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Executive Summary

Reading Partners respectfully requests \$292,600 from CNCS and New Yorkers Volunteer, matched with \$818,128 from Reading Partners. This grant will support our proven literacy intervention program in 15 Title I elementary schools in New York City. Support at this level will enable 22 full-time Reading Partners AmeriCorps members to recruit and manage 975 community volunteers to provide one-on-one literacy tutoring to at least 825 K-5 struggling readers twice a week during the August 2013 - July 2014 program year. 65% of students who complete the program will advance their literacy skills by at least one full grade-level. This project will support the Education Focus Area for CNCS.

Rationale and Approach

a. NEED:

The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) reports that in 2011, just 52% of 4th graders in traditional public schools read at a proficient or advanced level. The case was even worse for students eligible for free or reduced price lunch through the National School Lunch Program, an indicator of poverty. For these low-income students, their reading proficiency rate is at 23% in NYC (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2011) Reading 2011: National Assessment of Educational Progress at Grades 4 and 8.)

In other words, 3 out of 4 low-income 4th graders are still grappling to master basic literacy skills ranging from sounding out words to retelling a story's plot. The real grievance of our students' daily struggle is that the defeat they feel in 4th grade will follow them throughout their academic careers. In a 2011 report, the Annie E. Casey Foundation found that students reading below grade level in third grade were four times as likely as their peers to exit school before earning a high school diploma. Indeed, it is critical to support struggling readers during the elementary years when targeted, data-driven, and personalized intervention can put them on a path towards future academic and employment success.

Reading Partners (RP) targets economically disadvantaged children because we believe that every student, regardless of their socioeconomic or demographic background, deserves the opportunity to succeed in life thanks to strong literacy skills. For students who have fallen behind in reading, early intervention is critical not only to their short-term success in the classroom, but to their long-term academic and life success as well. Once students start to fall behind in reading, they tend to fall faster and further behind their peers with every year, a phenomenon researchers and educators call the

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Matthew Effect (Stanovich, 1986). Strong reading skills in elementary school are especially important for children growing up in low-income communities, where there are so many barriers to academic and economic success. Children with low academic achievement are three times more likely to join gangs than their higher-achieving peers (Hill, et al. 2001).

RP utilizes community service and volunteerism as a means to enact positive change in our schools and for our children. We are dedicated to mobilizing community volunteers to become advocates for educational opportunity in their local communities. Our program is designed so that no matter a volunteer's prior experience with education or children, he or she can learn to use our research-based curriculum and support a student's concrete skill mastery. In this way, RP empowers everyone and anyone to become a change agent for their local schools.

b. AMERICORPS MEMBERS AS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO SOLVE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS:

AmeriCorps Members (ACMs) will serve in one of three roles: Site Coordinator (SC), Regional Site Coordinator (RSC), or Outreach Coordinator (OC). Under the supervision of RP staff, these members will serve together to recruit, train, and manage community volunteers to provide personalized literacy tutoring to K-5 students who are reading below grade level at each of our school sites. Altogether, these members will recruit and manage 65 volunteers to serve 55 students at each of our 15 schools. Because they train and manage volunteers to provide direct service, ACMs allow RP to serve many more students than if members solely tutored.

Site Coordinators: SCs are school-based positions and are responsible for managing the delivery of our tutoring program for 45-65 students Monday - Thursday at that school. Fridays are used for professional development trainings, service days, or tutoring make-up sessions. Under the supervision of a RP Program Manager, SCs are responsible for three activities: cultivating and stewarding relationships with their school's teachers and administration, training and coaching volunteer tutors to ensure each session is productive, and collecting and recording data on students' literacy development. SCs are responsible for maintaining close and consistent communication with teachers and administration to share school events, schedules, student availability for tutoring, student data, and student progress. SCs are also responsible for teaching volunteers how to use our research-based curriculum, pairing them with a student, observing tutoring sessions and coaching tutors with new strategies or activities to facilitate learning, and monitoring tutors' completion of progress monitoring notes. Data collection and management is the third major component of this role and entails assessing each student upon entry into the program, at mid-year, and at end-of-year; developing an

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Individualized Reading Plan for each student and adapting it as needed (with input from the Program Manager); and collecting school-based assessment data and recording it in our database. SCs also coordinate Home Connection Events such as twice annual Reading Recitals, as well as monthly newsletters. A SC's schedule is 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. RP plans to place 15 SCs in 2013-14.

Regional Site Coordinators: RSCs are school-based positions, but unlike SCs, RSCs are not assigned to one particular school. Rather, RSCs rotate between our larger school sites with the most need to provide additional direct service support. Working closely with their Program Manager, RSCs determine which schools need their help in a given week and when they arrive on site, they are tasked with specific duties such as performing make-up sessions with students who were previously absent, offering more intensive coaching to novice tutors, and supporting the SC with data collection and management. RP plans to place 5 members to serve as RSCs.

Outreach Coordinators: With guidance from a RP Outreach Manager, OCs are responsible for designing individual tutor recruitment plans for each school site and then executing those plans. OCs have desk space in the NY office, but they spend much of their time at community centers, schools, businesses, and civic organizations to recruit tutors. Once a volunteer has expressed interest in RP, the OC guides the volunteer through the orientation and application, ensures the volunteer completes a background check, and schedules the volunteer to attend an on-site training with an SC before becoming a tutor. OCs also focus on renewing the commitment of current tutors and partners for the next program year. Finally, OCs are tasked with developing volunteer appreciation events or strategies to ensure our volunteers feel connected to their service commitment. RP plans to place 2 OCs who will serve from 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday.

RP is requesting 22 full-time slots: 15 members will serve as SCs, 5 as regional SCs and 2 as OCs. Our service year runs from approximately August 1, 2013 to July 31, 2014.

c. EVIDENCE-BASED/EVIDENCE-INFORMED AND MEASUREABLE COMMUNITY IMPACT:

The RP program is both evidence-based and evidence-informed. Our model is based on studies from educational research that supports community-driven one-to-one tutoring programs as a cost-effective and outcomes-focused way of improving student achievement (Slavin, R.E., Lake, C., Davis, S., & Madden, N. (2009, June) Effective programs for struggling readers: A best evidence synthesis. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Data-Driven Reform in Education. Elbaum, B., Vaughn, S., Huges, M.T., & Moody, S. W. (2000). How Effective Are One-to-One Tutoring Programs in Reading for Elementary Students at Risk for Reading Failure?: A Meta-Analysis of the Intervention

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Research. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92, 4, 605-619.) As a prior AmeriCorps and Social Innovation Fund grantee, RP is also obligated to conduct independent evaluation studies to verify the efficacy of our work and continuously improve. RP recently completed one such study with the Stanford University School of Education. This study included an experimental evaluation and reported that our program demonstrated statistically significant differences in reading skill gains for participants compared to control group students and had a moderate effect size (0.55), based on the Rigby PM Ultra assessments, RP's current literacy assessment. To build on the findings of the Stanford study, RP is contracting with a nationally recognized social policy research firm, MDRC, to conduct a randomized control trial (RCT) at 19 RP school sites nationwide. The study, made possible by the SIF, will include over 1,200 students and will probe the efficacy of our program design, our fidelity the program model nationally, and suggest ways to improve our program. Results from the study will be ready in summer 2014.

In addition to being evidence-based, RP prides itself on being evidence-informed. To monitor and improve our program internally, RP has a Research and Evaluation department. This department focuses on assessment, curriculum and program updates to reflect changing policies such as the implementation of Common Core State Standards, and managing internal and external studies. The Research and Evaluation department also supervises our internal data collection cycle. This cycle includes a literacy assessment of each enrolled student to determine baseline literacy skills and growth; twice annual tutor, teacher, and principal surveys; collection of school-administered performance data; and qualitative notes from tutors on students' real-time breakthroughs and challenges. We record all data in our Salesforce.com online database so that our program staff and Research and Evaluation Department can analyze the data and progress-monitor. Each summer, we report students' gains to our funders, outreach partners, and tutors via emails and reports so that everyone involved in creating success for students knows how the school year progressed.

The investment by New Yorkers Volunteer (NYV) will allow RP to have a direct academic impact on 2,500 children in NY over the next 3 years. NYV funding for 2013-14 would allow RP to serve 825 students in NY. RP selects participating students by meeting with principals, teachers and literacy specialists at each site to develop a tactical plan for identifying potential RP students. 65 percent of students who receive the full dosage of tutoring (16 hours) will increase at least one full grade level in literacy skills. This performance measure target has been selected based on internal trend analyses on assessment data collected over the last 5 years. RP has maintained consistently strong outcomes even while scaling to serve many more students. Our education performance measure is based on the

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requirements for the Education National Performance Measure.

d. MEMBER RECRUITMENT:

RP has filled 100% of our AmeriCorps (AC) positions each year for the last 3 years, and has retained at least 94% of members. 45% of our first-year ACMs also elected to serve a second term with RP in 2012-13. We received 134 applications last year for our 6 National Direct and 5 VISTA available positions in NY. As of 12/1/12 we are at 100% enrollment and retention for our NY cohort, and at 100% and 99% respectively for our 113 MSYs nationwide in 2012-13. Additional recruitment strategies include: 1.Partnerships. Close partnerships with community institutions like colleges and universities, community centers, volunteer centers, and other AC programs help us promote our program. 2.Web presence. Our website clearly explains our AC program. We post opportunities on bulletin boards like idealist.org, VolunteerMatch, and americorps.gov. Candidates submit applications online. 3.Tutor conversions. This year, 22% of our national AC cohort were volunteer tutors from last year. RP's Diversity in Recruitment Initiative ensures that each region attends Diversity Career Fairs and posts hard copies of the ACM position description in low-income communities as part of our recruitment strategy. We recruit in our service neighborhoods by making AC recruitment materials available at all of our sites, advertising open positions in those communities, and working with organizations like Teach for America to recruit individuals who are passionate about community service. 73% of our NY cohort is from NY. In 2012-13, the population of our NY AmeriCorps members is comprised of the following: 45% Latino; 36% Caucasian; 18% African American; 1% Multi-ethnic/Other.

e. MEMBER TRAINING:

Training for ACMs is designed to scaffold members into their service experience by teaching them about their service commitment and service environment, supporting their transition into the service environment, and providing ongoing and consistent coaching to ensure that members are thriving. Training begins with 3 weeks of pre-service orientation planned by RP program staff. This training consists of: 1. AC Training & RP Orientation: All members meet at 1 location for one full week of training in August. Staff provides training on AmeriCorps-specific topics like the history of national service, prohibited activities and RP AmeriCorps policies and procedures. ACMs sign their contracts during this training. Additionally, PMs train members on RP-specific topics like literacy and pedagogy, student and tutor support, and reading assessments. 2. Center-based Training: After leaving Orientation, members spend two weeks in their regions prior to the start of tutoring. During this time, they conduct community mapping exercises to learn more about what it's like to live and serve in the

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community, receive 1:1 coaching and orientation at their site from their manager, and set up their Reading Center. They meet with school personnel to discuss the program structure and review the Rigby student assessment processes. Members then complete classroom observations, schedule volunteers for orientations, and conduct student assessments before scheduling tutoring sessions. Training throughout the year includes 1. Weekly on-site coaching with staff 2. Friday Team days to come gather as regional teams to discuss training topics. 3. Professional development days (every other Friday) coordinated with Days of National Service. Managers cover topics such as: goal setting; public speaking; and life after AmeriCorps.

Each prohibited activity is outlined in our Member Contracts. Members must initial and sign the Prohibited Activities section, following a Prohibited Activities training. RP volunteer tutors must sign a Tutor Code of Conduct after receiving training on the RP program and our Prohibited Activities pertaining to both RP and AmeriCorps. RP ensures that our volunteers do not engage in prohibited activities by requiring all volunteers to sign a Tutor Code of Conduct, an agreement that outlines the prohibited and acceptable activities of being a volunteer with RP. A volunteer may not begin tutoring unless this agreement has been signed.

f. MEMBER SUPERVISION

RP integrates multiple levels of support for our ACMs. OCs are supervised by Outreach Managers (OMs) who have 3-6 years of volunteer management experience. SCs are supervised by Program Managers (PMs), all of whom have classroom teaching experience with at-risk youth and/or a NY teaching credential. In addition to constant contact over email and phone, PMs visit each ACM at their school site at least once a week to provide in-person guidance.

Members also receive support from their AmeriCorps Program Manager (ACPM). The ACPM provides prohibited activities supervision and surveys member satisfaction with the RP AmeriCorps program. The ACPM accomplishes this through training, surveys, and 1:1 check-in meetings with members. Managers are supervised by the New York Regional Executive Director (RED). Program and Outreach Managers are hired based on their experience with volunteer outreach, education, and/or direct service. All managers attend a comprehensive orientation and training in June/July, participate in weekly check-in meetings with their direct supervisors, and participate in bi-weekly team meetings. National staff such as the CEO, COO and AmeriCorps Director also join PMs on school visits to ensure program quality and fidelity to the program model.

The RP program is compliant with the CNCS tutoring guidelines in the following ways: 1. RP requires that all members have at least a high school diploma or its equivalent and successfully complete a

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120-hour training program prior to the start of the program and regular in-service trainings during the program year. Community volunteers also undergo a training program that is focused on in-school instruction. 2. RP uses the Rigby PM assessment kit to track student progress and measure student outcomes. Students are assessed three times per year and tutors use the data to guide instruction. On a weekly basis, members review tutoring notes and conference with PMs to adapt student intervention plans. 3. Upon entry into RP, every student is assessed and placed into one of the three curricular programs depending on the student's academic needs and reading skill level. 4. RP's training program is designed by expert educators to prepare tutors and members for their work in reading centers. 5. Members are supervised by PMs who have at least 5 years of experience in education, a current NY teaching credential and/or a master's (or higher) degree in education.

g. MEMBER EXPERIENCE

RP connects our members across the country during Orientation, fostering a sense of national team pride. Members connect on a regional level each week through trainings and team building. They stay connected on a national level throughout the year by receiving a monthly newsletter with current events in AC or CNCS as well as AC accomplishments at RP. RP partners with other NY AC programs such as Citizen Schools, AmeriCorps Alums, and GenerationOn for National Days of Service to give our members a sense of connection and identity to the AC brand and mission.

OCs gain in-depth experience in community partnership development, and they see the impact community volunteers can have. SCs have meaningful service experiences as they assess and report on the measurable improvements their students make with the support of volunteers.

RP is clear on our commitment to continuous improvement and learning during Orientation. Each month, ACMs submit a reflection on an area for growth and a story of pride along with their timesheets. Friday trainings start and end with discussion questions designed for self-reflection. ACMs participate in MLK Day and AC Week each year designing and leading service projects in their neighborhoods. ACMs identify as such to community members and partners, by wearing their RP AmeriCorps gear that prominently displays the AC and RP logo at sites and events. ACMs are trained to abide by all regulations outlined in their member contracts and handbook. Pins, jackets, and polos with RP and AC logos are distributed after the AmeriCorps Pledge is complete. All members participate in a Life After AmeriCorps training in June before they graduate.

h. VOLUNTEER GENERATION

The RP model is a unique approach to helping struggling readers from low-income communities. Reading Partners believes there is a great deal of potential in volunteer engagement in NY, and that

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citizens are just looking for the right opportunity. RP's 2011-12 program year in NY resulted in recruiting and engaging 476 volunteers. Local community volunteers are empowered by our ACMs through training and personalized coaching to tutor their own students. This begins by OCs developing volunteer outreach strategies for each school. As of December 21, 2012, our NY OCs have already recruited 304 volunteers in NY to tutor at our 10 schools. We anticipate ending the 2012-13 program year with 650 active volunteers. Because OCs dedicate so much time to fostering relationships with volunteers, we expect to retain a large amount of our volunteers next year based on past trends, contributing to the 2013-14 goal to recruit 975 volunteer tutors.

SCs focus on serving students through our volunteer tutors by creating Individualized Reading Plans (IRPs) for tutors to follow in order to best support their student. Our student-tutor pairs work together for 45 minutes twice a week, following an Individualized Reading Plan tailored to that student's particular needs and strengths. To execute the plan, tutors use a multi-level, research-based curriculum developed specifically for use by trained volunteers.

RP's ACMs are directly responsible for volunteer recruitment and management throughout RP. Volunteers are trained on prohibited activities and asked to sign a Tutor Code of Conduct before tutoring. Tutors are held accountable to this under the supervision of ACMs and their supervisor.

i. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION

Being an AC program is central to the RP brand, and we display the AC logo throughout each regional office and in our marketing collateral. The AC logo is clearly displayed on our website, recruitment table banners and pamphlets, and promotional videos. In addition to providing hours of training on the AmeriCorps mission, history and regulations, we also partner and connect with other AC organizations for National Days of service, training, and organizational strategy discussions. Members also receive gear such as polo shirts, jackets, and pins and are educated on the history of AC during orientation and training during the year.

Organizational Capability

a. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STAFFING

RP's mission is to help children become lifelong readers by empowering community volunteers to provide individualized instruction that produce measurable results. RP was founded in 1999 by three retired California teachers. The teachers recruited a small group of volunteers to tutor the students at their local elementary school who they saw falling further behind each year. RP was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) under the name YES Reading in 2001. The organization changed its name to RP in 2008 and has grown exponentially since then, shifting from a local Bay Area organization to a national

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organization that is serving over 5,000 students from over 100 schools throughout New York, DC, Maryland, California, Texas and Colorado during the 2012-13 school year. RP received a \$3.5M Social Innovation Fund investment from CNCS via the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation in April 2011. This investment, along with high interest from the philanthropic and education community in NY, has enabled us to serve the community and children of NY for the past 2 years, establishing deep relationships across the region.

Reading Partners expanded to New York City in the 2011-2012 school year thanks to funding from The Heckscher Foundation for Children. In its inaugural year, Reading Partners engaged over 400 volunteers to tutor 307 students in 7 schools across Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Queens. These students had a standout year in their reading development as 88% of them increased their rate of learning and 71% narrowed their achievement gap on their peers. Based on this success and a growing stable of foundation and corporate partnerships, Reading Partners New York expanded to ten schools in 2012-2013, serving 450 students at PS 155: William Paca Elementary, Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School, Democracy Prep Harlem Middle School, PS 192: Jacob Schiff Elementary School, PS 242: Young Diplomats Magnet Academy, PS 188: The Island School, Achievement First Brownsville Elementary, Girls Prep Charter - Lower East Side Elementary School, PS 33: Edward Funk Elementary School, and PS 48: William Wordsworth Elementary School. RP plans to expand to 15 schools in 2013-14 with the addition of 5 new schools: PS 223: Lyndon B Johnson, PS 154: Jonathan Hyatt, Invictus Charter School, East Harlem Tutorial Charter School, and PS 19: Roberto Clemente.

Describe how the organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program. Describe your organization's management structure and how the board of directors (if applicable), administrators, and staff members will support your program. Who will staff the AmeriCorps program and what is their specific role? What is their relevant experience? : The administration of the AC program falls under the purview of our AC department. RP created this department when it received our first AC grant in 2010, allowing us to support members directly and to ensure compliance with all federal regulations. Our Director of AC Programs, Kristarae Flynn, oversees national grant management regulations and member support structures. She came to RP in 2010 after serving as the Director of Community Development at Public Allies, where she supervised ACMs and partnerships in San Francisco, CA. Our AC Program Manager (ACPM), Jeremy Exell manages our National Direct partnership along with VISTA grants in 3 CNCS state offices. Jeremy served with AmeriCorps NCCC and as a VISTA. Most recently, he managed member outreach for

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AmeriCorps Alums in DC. Jeremy provides another level of knowledge, accessibility, and support for members beyond their direct supervisor. Members are encouraged to reach out to their ACPM with any questions or concerns about AC or their service year. Jeremy, the ACPM based in DC, would manage this grant.

As a national program, RP's organizational structure has proven to be effective over the past 5 years as an AC program operating in 6 states. A full-time RP Program Manager (PM) is responsible for overseeing a portfolio of 5-6 school sites and their SCs. PMs are also responsible for managing relationships with each school's principal and administration to ensure the achievement of strong outcomes in student learning. NY currently has 2 PMs already in place.

Jason Martinez, born and raised in the South Bronx graduated from Northwestern University and soon after completed 2 AmeriCorps terms with CityYear Chicago. He returned to NY where he worked as a NYC Teaching Fellow and earned his M.S. in Urban Education from Mercy College. After six years working as a Special Education teacher, Jason joined the RP team in 2011.

Tiffany Zapico started her professional journey with AmeriCorps in 2006 as a Corps Member of AmeriCorps NCCC. She then completed her term with Teach for America, worked as a K-9 special education teacher, became an NCCC board member and joined RP in 2011.

Since our model relies on volunteer tutors, RP has a robust Outreach team comprised of full-time Outreach Managers (OMs) who supervise 2-4 Outreach Coordinators (OCs). OCs recruit volunteers for 6-8 school sites in their portfolio. Managers conduct twice-monthly trainings for their members to enhance their knowledge of best practices in education, as well as volunteer recruitment and management techniques. NY managers report to the NY Regional Executive Director (RED), Jennifer Weil, who is based in NY.

Jennifer works closely with the NY regional board as well as with the national board of directors. Specifically, Jennifer meets with the national office to set fund development goals and ensures that these goals are consistently met or exceeded. Jennifer coordinates RP's relationship with the NYCDOE and local charter schools to spearhead the process of selecting and launching new reading centers. She also develops local fundraising initiatives to ensure regional sustainability. Prior to joining RP, Jennifer most recently served as the NY Executive Director for a tutoring and enrichment program called Success for Kids where she launched a new region in partnership with the NYCDOE. Prior to that, Jennifer spent 8 years at a K-8 school called St. Philip's Academy in Newark, NJ, where she worked in several different capacities - Director of Development, Associate Head of School and Classroom Teacher.

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If positions are currently vacant, please describe the desired qualifications for each open position: Our program in NY will hire an additional PM in the spring of 2013. PMs are experienced educators who, in addition to being experts in elementary education, must have professional experience coaching and supervising adults. Along with a B.A. degree, PMs must have a valid NY teaching credential or at least 5 years of paid experience in elementary school education or reading instruction and experience in management and coaching.

What are your plans for providing financial and programmatic orientation and training and technical assistance to staff?: RP provides both initial and ongoing support to full-time staff members in the realm of financial and programmatic orientation and technical assistance. Initial support constitutes a week long Program Orientation each July to train new and returning staff on RP culture, structure, and expectations. Trainings include an introduction to the RP program model, accounting policies, AC allowable expenses and timekeeping requirements, AC history and regulations, and best practices of managing ACMs. During the year, Program staff participate in bi-weekly conference calls to preview upcoming program events, review AC regulations and procedures, and share management techniques and problem-solving strategies.

Describe the organization's capacity to provide training and skills development for members:

Following Orientation, members are given the training schedule for the year. Trainings take place every other Friday and are facilitated by managers or an outside expert in the topic. Training topics are aligned to happenings in the program calendar in order to provide ACMs with the most helpful and relevant skill set for that time period. In addition to the topics listed in Member Training, other topics include: CPR/AED, Disaster Preparedness, The Five Domains of Literacy, Working with English Language Learners (ELLs), Cultural Awareness, Engaging Families, Learning Styles and Childhood Development, Stewarding Partnerships, and Professional Communication with Difficult Conversations. Using online survey tools, RP has the capacity to survey and analyze member feedback for each of these trainings, enabling us to improve the training calendar and topics year over year.

Describe the organization's capacity to complete an evaluation or provide support to an external evaluator: Spearheading our various evaluation efforts is our Research and Evaluation Department, lead by Senior VP of Research and Evaluation Dean Elson and Data/Research Manager Rebecca Sutherland. The department has two major priorities: planning and supervising our annual cycle of internal program assessments and acting as liaison with external evaluators. As exemplified by the successful execution of the Stanford University School of Education study as well as the two external

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evaluations for two Social Innovation Fund grants currently underway (a nationwide randomized controlled study in partnership with MDRC and an implementation study taking place in Colorado), RP is equipped with in-house expertise to follow through on multiple evaluation projects at a time. Consequently, RP is well positioned to execute the evaluation requirements of an AmeriCorps grant. Describe your organization's experience administering AC grants or other federal funds: RP has five years of experience managing ACMs, as well as managing multiple federal grants in the same program year. In 2012-13, we are supervising 112 ACMs in the following combination of AC grants: 63 FT slots through CaliforniaVolunteers, 18 FT slots with National Direct, 10 slots with CA VISTA, 6 slots with NY VISTA, 5 slots with TX VISTA, and 10 FT Education Award Program slots. We currently also manage two CNCS Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grants this year, one through the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and one from the Mile High United Way. In 2011-12, RP managed a 40-MSY National Direct (ND) grant, a 33-MSY CaliforniaVolunteers grant and a 6-member VISTA grant in CA. In 2010-11, RP secured a 33-MSY CaliforniaVolunteers competitive grant and served as the single largest placement site for Public Allies DC. In 2009-10, we managed 18 members as a host site for three different agencies in CA. In 2008-09, we managed 8 members as a host site.

b. SUSTAINABILITY

Describe how the organization has secured, or describe an effective plan for securing, the financial and in-kind resources necessary to support program implementation and to demonstrate community stakeholder support. Describe your fundraising funds to support service activities and initiatives.

The RP business model in NY identifies the following resources necessary to operate our program; philanthropic funds, fee-for-service revenues, in-kind donations, and volunteers.

In NY for FY13, we have nearly \$500,000 in philanthropic funds already committed and roughly \$150,000 pending. The following foundations that have made a leading investment in our program: Heckscher Foundation for Children, Tiger Foundation, The New Yankee Stadium Community Benefits Fund, Inc., the Leon Lowenstein Foundation, and the Robin Hood Foundation. We work closely with our foundation partners to discuss our future plans and to outline sustainable growth. We have also built a strong NY regional board of directors to lead our annual individual donor campaign. Finally, RP works with corporations to build partnerships leading to both funds and volunteers. In NY, Target is the lead corporate investor for FY13.

NY schools and districts invest in the RP program by providing Fee For Service (FFS), expected to be

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about \$14,000 per school in 2013-14. In regards to in-kind resources, our school partners donate classroom space for us to use for our reading centers. These in-kind donations of space are elemental to our program design.

Volunteer recruitment partners are also vital to our current and future operations. To maintain a stable pipeline of tutors, we seek out relationships with work-study programs, employee engagement programs, and civic volunteerism opportunities that we know will have long-term potential. Our volunteer recruitment partners include: CUNY, AARP Foundation, St. John's University, Repair the World and Oxford University Press.

How will that contribute to long-term sustainability? Outline your plans for ensuring that the impact of your program in the community is sustainable beyond the grant period. For example, you might describe how your community relationships will lead to community investment in the (such as state, local, and private sector funding); how your strategies for recruiting and supporting volunteers will sustain member activities after your AmeriCorps grant ends; or how the community will maintain your project once it is completed.

RP recognizes that in order to sustain our impact in the community we need to cultivate a local, loyal, and long-term base of funders and champions. Our NY RED is currently engaged in building this network so that no single grant expiration threatens our operations.

RP volunteers become advocates for increased citizen involvement in public education as they share their tutoring experiences with friends and families tutoring and realize that student achievement is a shared responsibility, not the sole duty of teachers or principals alone. RP surveys showed that 85% of volunteers are more interested in public education issues after their service, and 90% intended to continue volunteering in their community. Additionally, the majority of our volunteers find out about RP through word-of-mouth referrals. We work hard to ensure our volunteers are satisfied with their experience so they will spread the word and generate a larger volunteer base.

Our current funders are among our greatest assets to ensure long-term sustainability. Already, our supporters have made numerous introductions for us and helped us to build our network of private sector donors. For example, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation recently introduced us to the Leon Lowenstein Foundation in NY. Lowenstein approved a grant to RP this December.

Similarly, RP relies on word of mouth referrals from school principals and officials within the district to secure new school partnerships. With a 98% satisfaction rating among current RP principals, we are poised to grow FFS revenue long-term.

Finally, the RP Regional Board has yearly member recruitment goals and a board chair succession

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plan in place, which will guarantee that the RP board is a powerful resource for the organization. Who are your community stakeholders and partners? How are they involved in planning and implementing the proposed program? How will their involvement contribute to long-term sustainability?

RP ensures that stakeholder meetings take place with appropriate community members and organizations to make certain that everyone is aware of issues and solutions to challenges our communities face. For example, in the fall of 2011, we hosted our RPNY launch event with Chancellor Dennis Walcott at PS 188. This Chancellor was the keynote speaker at the event, which was attended by many school and community leaders. The primary purpose for this event is to raise awareness around the need for community investment in schools, and to thank and acknowledge the volunteers and funders who are already supporting this movement.

RP's success depends on strong relationships with multiple stakeholders, including principals/superintendents/teachers, volunteer partnerships, and community families. Regular monthly meetings allow RP to maintain close communication with teachers and school district administration throughout the school year to ensure students receive maximum academic support. Through specialized training of our local community volunteer tutors, we align our instructional practices to mirror what the teachers are working on in the classroom and to reinforce what students are learning. Our stakeholders donate their time, funds, and/or in-kind resources and RP guarantees and delivers results within a year.

c. COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

RP holds itself accountable to compliance regulations by utilizing a Federal Grants Manual that outlines policies and procedures for all major federal grants regulations and deadlines, including CNCS and AC. RP holds itself accountable to instances of risk by conducting multiple internal audits each year in regards to member files, hours, health benefits, and payroll. For instance, the AC Program Director conducts a quarterly member file check for all AC grants to ensure that member files are complete and updated. The ACPM and AC Director meet on a quarterly basis to analyze and audit member hours and timesheets for accuracy and to determine if ACMs are on track to meeting their 1700 hour commitment. The accounting, development and AC department meet monthly to discuss each grant's fiscal progress, follow-up on upcoming grant program or fiscal deadlines, and announce updates of new CNCS regulations.

To hold members and service sites accountable to compliance regulations, RP trains members and staff on prohibited activities and acceptable conduct, followed by the signing of contracts. Principals

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sign MOUs that outline AC expectations. Staff, members, and partners receive training on the AC prohibited activities so they are able to recognize any violation of prohibited activities and report to RP immediately. Tutors must sign a code of conduct that outlines relevant AC regulations before they can begin tutoring.

Members are required to ask their manager or ACPM if an activity they are unsure about is within compliance of the grant. Weekly site visits and formal check-ins by PMs and the ACPM allow RP to continually monitor site and member compliance. ACMs and managers receive a 2-hour timesheet training during Orientation focused on allowable and unallowable activities. Members submit bi-monthly time sheets that are checked and approved by managers and audited on a quarterly basis by the ACPM and AC Director. If there is any uncertainty about RP's compliance, the AC Program Manager will immediately seek advice and guidance from our NYV Program Officer. RP has never been on corrective action status for any grant received and support a culture of establishing strong communication with each of our grant Program Officers early on in the grant year.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

1. COST EFFECTIVENESS

Explain how the budget is cost effective. Discuss how your program is a cost effective approach for addressing the community need(s) identified in your application:

RP is a cost-effective approach for improving elementary literacy proficiency across NY because our model leverages community volunteerism to increase instructional capacity at Title I elementary schools. By recruiting, training, and continuously coaching private citizens as reading tutors, RP is able to help more children receive individualized attention than our school partners might otherwise be able to do on its own. Last year across all of our regions, 5,162 volunteers collectively donated over 120,000 hours of tutoring, which is valued at \$1.44M if we were to pay volunteers a \$12/hr tutor wage. With school, municipal, and state budgets forced to do more with less resources, RP is able to bring more personnel into schools without burdening schools' budgets. The RP model will cost NYV \$354 per child to increase his/her literacy skills, thereby altering that child's life trajectory. RP is also cost effective because we transform unused classroom space into reading centers at no additional cost to schools. Schools may donate the use of classroom space, which we project to be worth \$210,000. RP thus saves on cash expenses by not needing to rent space and schools incur no additional cost through the in-kind donation of space.

Explain how the requested funds do not exceed the maximum cost per Member Service Year (MSY) The amount requested is a competitive factor in the selection process: RP is requesting \$13,300 per

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MSY (22) and is not exceeding the maximum cost per MSY. We have requested the maximum cost per MSY because RP has a very high-touch supervision and professional development model, which we believe is critical to equipping our members with the skills they need to effectively engage the thousands of community volunteers that we do. We provide our members with an unusually high degree of support with a low program manager to member ratio (1:6 average).

Please list all sources of organizational funding and what percent the proposed AmeriCorps project represents in your budget. What percentage of your total operational budget does your proposed funding request from CNCS represent?: Organizational funding sources breakdown: 47% Private Foundations; 15% Government (CNCS and AmeriCorps); 14% Government (Social Innovation Fund and CNCS); 14% School fee-for-service; 5% Corporate; 5% Individuals. RP's growing operating budget is \$13,144,384 for FY13. \$292,600 from NYV would represent 2.2% of the RP total operational budget.

If you have received support from CNCS during the last five years, please specify what type of support you received: RP receives 15% of its revenue from the CNCS and AmeriCorps; this includes our CaliforniaVolunteers, National Direct, VISTA and SIF grants. We have a dedicated department for our relationship with AC and it is their charge to grow our collaborations with partner state commissions. RP received a \$3.5M Social Innovation Fund (SIF) investment from 2011-2014, administered by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation (EMCF) for CNCS. SIF will allow RP to scale nationally more quickly than previously anticipated. The investment focuses exclusively on capacity building and infrastructure development in areas such as research and development, evaluations, and operations. RP also is a subgrantee on the 2012-2017 Mile High United Way SIF grant, providing \$600,000 per year to fund an expansion into Colorado.

Demonstrate how your program has or will obtain diverse resources for program implementation. Indicate the non-CNCS resource commitments (in-kind and cash) that you have obtained to date and the sources of these funds. Indicate what additional commitments you plan to secure, and how you will secure them.

The proposed Reading Partners NY project will cost approximately \$1,166,133. NYV funding would account for 26.34% of revenue, and RP would raise the remaining \$818,128 (73.66% of total program cost) to support this project. These remaining funds will be a combination of private philanthropy (foundation support, corporate giving, and individual donations) and fee-for-service and in-kind support from our school partners. Because of our success to date and growing presence in NY, RP is confident in our current and future ability to meet our local fundraising goals.

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Private Philanthropy (Foundations, Corporations, Individuals): \$351,595. RP anticipates that our lead investors from FY13 will renew and/or increase their support in FY14. Our top FY13 foundation investors include: Tiger Foundation (\$150,000), Robin Hood Foundation (\$100,000), the Heckscher Foundation for Children (\$75,000) and the Target Corporation (\$26,595). We are also working to build funding relationships with new partners such as the Charles and Mildred Schnurmacher Foundation and the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ Foundation. Many of our tutors are also donors. Thus far in FY13, our tutors and local supporters have donated \$6,533 in cash or in-kind donations (books and supplies). We have hired additional development staff to focus on individual giving and are innovating our annual solicitation events and strategies to more precisely target our various stakeholders with giving potential.

School Fee for Service and In-Kind: \$435,000. To demonstrate their investment in our program, each RP school partner contributes fee-for-service, which is expected to be approximately \$225,000 (\$15,000 per school). This figure accounts for 19% of our overall Reading Partners NY budget in 2013-14. To operate our program, we ask each school partner to donate classroom space that we can transform into our reading centers. With 15 schools in 2013-14, we expect the value of this donated space to be \$210,000, 19% of the Reading Partners NY budget.

These conservative projected cash and in-kind donations are currently at \$818,128, far exceeding our required match goal to manage and operate the Reading Partners NY program.

Consider the total costs and benefits of the program and, to the extent possible, document the costs and benefits: RP's most significant cost is personnel. In 2013-14, 62% of our NY budget will go towards personnel. RP invests in personnel because our ability to help students make measurable and lasting gains in their reading achievement depends upon our tutors having the coaching, problem solving help, and instructional resources they need to be effective. Accordingly, our model requires ample staff to maintain low staff-to-member and member-to-tutor ratios and to provide an individualized level of support. Each school site has at least one dedicated full-time ACM to manage tutoring and we limit our PMs to a maximum of six schools to supervise. To attract and retain passionate and engaged staff, RP intentionally offers ACMS more than the minimum living allowance required by CNCS and invests heavily in coaching.

While personnel may be our largest cost, the present and future benefit that we accord to minority and/or children from low-income communities merits the expense. According to RP data, 89% of students who participated in RP in 2011-12 accelerated their rate of learning. By gaining an average of 1.6 months of skills for every one month of tutoring (compared to only gaining .6 skill-months for

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every month spent in school prior to enrollment in RP).

Compare the cost effectiveness of the program with the costs and benefits of alternative models or approaches (if available), and demonstrate how your program model is most cost effective: A growing number of nonprofit organizations are committed to improving youth literacy rates.

Jumpstart for Young Children and Everybody Wins! are examples of organizations committed to improving youth literacy rates that deploy volunteers to help emerging readers solidify their skills.

However, RP is the only scaled nonprofit in the US with its program model: the complete package of in-school, one-on-one elementary literacy instruction by volunteers who are trained and supported by staff and ACMs, while working in close partnership with school staff and teachers. RP is unique compared to other literacy nonprofits because our program offers full-time integration into each school's space, schedule, and culture rather than being an after-school or part-time only support.

Because we offer eight to nine hours of on-site programming Monday through Thursday, RP is able to serve 45-65 students per school with reliable, yearlong instruction.

Moreover, RP directly increases the quantity of literacy resources in our partner schools, as well as the personnel required to guide students through those resources. We equip our school partners with a dedicated full-time member, a multi-leveled and research-based curriculum, a reading center with a library, and a data collection cycle that augments teachers' knowledge of their students' strengths and needs. Compared to other organizations working in this field, RP is the only one that offers such a comprehensive package of resources and support. Finally, because our program model is more intensive than other organizations, our outcomes are stronger. No other program can deliver evidence-based results at a low cost, while efficiently utilizing a low number of ACMs. Our performance measure model makes it clear and simple to report our outcomes to our state commissions and CNCS. RP was invited by CNCS in December to present at the national conference in 2013. RP has been identified as a strong program model for reporting outcomes and we plan to share our process in creating strong performance measures and the tools we use to determine accurate results.

To execute our program, we rely on a budget model that maximizes the cost benefit to our school partners. By leveraging private philanthropy and AC dollars, RP will match the NYV grant at 73.66%. We ask our school partners to demonstrate their investment in our program by contributing fee-for-service, the average contribution being \$15,000. With this cost model, schools receive literacy intervention services for 45-65 students without having to overextend their already tight budgets. Schools are jumping at this opportunity, with a national waitlist of over 175 schools. Moreover, RP is

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free to students and constitutes no additional costs to families.

2. BUDGET ADEQUACY

RP utilized NYV sample AC program budget template, as that mirrors our program operating costs to provide clear planning for all Reading Partners NY program expenses. The budget takes all AC and NYV requirements into account, while building in the programmatic needs of RP. To align with the narrative, we invested 63% of our NY budget into our personnel including staff and ACMs, allowing RP to be fully staffed and provide a high level of program oversight at each placement site. We offer our NY ACMs more than the minimum living allowance required by CNCS, as well as go beyond the minimum health benefit requirements to invest in the members to ensure that they are appreciated and valued. RP has created project budgets for new AC regions for three years, so we are familiar with requirements and true costs. RP has continuously met and exceeded our contracted match requirement with our state and national AC grants, proving the adequacy of our past AC budgets. This budget template is similar in expenses and has proven to support our record of meeting all of our Performance Measures on all AC grants.

The 2013-14 budget for the Reading Partners NY project is \$1,110,728. In addition to New Yorkers Volunteer funding of \$292,600, RP will match \$818,128 to support this project. For this particular budget, RP budgeted for the following major expenses: 1: Personnel Salary and Benefits (\$231,337); 2: Staff Travel to New Yorkers Volunteer and CNCS events and trainings (\$2,136); 3: Member Travel (\$330); 4: Member Gear (\$1100); 5: Books for centers (\$1500); 6: Member Training Costs for disaster preparedness training, RP recommended CPR Certification Training, and facilitators for Cultural Awareness and Resume/Interview Skill trainings (\$1,450); Staff Training is an additional \$90); 7: 3-part required fingerprinting costs for all staff and members covered by grant (\$1,350); 8: Rent (\$210,000); 9: Member living allowance, FICA, Worker's Compensation, and Health, Vision and Dental coverage (\$491,205); 10: Federally Approved 18.1% Indirect Cost Rate (\$170,230). These expenses total \$1,110,728.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

As part of its Social Innovation Fund awarded in 2011 through the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Reading Partners has planned and is currently executing an externally-administered randomized control trial (RCT) of its effectiveness. RCT is considered the "gold standard" of experimental study designs. We are currently partnering with MDRC, a leading research and evaluation firm, to design and implement these studies. Funding comes from the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grant that Reading Partners received from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and the

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Corporation for National and Community Service.

During the 2012-13 school year, MDRC is leading a student-level RCT to compare outcomes (using research-validated, policy-relevant literacy assessments) across schools for students who are participating in Reading Partners for the first time to other eligible students matched by grade, classroom, gender, ethnicity, and entering reading proficiency. The evaluation plan represents an advance in study rigor by using a larger sample (approximately 1,200 students), including a broader geographic mix of 19 schools and ensuring that data collection is more robust and includes survey data and school records. The implementation evaluation study will provide important feedback to Reading Partners about program delivery and will add valuable context to the impact study findings.

Amendment Justification

NA

Clarification Summary

NA

Continuation Changes

NA