



Proposal for Oasis Connections Technology Solutions for CNCS

Overview

The Oasis Institute has been designing programs and curriculum across multiple content areas, including lifelong learning, health and fitness, and purposeful volunteering for 38 years. Oasis empowers older adults to thrive throughout their aging process and to be purposeful change-makers in their communities.

The Oasis Institute developed the Connections technology literacy curriculum in 2000 has expanded and regularly updated the curriculum to include 7 classes devoted to the most current and relevant internet safety topics. Additionally, Connections curriculum was updated to include basic internet safety practices in our curricula featuring all basic mobile and desktop devices (Android, iOS and Windows) classes and Internet classes.

According to reports from the [Federal Trade Commission](#), the [United States Senate Special Committee on Aging](#)

and the [Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration](#) we know:

- more than 3 million scams were reported
- imposter scams are reported most frequently by older adults and frequently involve
 - o IRS impersonation
 - o Social Security impersonation
 - o Impersonation of family members, friends or potential friends/romantic interests

Oasis has created a variety of programs to assist older adults with navigating elder frauds and scams including Friends Fighting Fraud and the [Cybercrime Fighters series](#). Most recently, Oasis launched [YouTube instructional videos](#) in English and [in Spanish](#) to help older adults understand how to use the internet safely. Three of the seven forthcoming YouTube instructional videos focus on methods for identifying imposters and successfully disengaging from them.

Amy VanDeVelde leads the Oasis Connections program. Amy's experience in designing educational content for both in-person classes and remote delivery informs her understanding of the unique challenges older adults and digital late adopters face in effectively accessing social connecting technologies, communicating remotely with loved ones and service agencies, and using technology to gather information and stay engaged in lifelong learning activities. Amy also obtained a certificate in Cybersecurity Governance from Harvard University in 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created the need for more virtual programming for older adults. Since March, Oasis has pivoted its program delivery model to offer lifelong learning and health



classes via Zoom and has shifted its intergenerational tutoring program to a virtual setting using Zoom and other technologies. The first step in this process was to create best in class video tutorials about [how to use Zoom](#) to facilitate classes of all types and Oasis tutoring sessions. The Connections team then focused its energy on making [Zoom videos for end users](#). Lastly existing Connections instructors, most of whom are older adult technologists were trained to offer technology classes virtually.

Through this shift, Oasis has successfully trained thousands of older adult participants who now feel comfortable participating in a virtual world.

The Oasis leadership team developed a strategic plan to expand use of the Connections curriculum by expanding its instructor base to include high school and college aged students. Cybercrime has reached epidemic proportions and is a major risk to the financial well-being of American society. Every age group can benefit from receiving education about internet safety. Older adults, high school and college students all stand to gain considerably from an intergenerational program that allows mentors from both age groups to provide instruction to community groups.

Oasis has a long history, and has developed expertise, for providing a leading intergenerational tutoring model for four decades. We help older adults learn to navigate our “Tutor Power” portal to gain access to digital curriculum and ongoing tutor training resources, and we have recently pivoted to online tutoring through a successful pilot program with a library system.

Proposed Solution

Due to restrictions on in-person gatherings during COVID-19, older adults are turning to digital methods of delivery to take part in activities and learn about issues that affect them. Since the pandemic is projected to impact vulnerable populations through at least 2020, organizations serving older adults need to become technology educators in order to deliver their programming.

Oasis will provide the Connections curriculum to partners to train both their staff and participants, scale an intergenerational train-the-trainer model and offer technical assistance to help organizations that serve older adults train their volunteers and the participants of their agencies to use social connecting technologies.

Connections Technology Literacy Program

- Train-the-trainer for staff and volunteers
- Up to date materials (20 courses translated to Spanish) for PCs, Android, iOS and Cybersecurity



- Partner Portal for end of class surveys and capture of statistics
- Technical assistance and customer support
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- 30 topics including Android 10, Windows 10, iPad and iPhone (iOS 13) Zoom and Cybersecurity as well as the Microsoft Office Suite

Anticipated Outcomes

- 1) Enable CNCS grant sponsor organizations to use the Oasis Connections curriculum, train-the-trainer and Partner Portal to offer technology training to their participants
- 2) Propose and implement the work-plan for
 - a. scaling Ask-A-Techie 1:1 help as an intergenerational model
 - b. developing a technical assistance program with South Florida Institute on Aging (SoFIA) that helps organizations serving older adults choose and prepare devices to distribute to their participants and enable them to participate in virtual Connections classes

Project Budget

Oasis is eager to partner with CNCS on this project, and we can build a budget that reflects the scale of implementation and desired work-product. Once we have a sense of the project scope and our work in lifting the project we can create a draft budget that includes both development of new content, materials, and training resources, and appropriate personnel expenses for executing this work.