

## **APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY**

### **2014 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition**

Legal Applicant: Wisconsin Emergency Management

Application ID: 14AC156002

Program Name: ReadyWisconsin AmeriCorps Disaster Preparedness Project

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:**

##### **Strengths:**

The applicant cites five studies related to disaster preparedness.

The applicant presents compelling research describing a level of preparedness in America as seen in the Public Readiness Index (PRI) and five additional studies that further document the issue.

The applicant demonstrated an understanding of the volunteer management issue and cited quality research on this issue from the National Leadership forum and the results of the Joplin, Missouri tornado.

The applicant provides many citations for related articles and non-experimental studies that obviously inform the development of their logic plan.

The applicant successfully argues the prevalence of the problem on a nationwide level with supporting documentation such as the PRI survey.

The applicant cites and clearly describes two extremely strong studies (experimental design, significance reported).

In addition to citing strong studies, the applicant effectively uses non-experimental and quasi-experimental studies to describe preparedness, transtheoretical theory, and the Extended Parallel Process Model (EPPM) & Ready Model.

The applicant presents a comprehensive approach to training over 3000 individuals in disaster preparedness using targeted training, and a heavy use of social media which represents a creative use of AmeriCorps members who are generally very proficient in this medium.

The applicant presents a compelling approach to mobilize volunteers on an emergency basis through the development of 360 trained volunteer leaders that can respond to the need for a large scale force.

The applicant presents a solid plan of intervention by AmeriCorps members that is well supported by training, supervision, and internal evaluation.

Member activities are directly aligned with the dual program objectives of raising individual disaster preparedness and developing and expanding emergency volunteer capability.

The applicant is in the first year of this program and has no past performance to report. The program design includes creative approaches including a process to follow up with training participants via email to determine if they have changed behaviors regarding disaster preparedness.

Weaknesses:

The five studies cited by the applicant regarding disaster preparedness are nationwide surveys, but it is not clear how these data directly relate to Wisconsin.

The applicant requests volunteers to make a personal connection, but does not provide evidence that a personal connection is needed in Wisconsin.

The applicant presented an impressive array of national studies, but lacked research or data specific to Wisconsin that would demonstrate the severity of the problem in the proposed service area.

The applicant asserts that 50% of people have not thought about disaster preparedness, 1/3 don't think an emergency will happen to them, and 21% don't know. However, there is no source cited for these numbers and they are not linked to the target beneficiaries, making it difficult to determine whether this is a representation of residents in Wisconsin, or the US at large.

Broad statements are offered as defense of the problems in Wisconsin, such as "offices are understaffed and underfunded" and "Wisconsin does not have the capability of executing an operation of this magnitude." The applicant does not adequately justify these statements with any documentation.

The applicant indicates Americans scored 3.31 on the PRI survey but fails to translate these results in terms of disaster preparedness, causing the reader to make an assumption that the score reflects negatively on individual preparedness levels.

It is unclear whether or not the applicant is using the Ready Model, the EPPM Model, or a combination thereof.

The applicant states that the Ready Model has been promoted since 2008, but one of the strongest studies for evidence cited tests the EPPM model and the applicant states it is up to them to replicate the EPPM model results "using its own efficacy-based curriculum among responders."

Threat efficacy profiles were not adequately explained for a layperson. It is unclear how "Deliver continuous reinforcement and expansion preparedness and motivational messaging through social media and social networking" is "high threat/low efficacy."

The applicant states that 30% of 3240 individuals who attend a single training will, in turn, volunteer for preparedness and response activities (long-term output). Evidence of the likelihood of achieving this level of success was not provided.

Evidence of past performance success meeting the stated need was not evident in the application.

This is a new applicant addressing these community problems for the first time.