

Grant Continuation Report from Task Force

Recommendation: Authorize proposal request with budget clarification.

Legal Applicant: Trekkers, Inc.

Program Name: Trekkers AmeriCorps Aspirations Program

Category: AC Formula
 AC Competitive
 Other Competition

Type: Planning
 Operating
 Fixed Price
 Ed Award Only

Year in Grant Cycle: Year 1 Year 2 Year 3

Continuation Dates: Start: 09/01/2023
 End: 08/31/2024

New Resources for Continuation: Funds and Slots

	CNCS	Local Share	% change from prior year			
Operating	86,400	n/a	10.8%			
Member Support		n/a				
Indirect (Admin)		n/a				
% sharing proposed	0%	n/a				
% share required	0%	n/a				
Cost-per-member proposed (max allowed)	\$28,800 proposed (\$28,800 allowed)		10.8%			
Total AmeriCorps Member Service Years:						
	Slot Types Requested					
	FT	HT	RHT	QT	MT	Total
Slots With living allowance	3					3
Slots with only ed award						

TASK FORCE REVIEW SUMMARY:

BUDGET

- Trekkers, Inc. seems to have a long history of doing this work successfully, they have a strong AmeriCorps alumni presence on staff. Additionally, they had no issues in year 3 obtaining their match and no budget variance.
- There appears to be strong financial oversight and governance processes in plan. Further, there is no budget overage.

POSITIONS/SLOTS

- The workload and activities planned for the upcoming year track realistically for me. The new supervision structure proposed is comprehensive and well thought out.
- It appears as though Trekkers is effectively leveraging their members and invested in their overall success.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

- They didn't hit all the targets planned, but amidst the pandemic, they came very close on most of them. I feel their targets are realistic and obtainable given where we've come with regard to Covid-19 and its hindrances.
- The number of students graduating from high school on time was a mere fraction of Trekkers' original target -- does this need to be adjusted or addressed?

CHANGES IN OPERATING PLANS

- The changes are well thought out and make sense. As previously mentioned, the new supervisory structure for the AmeriCorps members will be beneficial and should go a long way in moving the work forward.
- Trekkers' model of deploying members to provide 1:1 mentoring and build the organization's community network of support appears to be working, as evidenced by the program outcomes to date.

OTHER COMMENTS

- The performance measure related to additional service units could be adjusted reasonably (increased).
- A number of deficiencies were noted in the compliance overview (i.e., member training requirements, member development performance measure targets). It is recommended that Trekkers articulate a plan for how they will address these milestones.
- Because of the achievement of 141.35% of the target.

	Authorize Proposal	Modify: Increase	Modify: Decrease	Deny Request
Budget	X			
Positions/participant slots	X			
Performance targets	X			
Operating plans	X			
Other:				
Conditions or requirements of continuation award:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The living allowance for each member slot serving on a full-time basis must be stated in the budget narrative and meet the Commission’s minimum standard amount. 				

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION (executive summary from grant application):

Trekkers proposes to have three full-time AmeriCorps members who will provide mentoring to 7th - 12th grade students, recruit volunteers, and cultivate community partnerships in Knox County, Maine. At the end of the program year, the AmeriCorps program will have increased the number of hours each Trekkers participant has spent with a mentor and increased the number of Trekkers participants receiving other local supports and participating in local community service activities due to an increase in organizations working collaboratively with Trekkers. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 60 volunteers who will be engaged in mentoring. The program will concentrate on the Education Focus Area.

SERVICE LOCATIONS (new sites are italicized):

Members are assigned to the applicant’s operating site.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES (targets and achievement for prior years; targets proposed for new year):

Measure: Relationship Building through Mentoring

Output: Number of individuals served

Target: 150

Actual: 122 (81.33% of target)

New: 150

To best serve their students and best consider SEL they chose to only bring in one 7th grade cohort this year which means they would not be able to reach their goal number this year. They hope to return to two 7th grade cohorts which will increase their numbers.

Outcome: Number of students graduating from high school on time

Target: 30

Actual: 7 (23.33% of target)

New: 30

Their graduating cohorts this year became small in 2020 due to COVID and a lead staff member for the team departing. They report that all their senior cohort graduated from high school on time even though it was a smaller number than the goal.

Outcome: Number of students with improved academic engagement or social-emotional skills

Target: 120

Actual: 83 (69.17% of target)

New: 120

Due to the pandemic their enrollment rate has been down a bit from where they would like it to be. They have also seen students much more emotionally challenged by the pandemic world. They do feel that having over 80% of their students that took the survey having improved academic engagement or social-emotional skills is still an excellent outcome.

Measure: Relationship Building with volunteer mentors

Output: Number of organizations that received capacity building services

Target: 1

Actual: 1 (100% of target)

New: 1

Outcome: Number of Additional Service units or activities done by leveraged volunteers

Target: 3000

Actual: 4240.50 (141.35 % of target)

New: 3000

Measure: Member Training

Output: Number of AmeriCorps training activities

Target: 10

Actual: 8 (80% of target)

New: 11

Outcome: Number of members demonstrating increased competency in skills application and knowledges

Target: 3

Actual: 3 (100% of target)

New: 3

OPERATING PERFORMANCE SUMMARY:

Enrollment current year.

Service Term	Awarded slots	Used Slots	% Of enrollment
1700	3	3	100%
1200			
900			
675			
450			
300			
<i>Overall</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>100%</i>

Retention -- keeping members engaged once they start service. Data is last completed year (Sept 21-Aug 2022)

Service Term	Filled slots	Left early	Successfully completed	% Retained
1700	3	0	0	100%
1200				
900				
675				
450				
300				
<i>Overall</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>100%</i>

COMPLIANCE:

Trekkers is often asked to share its policies and procedures with other small non-profits throughout the state. Board by-laws are reviewed annually. Strong documentation is in place for on-boarding staff and volunteers. The Personnel Policy manual was just updated. They have strong Executive and Governance board committees that oversee the process to update and adopt policies and procedures and assure they align with best practices. Trekkers Finance Committee has a policy handbook that is regularly reviewed. Both board and staff members regularly attended the Maine Association of Nonprofits Nonprofit Finance Conference. There are no corrective actions in this program year thus far.

The program is consistently compliant in the following areas -

- Member eligibility documents complete and accurate.
- Member enrollment and retention within CNCS tolerance for variability (typically 5%).
- Member time logs are signed and approved in accordance with regulations and within reasonable time.
- Personnel system for program staff results in compliance with grant/contract/provisions.
- Member host site selection, agreements, training, performance monitoring, and supervision are compliant.
- Program administrative system results in compliance with grant regulations, contract, special terms/conditions.
- Program Progress Reports complete, accurate, and submitted on time.
- Fiscal systems result in program compliance.
- Financial reports complete, accurate, submitted on time.
- Income Reports (including cash & in-kind match) reported quarterly:
- Engagement of non-AmeriCorps volunteers -- 169 Vol-to-date; 4240.50 Hours served; 25.15 Avg hrs/vol
- Inclusion and accessibility requirements are met.
- Performance data system in place to track and report progress related to grant/contract data and performance measures.
- Develops community partnerships to foster community ownership, sharing of resources, service coordination and infrastructure development.
- Accesses community support for volunteer/member development and training that is beyond what was required in the program design and budget.
- Develops Oversight/Advisory Committee/Boards to effectively involve target community in implementation
- Expands the base of community volunteers as means of growing ability to deliver services
- Access additional funding from diverse sources
- Successfully expands program/site service delivery
- Access additional equipment/supplies/ materials/resources/training (beyond those budgeted) to accomplish unexpected projects
- Build community awareness to advocate the importance of the project to potential supporters and general community.

Needs improvement –

Meeting Member training requirements.