

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** Habitat for Humanity International, Inc.

**Application ID:** 13ED145856

**Program Name:** Habitat for Humanity AmeriCorps

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

#### Reviewers' Summary Comments:

(+) The applicant provides a graphic illustration, citing current events, studies, and statistics, for the need for more affordable housing in the face of high poverty and unemployment rates, devastating natural disasters, increased cost of living expenses, and lingering repercussions of war and recession as a backdrop to its purpose, which was very compelling.

(+) The applicant clearly identifies the significance of AmeriCorps members' contributions to past projects via a survey of host site managers and the families that benefitted from the service provided. Host site managers (HSM's) attributed increased productivity, volunteer support, and overall effectiveness of services they are able to provide directly to the use of AmeriCorps members.

(+) The applicant cites evidence from prior programs that Habitat for Humanity International's AmeriCorps members have significantly assisted local communities with providing affordable housing in prior years.

(+) The applicant shows good intentions of providing evidence-based evaluation of project design and various social and economic indicators, from two universities and an Urban Institute plan to carry out independent research.

(+) The applicant's evidence-based model presents a "cause and effect" approach to problem solving in that developing infrastructure, such as affordable housing, maximizing resources. Engaging community members and volunteers ultimately lead to stronger families, better quality of life, and improved neighborhoods. The applicant also cited 19 years of experience and refinement of their approach, based upon feedback, data collection, and evaluation.

(+) The applicant contends that 35% of families served are attributed to community volunteers leveraged by AmeriCorps members, a favorable indicator.

(+) The target houses or people served are set at 5,600 and Members will oversee 200,000 volunteers for all focus areas including 1600 for disasters showing several focus areas addressed by the projects. These targets are measurable and controlled by the applicant suggesting an adequate basis for resource planning and performance

evaluations.

- (+) Habitat for Humanity's proposed program methodology monitors program performance, and includes shifting resources from one project to another project if it appears a program goal is behind schedule.
- (-) The applicant did not adequately describe the overall change the applicant expects to see by the end of the three-year grant cycle.
- (-) The applicant did not adequately describe the impact of the AmeriCorps members in the targeted population.
- (-) Habitat for Humanity fails to break the figure of 95 million people into households, fails to identify where those households may be located, and fails to analyze the cost of homeownership in different markets.
- (-) The scope of the grant was ambitious and widespread which hindered the specificity desired in describing a specific targeted population.
- (-) The narrative insufficiently supports the level of value of the added services rendered by AmeriCorps members. The narrative does not support whether the use of AmeriCorps members is the best choice for Neighborhood Revitalization and A Brush with Kindness Initiatives.
- (-) The applicant did not provide statistical data for the specific locations and populations the Members would serve.