentially serving many areas of the state. •Program likely could be replicated in other areas; I don't see it, however, as particularly innovative since its effectively a re-initiation of a program previously run by GWNEE. •Goodwill has significant experience in workforce development, although less so in public health, and has run AC programs frequently and successfully •Given that the program was operated previously under a separate grant, relationships are in place and it appears firm partner commitments have been arranged for the coming grant year. •The organization has substantial financial resources available; although it has operated at a deficit for the last few years, it has more than enough financial strength to operate and maintain this program. •GWNNE has a significant staff; although

it appears that some of those directly involved in supervision and management of this program have not been long-term employees. Given the size of its staff, the agency should have no problem adjusting if staff changes take place •GWNNE indicates that most of its volunteer experience has come through its AmeriCorps programs. It has implemented many, but not all, volunteer best practices.

Past Performance

Goodwill has long history of working with individuals with special needs, understands populations with special needs; has many rural sites, but also some very urban ones

GWNNE has had significant experience with AmeriCorps programs and the federal and local requirements associated with such grants •Commitments seem to be in place for the local share •I don't believe information was submitted related to the success of prior grants, although there are references in the submission to having successfully run programs in the past with good outcomes for member retention •As noted, applicant does have experience working with volunteers although not all best practices have been implemented

While the program is designed to work with many partners, it is not from a partnership or coalition. Given the broad range of partners, I've given the proposal partial credit.

Financial Plan

The applicant has significant fiscal resources available, is familiar with federal requirements, and, although operating at a deficit for the last several years, has a strong available fund balance.

Well established organization.

Fiscal Systems

Source of match is well identified and should be easily attainable.

This is a fixed amount grant and the sources of local funds are identified and stated to be firm commitments.

Grant Readiness

Names intended partners (of which there are many) but doesn't describe their involvement in program design.

The start-up plan looks good and the organization has the finances and staff to implement.

MAINE AMERICORPS STANDARD GRANT REVIEW

Peer Reviewer Report

<p>RFP Due Date: April 8, 2025</p> <hr/> <p>Application Number: 25ES276400</p> <hr/> <p>Legal Applicant: Goodwill Industries of Northern New England</p> <hr/> <p>Grant Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Recompete <input type="checkbox"/> Cost Reimbursement <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Amount</p> <hr/> <p>Reviewers: Ben Level, Dr. Tiffany North, Anne Louise Rice</p> <hr/>	<p>Project Name: GoodHealth Works AmeriCorps</p> <hr/> <p>Project Contact: Steve Niles</p> <hr/> <p>MSYs and Slots requested: 36</p> <hr/> <p>Budget Proposed</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">CNCS funds</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 546,200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Local Match</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 160,000</td> </tr> </table> <hr/> <p>Cost per Member: \$ 27,000</p> <hr/>	CNCS funds	\$ 546,200	Local Match	\$ 160,000
CNCS funds	\$ 546,200				
Local Match	\$ 160,000				

1. Summarize ratings here:

CATEGORY	Rating	Points
Rationale & Approach/Program Design Section (50%)		
The Community and Need	Weak	4
Logic Model	Weak	4
Evidence of Effectiveness	Weak	4
Funding Priority and Preferences	Adequate	2.25
Member Training	Adequate	4.5
Member Supervision	Adequate	4.5
Member Experience	Adequate	4.5
Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification	Adequate	3.75
Organizational Capability Overall Rating 25%		
Organizational Background and Staffing	Adequate	13.5
Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility	Adequate	5.25
Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy 25%		
Member Recruitment	Weak	3.5
Member Retention	Adequate	5.25
Data Collection	Adequate	3.75
Budget Alignment to Program Design	Weak	3
Total		62.25

2. Other than the legal applicant, please list the agencies or organizations that appear to be the major collaborators or partners in this grant. Maine Department of Health and Human Services

3. Will the applicant place AmeriCorps members with other agencies? ☒ Yes ☐ No

4. Applicant proposes to deliver services:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Within a single municipality | <input type="checkbox"/> Within a single County but not covering the entire County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County-wide in a single County | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple Counties but not Statewide <input type="checkbox"/> Statewide |

4. Which federal focus area does this applicant identify as related to its proposal? Do the performance measures chosen match the focus area?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Opportunity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans and Military Families |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Stewardship | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capacity Building |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Healthy Futures | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

5. Based on your read of the Application Instructions and Proposal, please answer the following questions:

A. Does the proposal fall in a Commission funding priority? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

If yes, which one?

- ☒ Public Health – including domestic violence, abuse or neglect, substance use, emergency preparedness/response, adverse childhood experiences, and mental health
- ☒ Workforce development – combining service with skill development or certifications that lead to post-service employment
- ☐ Housing – affordable and safe housing; home energy conservation, weatherization, or repair including programs that perform the modifications, teach homeowners DIY skills, or help residents connect with programs that offer financial assistance to accomplish the projects
- ☐ Climate action compatible with *Maine Won't Wait* (the state climate action plan) and Maine Climate Corps
- ☐ Environmental/community resilience, adaptation, and sustainability including emergency preparedness.

B. Does the applicant claim a preference because the proposal is on behalf of a coalition or partnership whose members represent local organizations working together to implement a common evidence-based approach to a community problem? ☒ Yes ☐ No

C. Does the applicant claim a preference because the proposal is from an organization led by or primarily supporting historically marginalized communities and/or people. ☐ Yes ☒ No

D. Do the Service Activity performance measures chosen match the focus area? ☒ Yes ☐ No

E. Do the Capacity Building performance measures match one of the sets listed in the RFA? ☒ Yes ☐ No

F. Do the Member Development performance measures exactly match the set in the RFA? ☐ Yes ☒ No

6. Based on your read of the Application Instructions and Proposal, please answer the following questions:

A. Does the Executive Summary format exactly match the template in the RFA (page 39)?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

By my signature, I affirm the final summary of scoring is the consensus agreement of peer reviewers and I participated in the review.

Peer Reviewer Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

REVIEWER COMMENTS

Section: Program Design (50 %) Need

While the application effectively cites the need for more health focused services in rural areas, there is absolutely no quantification of either historical or projected efficacy of the GTO intervention program on actual patients. Data collected since 2022 on patient outcomes in the other public health programs referenced should have been included. Further, the applicant merely claims that 18 site locations have agreed to accept the GTO program without any support letters, only an unattributed quote. The applicant would strengthen the application by addressing these two issues: 1) quantifying the efficiency of GTO on patient outcomes and 2) providing support letters from organizations (i.e. sites that have agreed to use the GTO framework).

Applicant describes the goal is to improve public health outcomes for vulnerable populations. Public health services target substance abuse recovery, access to health care and mental health services, support for youth with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE). Need more information describing the evidence based public health interventions and how they improve volunteer management, increase capacity for community partners, develop job skills to make members better prepared for potential careers in public health. Maine has health care workforce shortages, scarcity of public health in rural areas and urban communities attract marginalized, underserved populations including unhoused/homeless, persons in recovery, justice system involved, and immigrants. Support Maine Dept of Health/Human Services to support community-based organizations, partnerships and relationship building for innovation, collaboration, and strengthening health care delivery system. Recruit community volunteers for both basic operations and as appropriate provide mentoring and peer to peer coaching.

The applicant is stating that it is working with vulnerable populations and has identified some of the key indicators of Maine such as age of the residents, unemployment and workforce shortages as well migration rates. The applicant, however, fails to give specifics of the vulnerable population that it is serving, to show need. Additionally, the applicant does not show the amount or type of services given by current agencies that are currently working with this population in the hub and the need for similar services in rural areas. This would show a baseline and the impact of this initiative. The applicant is also focusing on rural communities and have identified that they conduct listening sessions to identify the unique needs of this population. It is unclear who was involved with this listening session and how participants were informed of this session. Additionally, the applicant has mentioned that current service hubs are in urban areas where they are dealing with the underserved population such as those in recovery or immigrants. The applicant does not mention how it will specifically identify, redirect and impact those individuals who cannot be served in the current service hub. The applicant does identify how it will engage service providers and will identify host sites but neglects to make the connection to its existing data to ensure host sites are accessible to the population it is intended to serve. This is a new application with an existing model that will be used to have an impact on public health intentions. The applicant is very general of the roles and responsibilities of community volunteers, and it would help to ensure that this is clearly defined to ensure outcomes are met.

Logic Model

While inputs including number of sites, volunteers and specific trainings are identified, the core activities, including duration of intervention, dosage of intervention and target population are missing,

along with measurable and meaningful outputs for target population. Additionally, there are multiple references to 16 stipended AmeriCorps volunteers which aligns with only the 5% of the MSYs by objective. This is patently unclear and reinforces the point that there is questionable planning behind this application. Finally, there is a mention of 415 other activities to be conducted by volunteers without any explanation. Such an untethered comment again raises serious questions about the lack of planning effort behind this grant application. This applicant would garner more points by identifying and quantifying core activities, including duration of intervention, dosage of intervention and target population are missing as are measurable and meaningful outputs for target population. Creating a list of tasks by MSY and objective would help explain where the 52 AmeriCorps volunteers will be resourced. Explaining the purpose and connection to delivering the GTO framework arrayed against 415 other activities may also help secure more points.

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The applicant has named 18 public health host sites in its inputs; however, only 14 of those sites will be provided with training and support so clarification would be helpful on what is occurring at the other 4 sites. The applicant has also neglected to elaborate more on the target population in their logic model as well as neglected to expand on the delivery of services outside of the host sites which would mitigate one of the barriers to the rural population to ensure accessibility which is a main issue for the rural population. The number of members is clearly defined as 36 members that will be trained on the Getting to Outcomes 10 steps for 1-3 hours per week for each member, but it is not clear for how long. It is assumed there are prescribed timeline is considering this is evidenced based model. The applicant is also very specific in regard to the dosages for training that lead to certification in either Recovery Coach, Emerging Youth Development Leaders Fellowship or Men Health Community Worker but again lacks duration. Also, it is unclear how the members are recruited and if a baseline is established for transfer of learning. The applicant has a personalized training plan but does not know how this plan is developed and evaluated. The applicant has also identified long-term outcomes such as increased economic opportunity and stability but is not clear how this is defined and how this is quantified as in percentages. Without the baseline of participants, it is hard to show the impact such as increased knowledge or skills. Also, some of the short-term outcomes need to be quantified to be better evaluated.

Evidence of Effectiveness

The applicant does not provide adequate quantification of GTO framework delivery outcomes and why they are preferable to other intervention programs. The application merely references a study and its authors, not its content on this critical point. Further, the applicant simply states as support for GTO efficacy, a retention number without providing a total number. This providing the numerator (number of volunteers retained) but withholding the denominator (total number of volunteers) is weak at best and non-transparent at worst. This application would do well to: 1) quote relevant content from studies it references; 2) provide complete statistics and; 3) quantify how AmeriCorps members will add significantly to existing community efforts.

Getting to Outcomes (GTO) has been operational and researched for 20+ years, using evidence based processes, evaluating impacts including impact on capacity building, program fidelity, accountability, replication. If the application gave more specifics about the evidence based process, this reviewer would have more confidence in their ability. GTO used for programs/services for positive youth development, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, sexual assault prevention, emergency preparedness, homeless veterans. GTO demonstrated to increased individual and organizational capacity and can be used for community health programs, behavioral health, prevention activities and evaluating program/service impacts toward sustainability. Goodwill managed public health AmeriCorps program in 2022, using the GTO model showing host site improvement impact and efficiency. They say 18 of 36 members are still employed in health care but don't give any specifics such as who the employers are, the work they're doing and wage.

The applicant does not specify if these programs that they are using as host sites are in rural areas which is their targeted population as well as have not established outcomes in relations to the ten steps associated with the GTO model to show its implementation and impact on the target population. For instance, one of the steps step 1 in identifying the need has not been completed for this area except for a listening session that has minimal information on how and who it was done on. Additionally, another step identifies best practices and ensures the fit of the structure implemented is appropriate for the target community and organization. This is not identified in the theory of change or logic model. There is a lack of this applicant to show the impact of the actual target population and how some of the activities that will be measured which are not shown in the logic model.

Funding Priority and Preferences

Requesting more than half a million dollars and meeting only one Americorps funding priority and two Commission preferences out of a combined total of 13 criteria, yields a 23% match rate. A strong application would identify other priorities, such as Healthy Futures and explain qualitatively and quantitatively how the grant proposal connects to them.

Goodwill "Good Healthworks America" (GWA) supported Capacity Building for National Service and Public Health, and Workforce Development for Volunteer Maine. AmeriCorps members get hands on experience and training, learning new skills which can be used in future public health employment.

The applicant aligns with the capacity building Focus area for national service and the public health volunteer Maine. The applicant also aligns with Maines Workforce development priority. The applicant is showing how they will increase the capacity of members to assist public health

organizations who then can further assist the community. The applicant is also showing that they are indirectly impacting the workforce and this would be better shown if they had specific outcomes.

Member Training

The application identified several relevant certifications that will be offered and demonstrated sufficiently that they are relevant for the proposed project as well as future employment.

Application information shows members get orientation on day 1 including AmeriCorps history, program policies, benefits, time management, reporting requirements and specific host site training. Supervisors and members develop a “Member Work Plan” showing duties, long term projects, trainings and professional development goals. Ongoing training in GTO for planning, implementation, evaluations, volunteer management, public health interventions. Receive technical assistance in evidence based public health and foundational training for public health AmeriCorps.

Members receive a personalized learning plan that is created but is not revealed how this is assessed and revised if necessary or shows transfer of learning skills. There is, however, ongoing training in the GTO model as well as staff identified to assist in this endeavor such as the AmeriCorps on Evidenced Based Public Health that will support the fidelity of the model. The training tracks are identified in the logic model however the applicant neglects to show thresholds or quantify increases in skill development. It however shows the amount of hours that members are trained in and the amount of members to be trained. There is also additional evidence to support that members participate in career development training to help support member development including specific certification pathways that can be taken in various areas.

Member Supervision

The application offers no description of AmeriCorps training for the site location supervisors. Equally concerning is the proposal for having only one AmeriCorps program coordinator in direct line for responding to up to 18 site location staff; 52 AmeriCorps volunteers; and another up to 100 community volunteers is too short-staffed. This individual will be inundated with questions and will not have sufficient time to respond, even with supervisors who are already Goodwill employees with strong experience. This resourcing and reporting arrangement needs to be completely reworked in order to garner sufficient points

Application describes daily supervision from host site supervisors; one for intervention and another for professional development. Bi-weekly check-ins with AmeriCorps program coordinator to assess progress, challenges and support. Host site supervisors get orientation about AmeriCorps regulation, compliance, activities and expectations, handbook, branding resources training in best practices, managing evidence based services, member support & compliance. Supervisors supported by Goodwill’s workforce services model, integrating education and employment.

The applicant is implementing a dual supervision model with supervisor overseeing the intervention and as it mentor focusing on professional development. There is plan for bi weekly check ins and there is an extensive orientation that outlines regulations, prohibited activities and expectations. It would be helpful if this as also measured to show transfer of learning and understanding and any corrective action or feedback plans that support learning and promote growth when there is a concern.

The applicant is also using existing best practices from its existing partner organizations to assist with supervision and training. Additionally, some of these outcomes for growth are in the mid term outcomes of the logic model but not quantified to show percentages or progress.

Member Experience

The application sufficiently discusses recruitment of talent that represents the community and offers experience in this area, noting 78% of hires in similar programs were local. It also articulates commitment to provide resources, including alumni.

Goodwill tries to recruit members: from local areas with knowledge of community and population, diverse backgrounds, talents and capabilities. Since 2022 nearly 80% of members in Public Health recruited from geographic and demographic communities served. Members participate in AC initiatives including Service Year Alliance/AC Building and Belonging, ongoing service project and training. Connect with AC Alumni on “National Days of Service” and calls to cohorts to discuss success, challenges.

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Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification

The applicant describes signage, clothing and speech as requiring AmeriCorps branding which suggests an adequate understanding of this requirement.

Applicant describes members get orientations about AC history, program info, and branding requirements. Receive “elevator pitch” and how to describe the project in the community. Goodwill creates member identity giving pins, uniforms, buttons, signage for host sites. This reviewer believes the applicant has overlooked many other opportunities to instill member identification and being members of a team.

The applicant has addressed that members will have branding as well as there will be formal introductions to ensure that members will be recognized. Members are also given training on elevator speeches so they can properly identify themselves and their roles. There are also branding requirements that are mentioned. There is also appropriate cobranding in the application. It would also be helpful to outline orientation meetings and expectations with host sites in this application to also ensure they understand the co-branding.

Organizational Background and Staffing

The applicant sufficiently describes its 16 years of experience with AmeriCorps programs, noting its strong experience with AmeriCorps leadership roles embedded in the Goodwill organization. The organizational chart is strong with key individuals and their years of experience identified. However, this application would have garnered more points if it added an additional resource to manage this proposed program with one coordinator responding to seemingly 170 individuals in the field (18 sites, assume one representative per site), 52 AmeriCorps volunteers and 100 community volunteers. Even at half that number, it is too many for a single coordinator who is not even identified as full-time – a requirement of this program. Finally, this application does not mention any internal documentation – policies or financial accounting systems dedicated to ensuring compliance with federal grant requirements.

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Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

The applicant identifies sufficiently current policies but does not linked them explicitly to the proposed program

Applicant describes hiring leadership and staff with lived experience similar to communities served. No strategy or information is given on how this will be achieved. Applicant states there are tools to achieve DEIA including “Trust Index Survey” (more information on this would be helpful) and that Goodwill DEI Committee coordinates with consultant. More information on the consultant role and responsibility (consult with staff, trains host sites, etc) is needed.

The applicant has shown that they have a record of having members that represents the communities they serve. However they have not given specifics how they will ensure that this will occur with this program. The applicant however has a strategic framework that incorporates DEI efforts and stages to ensure equitable practices are throughout the organization. It is unclear how the board was recruited and if they are diversified. The applicant however incorporates a survey to its members and staff to ascertain how safe staff feel and to make adjustments based on this.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy 25%

Member Recruitment

There is no discussion of a budget for member recruitment, merely a mention that some of the funds will be used to support marketing efforts and a mention of past successful local recruitments. This application would have garnered more points if some mention of the assignment of proposed funds was discussed in the narrative or included in the logic model.

Includes career fairs, targeted social media, and local networks. Applicant mentions providing a “referral incentive” but doesn’t give any detail such as who is making the referral (host sites) or how what the incentive is: Cash, or in-kind donation or AmeriCorps merch. Video production - “compelling materials” to show potential recruits. It would be more convincing if there was more info on the “compelling materials”. Applicant describes that recruitment coordinator collaborates with host sites to recruit underrepresented populations such as persons geographically isolated youth, immigrants, disabilities, transitions from criminal justice and substance abuse. More info on this, such as past experiences, would be helpful to know how successful this member recruitment strategy has been.

The applicant has stated that they budget for recruiting to include social media and branding items and social events. There is no specific budget identified or specified for this area and no specific budget for targeted recruitment and what that entails for the rural community to help mitigate the barriers mentioned.

Member Retention

The applicant sufficiently discusses various elements including housing support, certifications, networking and leadership opportunities under this proposed program.

To achieve retention, Goodwill offers professional development and community bldg (no specifics or generalities). Life Navigator helps with barrier reduction (mental health and substance abuse) Certification in 3 public health areas: leadership development, and Vol Maine required events. More information on members who may be struggling/challenged is provided.

The applicant does offer an above the average minim wage and also provides provision as well as the learning certification and pathways. There is also mention of connections and interactions with other members and allotments for training and learning opportunities which will allows for more growth in the rural areas There should also be more opportunities for leadership growth in the organization outside of the certification pathways to allow for the members to find or foster leadership opportunities in these communities.

Data Collection

The application identifies sufficient and reliable data collection methods and uses.

Applicant references having a system in place for monthly reports, data collection training, and electronic timesheet process. The applicant indicates there is a consultant to train staff on data collection, interpretation. Applicant references using an evidence-based model to collect and analyze data but doesn't provide sufficient info on what the specific evidence based models are and whether the consultant or staff is responsible for evaluation. Applicant could have provided names types of software used and database management.

The applicant has budgeted for an external; evaluation to assist with their program. Additionally there are budget allocations that support the interventions and measurements needed to evaluate the program,, There is data training and support for the program as well as dedicated staff for the website to ensure data management and collection fidelity. There are ample opportunities for feedback as there are monthly check ins and activity tracking. The data collection is also implemented in the timeline.

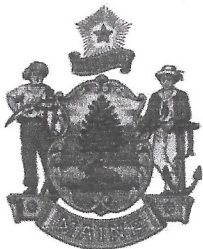
Budget Alignment to Program Design

The requested funding amount for 52 AmeriCorps positions meets the requirement of the program, however, local funds are not described as secured. Finally, the Face Sheet does not include the \$160,000 in local funds.

Applicant references having a system in place for monthly reports, data collection training, and electronic timesheet process. Applicant indicates there is a consultant to train staff on data collection, interpretation. Applicant references using a evidence based model to collect and analyze data but doesn't provide sufficient info on what the specific evidence based models are and whether the consultant or staff is responsible for evaluation.

The applicant has a cost per MSY of \$26,999.51 and total MSY of 20.23. There is a required match of 24% from its other host sites with \$60,00 being public funding an \$100,000 being private. The grant is seeking \$546,200 which is 20.23 multiple day \$27,000 a little over the needed \$546,189.77 total budget required,

SUMMARY APPRAISAL 1. Having reviewed all elements of the proposal provided to you, do you think that this applicant would be effective in this category of grant? Yes (X) No ()



Volunteer Maine

19 Elkins Lane, 105 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333

voice: (207) 624-7792

service.commission@maine.gov

www.MaineServiceCommission.gov



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Before you begin to review applications:

1. Check each statement to indicate you agree.
2. Sign the form and send to Commission staff. Digital signatures are accepted. Scans may be emailed to the address above. Hard copies should be sent to 105 SHS.

- ☒ I have read the Commission policy on Conflict of Interest as outlined in the Reviewer Handbook and understand that I must contact the appropriate Commission staff if a conflict arises during my service as a reviewer.
- ☒ I also will not divulge any confidential information I may become aware of during the grant review process.
- ☒ Upon completion of this work, I will return to the Commission or destroy any application hard copies or digital files and not share them with anyone or hold them.
- ☒ I fully understand that I must sign and return this Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement to the Commission Office before I begin review of grant applications.

Name (please print): Anne Louise Rice

Signature: Anne Louise Rice

Date: 4.10.25

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to the Commission Office before I begin review of grant applications.

Name (please print):__Tiffany North _____

Signature: _____
Tiffany North

Date: __4.10.25_____

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Name (please print): BEN LEVEK

Signature: 

Date: 14 April 2025

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Volunteer Maine

The Maine Commission for Community Service
A Stronger Maine Through Volunteerism



POLICY ON CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

(Note: Each Reviewer must submit a signed copy of the Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement form to Volunteer Maine before starting to review grants. This step provides assurance to everyone involved that you acknowledge the policy regarding conflict of interest and the privileged nature of the applications. **The form is the last page of this document.**)

Confidentiality of Applications. Your designation as a panel member gives you access to information not generally available to the public. Consequently, you have special professional and ethical responsibilities. Panelists are given access to information about applicants for use only during the evaluation process and for discussion only with fellow panelists and Commission personnel. Therefore, you must not use that information for your personal benefit or make it available for the benefit of any other individual or organization. All grant applications must be deleted from your electronic files and any printed be destroyed or returned to Commission staff at the conclusion of the review process.

Attempts to Influence Reviewers. The process is intended to create situations that promote independent, informed assessments. The reviewers will not be anonymous to the applicants, due to the participation of reviewers in the interview process. We urge you to have no contact with applicants beyond the interview. Under no circumstances should you contact applicants in person, by phone, or in writing. In the unlikely event a representative of an applicant attempts to contact you or discuss the proposal with you, immediately decline to pursue the conversation and notify the Commission staff.

Conflict of Interest. Prior to reviewing any proposals, you must inform the Commission of any potential conflicts of interest or appearances thereof. As you review an application, if you realize you may have a potential conflict of interest, please immediately notify the Commission staff. The Commission will consider the impact of any conflict of interest and work with the individual reviewer to solve the issue.

What Constitutes Conflict of Interest. A conflict of interest arises when your association with a grant applicant may cause you to apply more lenient or favorable or biased standards to an application. Thus, it is critical to fairness and equity that reviewers have no "advantage" or bias with regard to applicants.

A conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict may occur if you are directly or indirectly affiliated with an organization that has submitted a grant proposal for this review. Examples of affiliations that may constitute conflicts include any of the following:

1. **Your personal submission of an AmeriCorps application to the Commission within the last 12 months.** If you have submitted an application, or have been personally involved in the preparation of an application, for an AmeriCorps State of Maine program, during the past 12 months you may not serve on a review panel.
2. **Affiliation with an applicant institution.** A conflict may be present if you have/hold
 - (a): Current employment or are being considered for employment, at the institution or a consulting, advisory, or other similar position.
 - (b): Any formal or informal employment arrangement with the institution.
 - (c): Current membership on a visiting committee, board, or similar body at the institution.

(d): Ownership of the institution's securities or other evidences of debt. (Minor or indirect holdings are not considered conflicts.)

(e): Any office, governing board membership, or relevant committee chairing in the institution. (Ordinary membership in a professional society or association is not considered an office.)

(f): Current enrollment as a student. (This is only a conflict for proposals or applications that originate from a department or school in which one is a student.)

(g): Received and retained an honorarium or award from the institution within the last 12 months.

3. Relationship with someone who has personal interest in the proposal or another application. Examples of such relationships include:

(a): Related by marriage or through family membership.

(b): Business or professional partnership.

(c): Employment at the same institution, organization, or business within the last 12 months.

(d): Past or present association as thesis advisor or thesis student.

(e): Collaboration on a project, book, article, report, or paper within the last 48 months.

4. Other affiliations or relationships. Interests of the following persons are to be treated as if they were yours:

(a): Any affiliation or relationship of your spouse, your minor child, a relative living in your immediate household, or anyone who is legally your partner that you are aware of that would be covered by Section 1, 2, or 3 of this Statement (except for receipt by your spouse or relative of any honorarium or award).

(b): Any other relationship, such as close personal friendship, that you think might tend to affect your judgment or be seen as doing so by a reasonable person familiar with the relationship.



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Please sign this form and return it to Commission staff, as instructed, at the address below *before* you begin to review applications.

I have read the Commission policy on Conflict of Interest as outlined in the Reviewer Information Package and understand that I must contact the appropriate Commission staff if a conflict arises during my service as a reviewer. I also will not divulge any confidential information I may become aware of during the grant review process. Upon completion of this work, I will destroy all digital and/or hard copies of applications and not share them with anyone or hold them.

I fully understand that I must sign and return this Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement to the Commission Office before I begin review of grant applications.

Name (please print): Edward A. Barrett

Signature: Edward A. Barrett

Date: 4-12-2025

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