

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Rebuilding Together, Inc

Application ID: 13ED146478

Program Name: Rebuilding Together Capacity Corps

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:

- (+) Rebuilding Together provides statistics for dozens of cities listing the percentage of the population that are seniors, live alone, live in poverty, veterans, families with children in poverty, or spend more than 20% on housing. These statistics indicate there may be a need for the types of housing assistance provided by Rebuilding Together.
- (+) 6,000 homeowners in-need are currently on the applicant's waiting lists, demonstrating an actual need that is explained by the documentation provided from sources such as the 2011 American Housing Survey and recent U.S. Census Bureau data; the data was comprehensive and compelling.
- (+) The applicant provides compelling data from credible sources such as FEMA, CDC, and HUD to clearly identify the need of major repairs, upgrades to homes and low-income service centers and for elderly and disabled people of a vulnerable population.
- (+) The applicant effectively illustrates a cause and effect relationship between the number of low-income elderly/disabled persons living in severely substandard, unhealthy environments and on fixed incomes, and the fact they are more prone to illness, injury, and economic hardship due to rising costs of everything.
- (+) The applicant provides excellent information on the impact of support services by AmeriCorps members leading to improving effectiveness and sustainability of Rebuilding Together programs: to rebuild additional homes for low-income homeowners including veterans and the disabled; building capacity by recruiting and managing volunteers; performing direct home repairs, conducting client outreach, building partnerships and creating new programs in 39 sites in 20 states.
- (+) AmeriCorps members can clearly add value in new sites where there is no previous intervention.
- (+) The applicant intends to carry out a two-year evaluation and implement the evaluation results into the program by year three acknowledging the need for improvements.

- (+) The output measure for veterans is very appropriate for project design and monitoring.
- (+) Rebuilding Together cites data from its 2011-2012 program year demonstrating that it served 233 needy veterans and 3,287 elderly and disabled individuals.
- (+) Rebuilding Together has a viable data collection, analysis, and reporting plan to monitor its progress towards the completion of program goals.
- (+) Much current and relevant data was provided to support evidence-based impact from past services and programs of AmeriCorps members as well as community partners.
- (+) The applicant adequately describes how affiliates attributed increased capacity and efficiency of their programs, positive energy and focus of the organization, and overall job satisfaction to the involvement of AmeriCorps members.
- (+) The applicant sufficiently described their plans to use national performance measures to determine the program's impact via existing data collection tools include monthly and quarterly activity reports and logs tracking outputs and outcomes.
- (-) Disaster recovery and economic recovery should be distinct from that of economic opportunity – housing. In disaster incidents, the victim is made whole during recovery efforts versus tenant improvements from normal wear and tear.
- (-) The rationale for making more housing units available for low income people is not well supported in the narrative.
- (-) While the applicant provides excellent data to support the needs for assistance to the low-income elderly and disabled people in these target areas, the data was not as persuasive regarding their other two identified needs: assisting disabled and potentially homeless veterans and low-income families victimized by natural disasters. While it is noteworthy that millions of veterans have disabilities and are at risk of homelessness and that hundreds of thousands of people lost their homes as a result of natural disasters, it is not entirely clear what portion of those populations this proposal is focusing their efforts upon.
- (-) Rebuilding Together provides no data on the number of victims of Hurricane Sandy that require assistance beyond the assistance provided by FEMA.
- (-) Documentation provided for housing need(s) was cited from the most knowledgeable and credible source: HUD, however, the data came from 2001, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, instead of more recent statistics.
- (-) The applicant provides clear objectives, but limited guidance with respect to roles of 65 AmeriCorps members and 16,000 volunteers. The variance between 65 Members and 145 slots is unexplained in the narrative suggesting limited vetting of capacity requirements.
- (-) Rebuilding Together provides no evidence that its AmeriCorps members provide a highly effective means to solve

community problems.

(-) Rebuilding Together will focus its efforts on energy efficiency, serving the elderly, disabled and veterans, and rebuilding from Hurricane Sandy. It does not indicate how many of its Members will be focused on each of these program goals, or how its Members will accomplish these goals.