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Executive Summary

TITLE: United Way of Greenville County

OVERVIEW: United Way of Greenville County (UWGC) is an existing grantmaking institution that has held a competitive grant process for over 40 yrs. UWGC's Middle Grades Initiative is geographically-based and aligns with the focus area of Youth Development. Subgrantees will be located in the White Horse Crescent, a 40 sq mi area of concentrated disadvantage located along the western edge of Greenville County, SC. Other key organizations include the Richard W. Riley Institute at Furman University (evaluation partner) and Greenville County Schools. UWGC requests \$1 million per year for 5 years. Match commitments total \$644,000 and include: UWGC (\$300,000); Hollingsworth Fund (\$200,000); Community Foundation of Greenville (\$100,000); and Wells Fargo (\$44,000). Match commitments are anticipated from foundations and corporate partners.

SUMMARY: The Initiative will implement a dropout prevention strategy for middle grades students, an Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) together with a coordinated menu of response interventions. An EWRS uses real-time data to identify students who are beginning to disengage from school as indicated by attendance, behavior, and course performance. By identifying students early, a coordinated team can match students with the right response interventions and monitor progress.

UWGC will support the Initiative to 1) implement an EWRS; 2) expand the availability of evidence-based response interventions for middle grades students; 3) build evidence to scale the model to the district and similar communities; 4) strengthen and insulate the education pipeline; and 5) develop a credentialed workforce.

More than a third of Crescent middle grades students (39%) were frequently absent, missing 9 or more days of school, while 12% of students were chronically absent, missing 18 or more days of school. Half of students (49%) received a behavior referral, 27% of students received in-school-suspension, and 24.5% of students received out-of-school suspension. Across all grades, only 54% of middle grades students met or exceeded state standards in ELA and only 48% in math.

The theory of change grounded in ecological systems theory: MATCH THE RIGHT STUDENTS TO THE RIGHT INTERVENTIONS AT THE RIGHT TIME. This theory translates into an insulated education pipeline in which the student is at the core and there are smooth transitions; an inner layer of insulation that includes the family and coordinated response interventions; and an outer layer of insulation that includes coordinated basic supports.

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A system of evidence-based supports will ensure that students: 1) transition successfully into and out of middle school; 2) remain actively engaged in the learning process; and 3) enter high school prepared for success. The measurable outcomes for the grant are: Increase the number of middle grades students proficient in math and ELA by 25%; Reduce the rate of chronic absenteeism by 75%; Decrease the number of students receiving disciplinary referrals by 50%; and Decrease the number of students receiving out-of-school suspension by 50%.

STRATEGY: UWGC will use its networks to recruit applicants with at least preliminary evidence. Applications will be scored in four areas: 1) Financial soundness; 2) Organizational capacity; 3) Strategy and alignment; and 4) Evaluation. Selection stages include a prequalification review, written application, presentations, and site visit. The Riley Institute and UWGC will develop and manage the portfolio evaluation strategy and subgrantee evaluation plans. Using a Collective Impact approach will allow UWGC to strengthen the field of providers through activities such as leadership development and creating shared metrics for the field. Subgrantees will create a growth plan that details strategies for growing impact using principles of Transformative Scale.

EXPERIENCE: UWGC: A strong history of competitive grantmaking processes; A commitment to evidence-based decision making strategies; Deep knowledge of the community; Strong relationships with the community's philanthropic leaders; Sound financial oversight practices. GREENVILLE COUNTY SCHOOLS: Significant commitment to the Early Warning and Response System technology and training; Strategic focus on the Crescent. RILEY INSTITUTE: Experience designing and implementing evaluation processes; Institutional focus on transformative education policy.

Program Design

A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

OVERVIEW: Middle school is a time for students to explore their strengths and start to think about their future. It is a time for incredible growth and learning. It is also a time when too many students fall off track and lose the momentum needed to complete high school and be prepared for a successful future. If students do not successfully transition from elementary school into middle grades and then from middle grades into high school, the community's investments in early education and high school supports are at risk.

United Way of Greenville County (UWGC) and its partners are committed to the vision that every person deserves a chance for a better future. For most communities, particularly communities with

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high concentrations of poverty, that vision requires a focus on children in those vulnerable middle grades years. By monitoring three critical aspects of their school lives - attendance, behavior, and course performance - and aligning the right evidence-based response interventions to the right students at the right time, the community can keep more students on track and impact their chance for a better future. By pinpointing and targeting the issues (both in and out of school) that create problems in attendance, behavior, and course performance, the Middle Grades Initiative will disrupt the generational cycle of poverty. It also will set in motion a cycle of success for both students and families, resulting in a change in trajectory for the students in the White Horse Crescent region of Greenville, SC. There is community consensus that the White Horse Crescent region, an impoverished area with extreme disparities and multiple challenges, is a priority for introducing innovative solutions that will bring about much needed positive change.

Addressing the CNCS focus area of Youth Development, the Middle Grades Initiative will mobilize the community's shared vision of implementing a best practice dropout prevention strategy for middle grades students: an Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) together with a targeted and coordinated menu of response interventions. Piloted in Philadelphia and Phoenix, an EWRS utilizes real-time data to identify students who are beginning to disengage from school as indicated by attendance, behavior, and course performance. By identifying students early, a coordinated team of educators and community experts can match students with the right response interventions and then monitor each student's progress over time. With this system in place, middle grades students will stay on the pathway to graduation, successfully navigating critical opt-out points.

Greenville County Schools has identified the White Horse Crescent as a priority action area to improve academic outcomes for students. UWGC and the school district are jointly committed to improving outcomes for students in this area; working collaboratively has been standard throughout the planning process for the middle grades work. The district continues to champion innovative solutions, demonstrating the ability to enhance what works in a short time frame. Further, school district officials have expressed an openness to explore systems of responsible data sharing with partner providers in order to support achievement for all students.

To address the multiple community challenges over the course of five years, the Middle Grades Initiative will support the work to 1) implement an EWRS; 2) expand the availability and accessibility of evidence-based response interventions for middle grades students; 3) build appropriate evidence to scale the model to the entire district and similar communities; 4) further strengthen and insulate the education pipeline; and 5) develop a workforce with the credentials to compete in today's market.

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TARGET COMMUNITY: Greenville County, located in the Upstate region of South Carolina, is home to nearly 475,000 people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). A medium-sized market, Greenville County is at the heart of one of the strongest manufacturing centers in the country. The region is home to world-class companies such as BMW Manufacturing Group, Michelin North America, Fluor Corporation, and Lockheed Martin. While the advanced manufacturing sector has helped stabilize the region's economy, not all residents have shared in this stability. County-wide, 15.2% of residents live below the poverty level.

The Middle Grades Initiative is geographically based and targets the White Horse Crescent, an area of concentrated disadvantage located along the western edge of the county. The White Horse Crescent, comprising 28 census tracts over more than 40 square miles, straddles White Horse Road (US-25), a major roadway that runs north-to-south. The neighborhoods in this area were established around the textile mills that thrived and provided stability throughout the early and mid-twentieth century. As the US textile industry began to implode in the 1980s, relocating mills overseas and closing US facilities, residents in these communities lost their livelihood and their heritage, contributing to declining community conditions that include gang violence, drug trade, high unemployment, and low educational attainment, all of which contribute to low levels of community cohesion and stability.

The White Horse Crescent currently is home to more than 80,000 people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). The area is racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse. Almost half of residents (47.9%) are White and 36.6% are African-American. Among residents of all races, 18.3% of residents are Hispanic and 14.7% speak primarily Spanish at home.

Educational attainment for adults in the Crescent is low--30.7% of adults lack a high school diploma or its equivalent and 35.3% of adults are high school graduates with no additional education (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Only 5.0% of adults possess an Associate's degree and 8.4% of adults possess a Bachelor's degree. In 2013, the median household income was \$25,935, well below the county median household income of \$48,438. Throughout the Crescent, there are pockets of extreme unemployment, with some rates exceeding 25% at the census tract level (South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, 2014). In total, 31.8% of households live below the poverty level and 60.3% of households are at 200% of the federal poverty threshold (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).

Public schools in the White Horse Crescent are part of Greenville County Schools. The largest district in the state of South Carolina and 45th largest district in the nation, Greenville County Schools consists of 100 schools and centers serving 71,639 students. The three White Horse Crescent middle schools - Berea Middle, Lakeview Middle, and Tanglewood Middle - served a total of 1,799 students in

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the last school year. These schools served a higher proportion of students of color and students from low-income households than other schools in the district: 39.5% of students were African-American, 31% Caucasian, 28.5% Hispanic, and 1% other. The racial composition of all district middle school students was much different - more than half (60.3%) of students district-wide were Caucasian, 22.6% African-American, 11.1% Hispanic, and 5.9% other. Further, nearly all middle grades students (92.5%) in the White Horse Crescent qualified for free or reduced meals, compared to 49% district-wide.

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES: For families in Greenville County, education, income, and health are inextricably linked. When the linkages are strong and positive, they result in a cycle of success. Healthy children who enter school ready to succeed develop into engaged youth. Engaged youth graduate from high school on time prepared for college or career. Prepared adults earn family-sustaining wages, allowing them to provide a stable, resource-adequate environment in which healthy children flourish. Unfortunately, these conditions overwhelmingly do not exist for children and families in the White Horse Crescent, much like other regions in the US in which thriving economies rapidly dissolved. The underlying community challenges are complex and require an aligned, coordinated response that transforms systems, institutions, and community norms.

Opportunities exist for more families in the Crescent to access this cycle of success. A strong regional economy continues to support job growth in fields that provide a family-sustaining wage. Through 2030, there will be a demand for almost 1.5 million workers in South Carolina due to employment growth and workforce replacement (Woodward & Von Nessen, 2013). Of the projected 553,884 jobs to be created by economic growth, 52% will require higher education or specialized training, intensifying the shortage of skilled workers throughout the next 17 years. Community partners are tasked with closing the skills gap and building stronger pathways for low-income individuals to access these careers. However, the community cannot address the skills gap without also increasing the number of high school graduates entering the workforce prepared for success.

Graduating from high school is an important milestone that has serious implications for one's life trajectory. Research shows that an individual's educational attainment is one of the most important determinants of his or her opportunities in terms of employment, income, health status, and housing (Levin et al., 2007). According to the Alliance for Excellence in Education, a high school dropout on average earns about \$260,000 less than a high school graduate over the course of his or her life (2011). High school dropouts also are more likely to be arrested, become teenage parents, and suffer from adverse health conditions, incurring major costs to society. For example, just a 1% increase in the high school graduation rate among adult men would result in annual savings exceeding \$1 billion

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in criminal justice and corrections costs (Moretti, 2007). In a survey of dropouts about their reasons for leaving school, the most common responses were "I did not like school" and "I was failing school" (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006). Keeping students engaged and supporting educational momentum through graduation are integral to creating a cycle of success.

Researchers continue to explore when is the right time to provide students sustained and comprehensive dropout prevention supports. Dropping out of school is not a sudden, unforeseeable decision. It is a gradual process with signs that start to emerge well before high school. Dr. Robert Balfanz and his colleagues at Johns Hopkins University have zeroed in on the middle grades as a critical opportunity to keep students on track. Though students cannot physically drop out until high school, they start to "drop out mentally" in middle school and disengage from learning.

Researchers have confirmed the three key indicators for predicting early disengagement among middle grades students are: (a) attendance; (b) behavior; and (c) course performance (e.g. Balfanz & Fox, 2011, Celio, 2009, Iver, 2010). A closer look at the attendance, behavior, and course performance indicators and statistics highlights the poor academic performance and low engagement within Crescent middle schools:

a.) ATTENDANCE: Chronic absenteeism occurs when a student misses 18 days or more of school in a year or 10% of the year, including excused and unexcused absences and suspensions (Balfanz & Fox, 2011). Low-income students are at the highest risk of becoming chronically absent. Research shows that low-income, chronically absent students are more likely to have lower academic achievement, higher dropout rates, and weak college/career readiness. These students are also more likely to be in the juvenile justice system. Frequent absences that do not rise to the level of chronic absenteeism matter. If a student is not in school to receive education and supports, he or she cannot learn in the classroom or participate in available interventions.

During the last school year, more than a third of Crescent middle grades students (39%) were frequently absent, missing nine or more days of school throughout the year, while 12% of students were chronically absent, missing 18 or more days of school. Chronically absent students were more likely not to meet state standards in Math and English/Language Arts. Local causes of chronic and frequent absenteeism include severe health issues, such as chronic asthma, inadequate transportation, and neighborhood violence threatening safe routes to school.

(b.) BEHAVIOR: Measuring serious behavior infractions such as out-of-school suspension and encounters with the Department of Juvenile Justice is important; however, research has shown that to reach students before they are at the point of out-of-school suspension, it is necessary to intervene

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for mild, sustained behavioral issues (Balfanz & Fox, 2011). Almost half of Crescent middle grades students (49%) received a behavior referral, a formal disciplinary measure in the last school year. In total, these students accumulated 3,735 referrals for various offenses. The most frequent types of referrals were for minor offenses, such as disrupting class (25%) and disrespect (17%). Serious offenses also were common, including fighting (10.4%), refusal to obey (9.5%), bus violation (6.8%), and cutting class (4.3%). Suspensions were a common consequence of behavior problems, with 27% of students receiving at least one in-school suspension and 24.5% of students receiving out-of-school suspension.

(c.) COURSE PERFORMANCE: Failing math and/or English/language arts (ELA) and having a failing average for English, math, social studies, and science combined are the low-performance standards that signal when a student is off track (Balfanz & Fox, 2011). Across all grade levels, only 54% of White Horse Crescent middle grades students met or exceeded state standards in ELA, and only 48% met or exceeded state standards in math. In general, proficiency scores declined in each successive grade level. In 2013, only 57% of sixth-grade students were proficient in ELA and 51% in math, 56% of seventh-graders were proficient in ELA and 46% in math, and only 50% of eighth-grade students were proficient in ELA and 49% in math.

Rough transitions into and out of middle school exacerbate the problem, leaving students unsupported during periods of intense physical and social-emotional development (Andrews & Bishop, 2012). As students transition from middle to high school, supports fall away as additional responsibilities are added. In order for students to succeed in high school, they must enter with grade-level skills and knowledge (Galton, Gray, & Ruddock, 1999). Unfortunately, some transitions are so difficult that students can "unlearn" skills and content, causing them to begin to fall off track, even if they were previously on track (Andrews & Bishop, 2012).

Given the issues with attendance, behavior, and course performance in these middle schools, as well as the research on the importance of the transition into high school, it is no surprise that so many students do not graduate on time in the White Horse Crescent. Berea High and Carolina Academy, the two high schools located squarely in the Crescent, served 1,674 students in 2012-13 and had on-time graduation rates of 71.4% and 62.4%, respectively. At both high schools, a full 25% of students were chronically absent, missing 18 or more days of school. More than half of students (52%) received a disciplinary referral, while 36% received in-school suspension and 19% received out-of-school suspension. Students clearly were disengaged and disconnected, and, now with the option to legally drop out, many chose to do so - the 2013 dropout rate was 4.4% at Berea High and 6.3% at Carolina

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Academy.

Unfortunately, the existing community solutions addressing these issues lack coordination, scale, and effectiveness. Where coordinated efforts exist, they target students on either end of the cradle-to-career pipeline, leaving the middle grades unsupported. For example, on the early end of the education pipeline, the Institute for Child Success is a statewide leader in early childhood advocacy and research, while First Steps' early childhood scholarship endowment and Nurse Family Partnership program provide access to evidence-based interventions. The Early Grades Reading Initiative, a district-wide method for teaching reading utilizing a Balanced Literacy approach, targets elementary students and is making great progress in increasing the number of elementary students reading at grade level.

Farther down the education pipeline, several high schools are in the process of transitioning to the New Tech Network model, a project-based approach to learning that has shown great promise. Lastly, the Greenville Region Workforce Collaborative uses the innovative National Fund for Workforce Solutions model to engage employers and build sector partnerships. A current SIF subgrantee, the Collaborative raises, coordinates, and directs funding and advocacy in support of workforce partnerships that develop career pathways, linking low-income workers with sustainable employment in industry that is critical to the region while also addressing the workforce needs of industry.

Comparable systems-level efforts targeting the middle grades simply are not present. Where middle grades interventions do exist, they are programmatic and lack the alignment, scale, and evidence to change the odds for students. Some programs are effective but serve only a fraction of the students in need of interventions. For example, Communities In Schools, an evidence-based model for providing Integrated Student Supports, currently operates at Tanglewood Middle School. There is one site coordinator responsible for providing three levels of intervention and support for the entire school. As an individual staff person, her caseload is capped at 60 students, though there are more than 300 students who are in need of the intervention at her school. This lack of scale plagues the out-of-school time (OST) sector as well. At present time, there are seven known OST programs with a capacity to serve up to 200 middle school students throughout the Crescent. With roughly 1,800 students attending Crescent-area middle schools, this demonstrates a huge gap in services.

Finally, a problem hindering efforts is the lack of real-time data and a coordinated resource map of available evidence-based interventions. The data that educators and programs use to identify eligible students are outdated, often from the previous academic year, hardly offering a current picture of a student's status and progress. Without real-time data, educators miss out on opportunities to intervene early and prevent further disengagement. When educators and community experts do identify a

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student in need, they must navigate a disjointed system of school- and community-based providers. Finding any response intervention takes priority over finding an evidence-based response intervention, leaving effectiveness out of the equation. Early, coordinated interventions would be more cost-effective and less restrictive.

COMMUNITY SOLUTION: The Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) is a best practice dropout prevention strategy for middle grades students. An EWRS utilizes real-time data to identify students who are beginning to disengage from school as indicated by attendance, behavior, and course performance. By identifying students early, a coordinated team of educators and community experts can match students with the right response interventions and then monitor each student's progress. With this system in place, middle grades students will stay on the pathway to graduation, successfully navigating critical opt-out points.

The Middle Grades Initiative addresses the CNCS focus area of Youth Development and will build the capacity of targeted schools to implement an effective EWRS while investing in evidence-based response interventions designed to keep middle grades students engaged and on track to graduate. The Social Innovation Fund represents an excellent opportunity to 1) support the implementation of the EWRS; 2) expand the availability and accessibility of evidence-based supports for middle grades students; 3) build appropriate evidence to scale the model to the entire district and similar communities; 4) further strengthen and insulate the education pipeline; and 5) develop a workforce with the skills to compete in today's market.

The Middle Grades Initiative follows a straightforward theory of change: **MATCH THE RIGHT STUDENTS TO THE RIGHT INTERVENTIONS AT THE RIGHT TIME** to create a pathway to success in school and life. Founded in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (2005), this theory of change acknowledges the need for a holistic approach for addressing complex community challenges. For the Middle Grades Initiative, Ecological Systems Theory translates into an insulated education pipeline in which the middle grades student is at the core and there are: 1) smooth transitions between elementary and middle school and middle school and high school; 2) an inner layer of insulation that includes the family and coordinated wrap-around student and family response interventions that align with the education system; and 3) an outer layer of insulation that includes coordinated basic supports that facilitate overall family well-being, such as health care, transportation, and affordable housing.

---**RIGHT STUDENTS:** Using attendance, behavior, and course performance, educators can identify which students are beginning to disengage. By predicting student disengagement before it happens,

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educators will be able to craft an individualized response based on the student's unique characteristics and warning indicators. In partnership with UWGC, Greenville County Schools is integrating its existing data systems through an innovative business intelligence solution. One deliverable of this process is an EWRS dashboard that provides educators a real-time picture of students' attendance, behavior, and course performance, allowing for easy identification of students who are starting to fall off track.

---RIGHT TIME: Identifying the student at the right time is a critical component of the EWRS. When educators receive real-time data quickly, they can respond quickly, preventing severe disengagement at critical opt-out points. The cost benefit of intervening early is compelling and refers back to the Ecological Systems Theory; if a student does not succeed, surrounding systems of support, such as family, institutions, and broader society, must provide a stronger safety net. The societal cost of dropouts is staggering. The earlier an intervention occurs, the greater its social return on investment.

---RIGHT INTERVENTIONS: As indicated by Ecological Systems Theory, students do not grow and develop in isolation, so the best response interventions will support both students and families, inside schools and in the greater community. For all students, but especially for at-risk students, there are many barriers to achieving academic success, including barriers that students cannot overcome with academic supports alone. With limited time and resources, educators need a complete menu of evidence-based response interventions, both school- and community-based, that address issues in student engagement stemming from the multiple layers surrounding the child, such as peer and family relationships, family stability, and neighborhood characteristics. Strengthening the connections between systems that surround the child will contribute to better coordination and greater success, highlighting the need to build formal linkages between response interventions, educators, and community institutions.

The Middle Grades Initiative will invest in evidence-based response interventions that demonstrate at least preliminary evidence of improving attendance, behavior, and course performance. Subgrantees will build evidence and grow the impact of response interventions for promoting middle grades success and transitions. Response interventions will align with the insulated education pipeline, strengthening the transitions between grade levels and building connected layers of insulation. Insulating the core of the education pipeline (schools) are two distinct layers, one that directly supports the student's growth academically (inner layer) and one that helps provide wrap-around supports to make sure students have their basic needs met (outer layer). Investments will occur in all three layers of the insulated pipeline and will target vulnerable populations.

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1) CORE OF PIPELINE: Investments will be made to ensure the EWRS is fully implemented, including support for the data dashboard and training for Crescent school staff to ensure matching of students to the right evidence-based response interventions.

2) INNER LAYER OF INSULATION: In order to support traditional classroom learning, enrichment and learning beyond the school day must occur. Investments in this layer of the pipeline include high-quality out-of-school time programs, such as afterschool and summer opportunities where students receive tutoring, service learning, and mentoring opportunities.

3) OUTER LAYER OF INSULATION: If students' basic needs are not met, such as safety or health, then they will not be able to successfully move through the education pipeline. Investments in this layer of support will include high-quality services to support students and their families, especially services that are integrated with the school.

4) TARGET POPULATIONS: While the EWRS focuses on preventing students from falling off track, some middle-school students are already showing signs of serious disengagement, such as behavior problems, truancy, or chronic absence (Balfanz, Herzog, & MacIver, 2007). These students may be experiencing a family crisis, such as homelessness, or be involved in the juvenile justice, foster care, or the child protection systems. Investments in this area will target these most disengaged students with intensive supports in order to prevent complete disconnection from family, school, or employment.

COMMUNITY GOALS: Over the next five years, the Middle Grades Initiative will stimulate systematic change in how schools, institutions, and communities support students during the middle grades years, placing students on the path to on-time high school graduation and preparing them for college or career, setting in motion a cycle of success for students and families. A system of evidence-based school and community supports will ensure that students: 1) transition successfully into and out of middle school; 2) remain actively engaged in the learning process; and 3) enter high school prepared for academic success.

In order to achieve this vision for middle grades success in the White Horse Crescent, UWGC has identified several measurable outcomes for the five-year grant period.

- 1) Increase the number of middle grades students proficient in math and ELA by 25%
- 2) Reduce the rate of chronic absenteeism by 75%
- 3) Decrease the number of students receiving disciplinary referrals by 50%
- 4) Decrease the number of students receiving out-of-school suspension by 50%.

To identify these outcomes, UWGC and its partners assessed data from the targeted schools

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compared to the highest performing schools in the district. With the proposed initiative, it is possible to close the gap BY HALF between the lowest performing schools and the highest performing schools as measured by scores on standardized tests and behavior and attendance reports. A long-term goal of the Middle Grades Initiative is to ensure students graduate from high school in four years. The first cohort of students served by the Middle Grades Initiative will be reaching this milestone by the end of the grant period. UWGC hopes to see notable gains in the on-time graduate rate by 2020, but expects greater success by 2025, when 85% of students will graduate on time.

ABILITY TO SUPPORT PROPOSED APPROACH: UWGC is well-suited to support the proposed approach of the Middle Grades Initiative. First, there is broad community support. Community stakeholders in Greenville County have begun to rally around the middle grades and are engaged in two cross-sector coalitions aimed at generating innovative solutions and aligning efforts throughout the Crescent. The coalitions, the Middle Grades Challenge Team and the Middle Grades Task Force, comprise leaders from the school district, educators and school support staff, youth development service providers, parents and caregivers, and UWGC staff members, among others. Supported by a United Way Worldwide and Ready by 21 learning community, these coalitions have engaged in 18 months of planning around middle grades success and transitions. Planning activities have included (1) mapping community gaps and assets, (2) identifying data-driven systems-level solutions, and (3) researching evidence-based best practices for supporting students and families. UWGC hired a Middle Grades Success coordinator in order to integrate this work into the rest of the organization.

The strong partnership with Greenville County Schools also speaks to UWGC's ability to support the Middle Grades Initiative. The district has grown into one of the biggest champions for the middle grades and EWRS, as demonstrated by its investment in a business intelligence solution that will enhance the availability and utility of real-time student indicators. A successful pilot of the EWRS and response interventions in the Crescent could be scaled easily throughout the district, serving as a catalyst for broader community and regional transformation. The District has demonstrated the ability to enhance what works in a short time frame and an openness to explore systems of responsible data sharing with partners in order to support academic achievement for all students.

Further, UWGC is one of nine local United Ways across the nation participating with United Way Worldwide in an Early Warning and Response System Partnership. Partnership members are working in an aligned, mutually dependent, and accountable manner to develop, implement, scale, and sustain EWRS in communities across the country. The EWRS Partnership has established its own performance challenge to implement the system in 30 middle schools across partners' communities

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and to spread this work to an additional 113 communities represented by other local United Ways. Membership in this group of early adapters positions UWGC as a national leader in EWRS implementation, creates a system of accountability for achieving shared goals, and provides resources and learning opportunities to support the Middle Grades Initiative.

VALUE ADDED ACTIVITIES: UWGC has identified three areas of value-added activities that will support subgrantee success: 1) UWGC's intermediary experience; 2) BOOST, an out-of-school time intermediary; and 3) aligned CNCS resources.

1. UWGC's intermediary experience and support: While an EWRS is an excellent tool, its success hinges upon a well-coordinated response. UWGC's years of experience as a convener will allow it to strengthen all of the connective tissue required to provide an insulated pipeline and a well-coordinated response for individual students. UWGC operates as a community thought-leader, problem-solver, and capacity-builder and knows how to bring the right people to the table in order to advance shared agendas. Further, UWGC has in-house expertise in the areas of grassroots community development and advocacy, allowing the organization to strengthen community coalitions and promote grassroots leadership as well as influence local, state, and national policy. UWGC's partnerships and expertise in these areas are a major value-add to the EWRS and subgrantees.

2. BOOST, Building Opportunities in Out-of-School Time, is an initiative to increase quality and access to out-of-school time (OST) programs for school-age youth, ensuring they thrive academically, socially and emotionally. BOOST unites stakeholders around a shared mission, coordinates and maximizes resources, and drives improvement throughout Greenville County OST programs. BOOST also supports programs and staff by offering technical assistance, professional development, and networking opportunities. Further, BOOST advocates on a local and state level, raising awareness of the importance of OST programs and how they keep kids safe, inspire learning and help working families. The Middle Grades Initiative will utilize BOOST for technical assistance and capacity building to support subgrantees aligned with OST.

3. UWGC serves as an intermediary for two AmeriCorps programs: 1) a VISTA program in education and economic opportunity that hosts 12 members; and 2) an AmeriCorps State program in economic opportunity that hosts 33 members. Education VISTA members already are placed at targeted Title I middle schools and youth development organizations within the White Horse Crescent. Members help implement Title I action plans, assist in developing programs, build staff capacity, and connect families with community resources. The Middle Grades Initiative will leverage these VISTAs to build subgrantee capacity in areas of data collection and evaluation, program growth, volunteer

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recruitment, and sustainability planning. To complement the indirect service of VISTAs, AmeriCorps State members provide wrap-around financial stability supports to families in the White Horse Crescent, including free income tax preparation, screenings for public benefits, Individual Development Accounts, financial literacy classes, and workforce development referrals.

COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED MODELS: The Middle Grades Initiative incorporates several levels of innovation and transformation. First, the EWRS is a data-driven approach that allows for fast and early interventions. The EWRS uses existing data and aligns existing resources to create a more cost-effective and coordinated solution for preventing student disengagement. The Middle Grades Initiative also will transform the current culture within schools and social service providers, changing the way fragmented organizations do business through alignment and coordination. Further, there are opportunities to scale lessons learned from the Middle Grades Initiative nationally.

UWGC will select subgrantees based on 1) evidence of effectiveness; 2) alignment with theory of change; and 3) organizational capacity for growth. The latter two criteria are discussed in more detail in the following section on the subgrantee selection process. The following describes how UWGC will use evidence to select subgrantees and an overview of the landscape of potential subgrantees.

Applicants to the Middle Grades Initiative will present results demonstrating their intervention has achieved at least preliminary levels of evidence through a written summary of a credible study that describes the intervention and dosage; sample size and selection; methodology; and strength, direction, and generalizability of findings. UWGC and the Riley Institute will use this information to determine the level of evidence as defined in the evidence tiers provided by CNCS and the Office of Management and Budget. National clearinghouses for evidence-based interventions also will be consulted, including the What Works Clearinghouse from the U.S. Dept. of Education and the Model Programs Database from the National Dropout Prevention Center.

UWGC expects three categories of eligible applicants:

1) NEW MODEL, EXISTING APPLICANT: The applicant already operates within the White Horse Crescent, but is proposing to implement an evidence-based response intervention that it currently does not provide. These applicants will demonstrate their capacity to implement the new response intervention within four months of subgrant receipt, aligning with the 2015-16 school year.

2) EXISTING MODEL, NEW APPLICANT: The applicant does not operate within the Crescent or potentially within the state or region, but has experience implementing its proposed response intervention in other communities. Applicants will demonstrate that the results of their model are

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generalizable to students in the Crescent and demonstrate an understanding of community characteristics. These applicants also will need to demonstrate their capacity to implement the new response intervention within four months of subgrant receipt, aligning with the 2015-16 school year.

3) EXISTING MODEL, EXISTING APPLICANT: The applicant already operates within the Crescent and has experience implementing its proposed response intervention. These applicants will show a track record of measuring outcomes and demonstrate that participation in the Middle Grades Initiative will allow for growth and scale.

Based on these criteria, UWGC is confident there are sufficient innovative interventions with at least preliminary levels of evidence. There are several existing service providers operating in the Crescent, though these interventions currently lack the scale and coordination to transform the middle grades. Further, there are several regional research institutions implementing and researching innovative interventions, including Clemson University, the University of South Carolina, and the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. Examples of program models include:

(a) In a quasi-experimental study, one specific program, Communities In Schools, has demonstrated an ability to improve on-time graduation rates, decrease dropout rates, improve 9th grade GPA and attendance, and decrease 6th grade behavior problems (ICF International, 2010).

(b) AfterZone is an afterschool program for middle grades students from Providence, RI. Compared to non-participating peers, AfterZone youth showed: 1) 25% fewer school absences; 2) higher grades and proficiency test scores in Math 4) higher grade-point average in ELA and science; and 5) higher levels of positive behavior (Kauh, 2011). Based on Providence's similar demographic characteristics and, this model is well-suited for replication in the Crescent.

(c) The Family Solutions Program (FSP) from Families 4 Change is a multiple family group intervention program that is included in the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Directory of Best Practice Programs. FSP graduates show significant improvements in GPA, family functioning, parent-adolescent communication, and reduction in absences (Quinn, 2014).

B. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

1. SUBGRANTEE SELECTION

PROFILE OF SUBGRANTEE: The ideal subgrantee will demonstrate the ability to work within the theory of change as well as a willingness to engage in a collective impact approach. Ideal subgrantees

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will possess several key characteristics under the broad categories of financial soundness, organizational capacity, strategy and alignment, and evaluation. 1) Financial soundness includes a positive financial background demonstrating fiscal responsibility and solvency. 2) Organizational capacity includes a history of innovation, partnership, and vision, as well as an engaged board of directors. 3) Strategy includes a strategic plan that aligns with the theory of change, an evidence-based program model, and preliminary evidence of program effectiveness. 4) Evaluation includes experience with data collection and analysis and a willingness to commit to shared measurement and evidence-based decision-making.

UWGC expects to receive 12 to 15 high-quality applications that advance to the final round of the review process and to make 6 to 9 subgrantee awards ranging from \$100,000 to \$250,000. Subgrantee awards will vary by level of evidence. Partners whose models demonstrate preliminary levels of evidence will receive between \$100,000 and \$150,000; those with moderate levels of evidence between \$150,000 and \$200,000; and those with strong levels of evidence between \$200,000 and \$250,000.

SELECTION PROCESS AND TIMELINE: UWGC will conduct an open grantmaking competition to select subgrantees. This process reflects deep experience in competitive grantmaking and includes six major between Aug. 2014 and Apr. 2015. UWGC will create a Middle Grades Application Review Team, which merges the existing Middle Grades Challenge Team with community volunteers, representatives of partner organizations, and staff from UWGC and the Riley Institute. UWGC will ensure that conflict of interest policies are in place to remove potential bias from the review process.

Step 1: BUILDING AWARENESS (Aug 2014). Upon award, UWGC will release an announcement and hold two to three community meetings and webinars to build awareness and describe the purpose, mechanisms, and strategies for funding.

Step 2: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (Sept 2014). UWGC will release a formal Request for Proposals and conduct technical assistance webinars or meetings that lay out the steps and platform (Apricot for Funders) through which potential partners will obtain and submit an application.

Step 3: PREQUALIFICATION (Sept - Oct 2014). Both UWGC staff and volunteers will audit applicants' organizational documents that demonstrate their eligibility: audited financial statements, insurance, strategic plan, succession plan, client management software, and appropriate Board documents. Letters of intent to the prequalification round will be due by the third week in Sept., with audits occurring from late Sept. through late Oct., as they are received.

Step 4: GRANT SUBMISSION / REVIEW TRAINING. (Nov - Dec 2014). Applicants who meet

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prequalification requirements will be invited to submit a full application due on Dec. 19, 2014. UWGC will hold a series of trainings for Evaluation Team members on the overall goals of the Social Innovation Fund, the application review process, the selection criteria, and an explanation of how to use the scoring rubric to promote scoring consistency.

Step 5: REVIEW PROCESS (Jan - Feb 2015). The Middle Grades Review Team will score applications in the four focus areas: 1) financial soundness, 2) organizational capacity, 3) strategy and alignment, and 4) evaluation.

Step 6: FINAL REVIEW AND SELECTION (Mar - Apr 2015). The 12 to 15 applicants with the highest scores will be invited to the final round of evaluation, which will include an in-person presentation, followed by the opportunity to host a site visit for reviewers. Applicants will make a 20-minute presentation, followed by a 40-minute question and answer session. The purpose of this last round is to determine which partner or partners demonstrate the most potential to deliver strategies, build evidence, comply with SIF guidelines, and work collectively to solve problems. The Middle Grades Review Team will present selection recommendations to the UWGC Board of Directors for final approval. Selected partners will be notified in April 2015 with a Memorandum of Understanding executed directly following.

DETERMINING FIT WITH THEORY OF CHANGE: UWGC will use the following criteria to assess applicants' fit with the Early Warning and Response System and the insulated education pipeline: 1) a target population of middle grades students in 6th to 8th grades and/or students in the transition years of 5th and 9th grade; 2) strong alignment with one or more layers of the insulated pipeline; 3) strong evidence-based decision making practices; 4) understanding of the importance of school-community collaborations and a plan to strengthen these relationships; 5) evidence proving the ability to positively influence attendance, behavior and/or course performance to help achieve the overall goals of the Middle Grades Initiative; and 6) for out-of-school-time applicants, evidence of high-quality program elements.

ASSESSING CAPACITY / READINESS FOR GROWTH: UWGC will assess applicants' readiness and capacity to implement program growth throughout the application process. During the prequalification round and application review, the selection criteria work together to determine if applicants have the organizational infrastructure and culture necessary to foster program growth. By auditing basic organizational documents, reading applicants' written responses to RFP prompts, hosting in-person presentations, and conducting site visits with applicants, the Middle Grades Review Team will triangulate diverse sources of data that paint a solid picture of applicants' capacity for

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growth. Selection criteria at various stages all examine: 1) track record of using evidence-based decision making strategies; 2) strength of data collection and measurement policies; 3) strength of culture of performance management; 4) preliminary evidence of effectiveness; 5) sound financial history; 6) capable and visionary leadership; and 7) strength of strategic plan with clear goals and measurable outcomes.

2. PROPOSAL FOR EVALUATION

The Richard W. Riley Institute at Furman University in Greenville, SC, will serve as UWGC's contracted research partner. The Institute's research team will be led by Dr. Brooke Culclasure, the Institute's Research Director, who has served as the principal investigator for a number of outcomes-based education research studies and as the lead evaluator on numerous federal grants, and Dr. David Fleming, a professor and quantitative methodologist who has co-investigated many large-scale research studies and conducted numerous experimental and quasi-experimental studies. Dr. Tracy Waters, Research and Grants Manager at UWGC, will support the evaluation team and serve as an evaluation liaison between UWGC and the Institute.

The Institute will oversee the evaluation across the board, support UWGC with the subgrantee selection process, and help identify existing evidence levels and targets. In addition, the Institute will continue supporting UWGC's broader education agenda. At present time, representatives from the Institute serve on numerous UWGC committees, including the Middle Grades Challenge Team and Education Council.

PORTFOLIO EVALUATION: Along with UWGC and input from CNCS, the Institute will develop a portfolio evaluation strategy (PES) that will look at all data in a comprehensive manner, focusing on tracking progress toward outcomes across the project. Possible research questions include: 1) To what extent have students targeted by interventions demonstrated movement on the four project goals: increases in proficiency in Math and ELA; reductions in chronic absenteeism; decreases in disciplinary referrals; and decreases in out-of-school suspensions? 2) To what extent have students targeted by interventions moved on personal, behavioral, and academic skills correlated with school success? 3) To what extent have interventions moved to higher evidence levels? 4) To what extent has a menu of evidence-based interventions been put together that can effectively and efficiently help students identified by through the EWRS? Evaluators will work with the UWGC and Greenville County Schools to develop a data system to track performance measures across all subgrantees.

SUBGRANTEE OUTCOMES-BASED EVALUATION: Subgrantee evaluation plans (SEPs) will

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detail the specific evaluation design selected, which will depend on the specific intervention, the number of students served, and the level of existing evidence. Efforts will be made to incorporate randomized controls where feasible, but a quasi-experimental is the likely design due to the difficulty of conducting randomized control studies in school settings.

If a quasi-experimental design is utilized, control groups will be created in ways that will increase the likelihood of strong evidence demonstrating causation. Researchers will establish control groups in one or both of two ways. First, control groups could comprise an equivalent external matched group of students not receiving the treatment in the same school and grade level as the treatment students. The researchers will match students based on a variety of characteristics, including race and income status. Second, control groups could comprise groups of children from other schools in the district not receiving the treatment. Again, students will be matched based on grade level and a variety of student characteristics. Given that the school district is large and diverse, there will be a large number of schools and students available for the control sample. Following the Institute of Education Sciences' What Works Clearinghouse research guidelines, the evaluators will establish baseline equivalence between the treatment and control samples in all cases.

Also included in the SEP will be the identification of target evidence levels for each intervention; the discussion of other ongoing evaluations of the intervention and how they may impact the SEP; and the determination of finalized research questions, sampling techniques, data collection protocols, measures, and instruments to be used. In addition, timelines, budgets, and logic models will be refined and aligned to the overall PES.

A critical piece of the development of each SEP is the selection of the target level of evidence. This process will include a detailed literature review related to the intervention(s) proposed by the subgrantee, in addition to an analysis of prior research focusing on the specific intervention, with special consideration given to issues of internal and external validity.

Possible subgrantee outcomes based evaluation questions include: 1) To what extent have students targeted by the intervention demonstrated movement on the four project goals as compared to students in demographically matched control groups: increases in proficiency in Math and ELA; reductions in chronic absenteeism; decreases in disciplinary referrals; and decreases in out-of-school suspensions? 2) To what extent have students targeted by the intervention moved on personal, behavioral, and academic skills correlated with school success as compared to students in demographically matched control groups?

Data collection/analysis likely will include a mixture of statistical analysis of extant data with

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comparison to demographically matched control schools; administration of a selected assessment to a sample of students impacted by the interventions and to a control group measuring personal, behavioral, and academic skills, such as the ACT Engage assessment; and observation, interviews, and document analysis related to intervention.

SUBGRANTEE IMPLEMENTATION STUDY: Regarding the determination of implementation fidelity, subgrantee evaluations will vary in their approach depending upon if fidelity has been already established in other settings, the rubrics and protocols available to researchers for adaptation, and the nature of the intervention.

Regardless of approach, a fidelity matrix and logic model will be developed for each intervention. Primary measures of fidelity will be determined as well as scores required to be considered adequate fidelity. The fidelity measure will include: 1) Adherence: that program components are delivered as proscribed. 2) Exposure: the amount of program content received by participants. 3) Quality of delivery: the theory-based ideal in terms of processes and content. 4) Participant engagement. 5) Program differentiation: unique features of the intervention are distinguishable from other programs.

The following are likely research questions that will be included as a part of the implementation study: 1) What is the overall level of fidelity of implementation? 2) What are the most important ways in which the intervention as implemented differed from the intervention as planned? 3) What are the experiences of the control students that were parallel to the interventions received by the treatment students? 4) How different were the intervention and control conditions? 5) What were the barriers to implementation? 6) Did the students assigned to the treatment group receive the intervention as planned?

EVALUATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: UWGC and the Institute will work together to assess subgrantees' need for evaluation technical assistance (TA). The rigorous selection process will ensure that subgrantees possess a minimum level of comfort and experience planning for and implementing evaluations. UWGC and the Institute will develop a checklist of evaluation core competencies and will ask the subgrantee to provide a self-assessment of their skill level in these core competencies. Each subgrantee will meet with UWGC and the Institute to develop jointly a list of priority areas for evaluation capacity-building. Depending on each subgrantee's need, TA supports include peer-mentoring opportunities with other subgrantees, one-on-one training with the UWGC Research & Grants Manager, and the placement of an AmeriCorps VISTA member to help develop adequate data collection and measurement policies and implement evaluation procedures.

The total cost for reasonable evaluation activities in Year 1 is \$236,761. The Institute personnel

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costs (including fringe at 30% and FICA @ 8%) account for \$143,950 or 61% of total budget as follows: Research Director \$110,000 @ 20%; Assistant Research Director \$78,000 at 100%; Research Methodologist/Statistician \$100,000 at 20%; Budget Manager/Marketing and Website Coordinator \$50,000 at 10%; Research Assistant \$50,000 at 20%; UWGC Research & Grants Manager, \$51,400 at 25% + 40% fringe = \$17,290 for planning and data collection.

Other evaluation budget items include:

*Mileage to and from UWGC and program sites 2,000@ .56/mile= \$1,120; Hotel at \$1,880 (2 rooms @ \$235 each x 4 trips);

*Professional Development: conferences and trainings at \$1,000/staff at 2 staff; journals, webinars, professional fees, etc. at \$500.

*Research Costs: Data analysis/survey software @ \$1,000; Control school costs at \$5,000; Assessment/instrument costs at \$10,000; Data collection costs at \$3,000 and Report development at \$3,000.

*Materials & Supplies: Materials for reporting at \$2,000 and additional office space/equipment/data storage at \$18,000.

*The Riley Institute has an indirect cost rate agreement of 12% (\$28,021).

With guidance from UWGC, additional costs for subgrantee evaluation will be incorporated into subgrantee proposed budgets.

3. PROPOSAL FOR IDENTIFYING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS: In order for students in the the White Horse Crescent to access the cycle of success, they must reach early and frequent education milestones, moving through the education pipeline smoothly and graduating from high school. The middle grades is a time when students go through immense growth, but also a time when they need extra support. Current programs in place to support middle grades students lack scale, serving a fraction of the students in need. Moreover, because currently there is no systematic identification paired with a coordinated response for students, programs in place serve students who need the most intensive interventions, rather than identifying students early.

The Middle Grades Initiative incorporates several levels of innovation and transformation. First, the EWRS is a data-driven approach that allows for fast and early interventions. The EWRS uses existing data and aligns existing resources to create a cost-effective and coordinated solution for preventing student disengagement. The Middle Grades Initiative also will transform the current culture within schools and social service providers, changing the way currently fragmented

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organizations do business through alignment and coordination. Further, there are opportunities to scale lessons learned from the Middle Grades Initiative nationally.

In order to attract and select the best subgrantees to implement innovative response interventions, UWGC plans to leverage its relationships within its regional and national networks of community organizations. These entities include: United Way Worldwide, the national Early Warning System Partnership, YMCA, The Salvation Army, Goodwill Industries, National Fund for Workforce Solutions, Furman University, Clemson University, University of South Carolina, and Technical Colleges of South Carolina. UWGC also will leverage its relationships with the private sector to seek innovation solutions, including the national networks of Bank of America, Michelin North America, and Wells Fargo.

4. PROPOSAL FOR GROWING SUBGRANTEE IMPACT: Using the Collective Impact approach, UWGC will create an insulated middle grades education pipeline and grow effective subgrantee models. As described by Kania and Kramer, the elements of Collective Impact are 1) Creating a common agenda; 2) Using shared measurement; 3) Aligning mutually reinforcing activities; 4) Engaging in continuous communication; and 5) Identifying a backbone organization to serve as the foundation of collective efforts (2012). The Collective Impact approach aligns well with the Middle Grades Initiative's theory of change based in the insulated education pipeline, as the network of response interventions and community stakeholders has the greatest opportunity for growing impact when programs, systems, and policies are aligned and coordinated.

Utilizing this approach will allow UWGC to strengthen the field of youth development providers. Strengthening the field is an important precursor to scaling program impact and includes activities such as raising awareness, leadership development, creating well-defined shared metrics for the field, investing in subgrantee infrastructure, talent sourcing, and match-making when mergers are appropriate. The Collective Impact approach will foster the relationships and partnerships necessary to engage in the collective field building activities required to achieve transformative scale.

Apart from collective field building activities, UWGC and the Riley Institute will work with subgrantees throughout the five year grant period on crafting achievable milestones of growth. In Year 1, subgrantees will create a growth plan that they will update annually. Their growth plan will detail specific strategies for growing program impact, such as goals for expanding at current locations, replicating at other locations, or expanding through non-physical means. In addition, subgrantees will quantify their goals for program scale, which will include targets for serving more people and for

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improving quality. UWGC and the Institute will help subgrantees craft and update these plans based on program capacity and evidence of effectiveness and will monitor progress on growth plans.

Lastly, UWGC will use principles of Transformative Scale to guide subgrantees as they develop plans for growing and sustaining impact. These strategies include: 1) distributing efforts through existing platforms; 2) recruiting and training other organizations to deliver elements of the solution; 3) removal of elements not contributing to the solution and investing into what does work; 4) using technology to enhance scope, make decisions, and manage data; 5) supporting system and policy level advocacy for positive change; and 6) identifying and partnering with non-traditional partners and models (Bradach & Grindle, 2014).

ASSESSING CAPACITY FOR GROWTH: UWGC will use the following characteristics to assess subgrantee capacity for growth: 1) track record of using evidence-based decision making strategies; 2) strength of data collection and measurement policies; 3) strength of culture of performance management; 4) preliminary evidence of effectiveness; 5) strength of financial history and projection; 6) capable and visionary leadership; and 7) strength of strategic plan with clear goals and measurable outcomes.

Other characteristics related directly to scaling the delivery and applicability of interventions include: 1) strength of organization's regional or national network; 2) identification of one or more intervention components with great potential for impacting outcomes; 3) use of technology; 4) strength of relationships with public systems; and 5) societal norms related to the community challenge and intervention.

USING EVIDENCE TO PLAN FOR GROWTH: UWGC and the Riley Institute will use a developmental evaluation approach to determine when or how a program is well-suited for growth. Developed by the Data Research and Development Center, this approach includes five stages for determining how and when to scale. UWGC and the Riley Institute will use evidence throughout these stages to guide the process of growing program impact and scaling the delivery and applicability of interventions.

STAGE 1: PROOF OF CONCEPT. Confirm that the model has at least preliminary evidence and identify the parts of the intervention that are flexible and adaptable and which are not.

STAGE 2: ESTABLISH EFFICACY. Determine that the intervention can achieve intended results under optimal circumstances.

STAGE 3: DEMONSTRATE EFFECTIVENESS. Test the intervention in real-world circumstances and assess if it achieves its objectives.

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STAGE 4: SCALE UP AND TEST AGAIN. Implement the intervention among a larger population and across many contexts. Examine the contextual factors that influence impact. Use results to develop guidelines for implementing the intervention within different contexts.

STAGE 5: POST-INTERVENTION RESEARCH. Learn about the intervention's effectiveness in new contexts. Explore the sustainability of impact once the intervention is fully adopted in a community.

SUPPORTING SUBGRANTEE GROWTH: UWGC staff will provide technical assistance (TA) focused on building subgrantees' organizational capacity, developing evidence-based decision making strategies, supporting the use of rigorous evaluation practices, and sharing best practices. Using UWGC staff and local and regional experts in evaluation, sustainable program growth, and best practices, UWGC will establish a tiered approach to providing technical assistance that increases staff and organizational capacity, strengthens the field of providers, and increases the quality of services provided. UWGC will convene quarterly group meetings with subgrantees to provide TA on evaluation practices (including data collection and analysis and using data to drive decision-making) sustaining program growth, advocacy and public policy, and to support the sharing of best practices among partners.

The next tier of support will include individualized TA plans. First, each subgrantee will nominate one staff leader to participate in a one-on-one 360 leadership development program in order to develop key components of transformational leadership. These leaders will work within their own organizations to implement and share best practices necessary for growing and scaling program impact. Another opportunity for one-on-one TA will be available for subgrantees aligned with out-of-school time. BOOST, Building Opportunities in Out-of-School Time, will work with subgrantees to improve the components of program quality that are related to educational outcomes for youth.

The highest level of support will require the placement of AmeriCorps VISTA members at partner organizations to increase capacity and support evaluation. VISTA members build organizational capacity through systematizing processes related to evaluation, streamlining back-office supports, aligning resources, and providing training to staff. In addition to receiving VISTA members, these partners also will work with UWGC staff and the network of staff leaders in order to quickly increase capacity of existing organizational staff.

PLAN FOR STRATEGIC AND EFFECTIVE GROWTH FOR SUSTAINABILITY: UWGC will develop a plan to help subgrantees plan for strategic and effective growth that results in long-term sustainability beyond the scope of the grant period. The state of South Carolina, under the leadership

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of Gov. Nikki Haley, has expressed an openness and willingness to explore Pay for Success social impact financing models, placing the state well ahead of the curve, especially among other red states. The Institute for Child Success, a strategic partner in education thought leadership, is a national leader in social impact financing and will be a key resource to the middle grades work as it positions itself for sustainability. Through participation in the Middle Grades Initiative, UWGC will build field and partner capacity and increase evidence of positive outcomes so that partners are well positioned to engage in social impact financing. Helping partners increase their level of evidence also will position them to competitively seek other state and federal grants in order to sustain growth.

Organizational Capability

A. HISTORY OF COMPETITIVE GRANTMAKING

UWGC has funded community partners since 1922 and has held a competitive grant process for over 40 years. Last year, UWGC awarded \$6.6 million in funds to 68 organizations to operate 105 programs. The review process involved 120 volunteers and staff members from all levels of the organization. The award process for the current three-year funding cycle (2013-2016) was the most rigorous in the organization's history. It began with community meetings one year prior to the release of the Notice of Funding Opportunity. The purpose of the meetings was to create understanding that UWGC was seeking a new kind of relationship with grantees, one that moved from a transactional relationship to a collective impact partnership addressing multiple community challenges. The review process included 3 phases: pre-certification to determine basic qualification; online application submission; and review. UWGC finance staff evaluated budgets and financial statements for program viability and sustainability. UWGC community impact staff led trainings to prepare volunteer teams on award criteria and evaluation skill building. The overall goal of the review process was to select providers with the highest potential for results and alignment with strategic direction.

In addition, UWGC has experience leading targeted grant processes. For example, a "Breakthrough Initiative" grant application was held last year using UWGC surplus funds. Organizations pursued funding for initiatives that demonstrated the ability to make a positive impact on mission driven efforts. Further, UWGC's Director of Operations and Initiatives has participated on a federal grant review board and leads efforts that award state funds to partners in the areas of employment training, child care services, and emergency food and shelter programs.

UWGC has the organizational capacity to undertake the subgrant selection process outlined in this application. The proposed grant competition reflects deep experience in competitive grantmaking and

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a refined understanding of effective practices in managing volunteers and multi-stage application processes and working within strict selection deadlines. The grantmaking process is engrained within UWGC's business model and is supported by a team of staff members experienced in designing application instructions and scoring rubrics, providing TA to applications, and facilitating application review meetings.

B. EXPERIENCE GROWING PROGRAM IMPACT

UWGC uses its Community Investment Fund to seed and foster the growth of programs with potential to address community challenges. Examples include:

Center for Working Families (CWF): In 2012, UWGC identified Integrated Service Delivery as a best practice approach to help families achieve financial independence. Together with Goodwill Industries of the Midlands and Upstate of SC and Greenville County Human Relations Commission, UWGC piloted the CWF model, serving 2,143 individuals and moving 388 jobseekers to employment. In order to scale the delivery of this model, UWGC invested training, funding, and technical assistance in five new sites throughout the county. To date, partners implementing the CWF model have served 5,488 individuals and placed 1,223 in jobs.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA): Funded by the IRS, UWGC provides leadership to a coalition that operates a tax assistance program for low-income residents. In its first year (2006), a few volunteer preparers filed 1,254 tax returns, bringing \$688,000 into the community in the form of tax refunds. Over the next seven years, UWGC staff strengthened partnerships, raised additional resources, developed a strategic marketing plan, and built internal capacity in the form of financial literacy training and education. As a result, in 2013 the VITA program enlisted 336 volunteers to prepare 7,700 taxes returns and generated \$8.5 million in tax refunds. This tax season the program is on track to complete 9,000 tax returns and generate \$10 million in tax refunds. This constitutes a steady 30% increase in volume of returns on average each year. Further, the coalition's geographic footprint has increased from serving one county at only a couple of locations to serving seven counties at 35 locations.

Greenville Region Workforce Collaborative: In 2011, UWGC founded the Collaborative to address the skills gap crisis facing Greenville County. A SIF subgrantee funded in part through Jobs for the Future and the National Fund for Workforce Solutions, the Collaborative brings together local nonprofits, faith-based initiatives, educators, and employers to find creative solutions to the skills gap. The Collaborative works to train low-skilled workers and place these individuals in sustainable careers

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with the help of case managers and networks of businesses with available jobs. This initiative began as a partnership between three organizations with 8 businesses at the table and 12 students enrolled in training classes. The Collaborative now has 30 business partners willing to assist in employing and/or developing training and has enrolled 322 jobseekers in training. It is expanding regionally into areas of the state, particularly rural counties that have no similar workforce strategies in place. Additionally, the Collaborative has expanded its programming to reach new target populations with training in areas such as chemical manufacturing. The Collaborative's operating budget has grown from \$700,000 in 2011 to \$1.1 million today with over \$550,000 in grant funds.

CAPTURING AND SHARING BEST PRACTICES: UWGC will work with the Institute to monitor subgrantee performance measurement and identify which components of interventions are most effective and are best suited for replication. When a best practice is captured locally, UWGC will use the quarterly subgrantee meetings and individual TA meetings to share the best practice within the Middle Grades Initiative. Once implemented to confirm evidence of effectiveness, UWGC and the Institute will share the best practice with regional and national networks, publish white papers and research reports, and present at academic conferences.

One of the most promising platforms for sharing best practices is the United Way Worldwide Early Warning System Partnership, a learning community of 9 local United Ways working to scale the Early Warning System throughout the United Way network. A member of this learning compact, UWGC is well-positioned to learn from colleagues and share best practices with hope that other local United Ways will test these best practices in their own community.

C. EVALUATION EXPERIENCE

EXPERIENCE MANAGING AND SUPPORTING EVALUATIONS: The demand for data-driven processes is embedded in the culture of UWGC. It stems in part from volunteer leaders whose areas of expertise in successful businesses, both small and large, Fortune 500 companies, translates into the same high expectations of nonprofit partners and staff. The creation of a full-time staff research position is one example of the organizational commitment to evaluation. Dr. Tracy Waters has experience in research settings and manages UWGC's internal evaluation efforts. As internal evaluator, Dr. Waters' work has begun to transform the performance of funded providers and inform community conversations around multiple community challenges.

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Eleven years ago, UWGC conducted a needs assessment to create a Community Impact Agenda. This assessment analyzed the data to identify priority issue areas for the community. What followed over the next decade was a process of building the capacity of nonprofit organizations to prepare them to collect and measure outcomes using valid sources of data. In 2012, UWGC contracted with a Furman University sociologist to develop an even more targeted needs assessment. This needs assessment used specific indicators of community well-being in three issue areas in order to determine where efforts should be targeted both geographically and demographically. UWGC used this assessment to strategically fund programs that were in alignment with and capable of addressing these needs.

Another example of program evaluation experience is as convener for the Greenville Region Workforce Collaborative (GRWC). UWGC played a key role in the independent evaluation conducted by Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW). CSW has national expertise with industry partnership models, the advancement of low income workers, and assessment and evaluation of both areas. The CSW-led local evaluation works with Dr. Waters to track the impact of the program. GRWC uses an online client-management database (Apricot) as well as a database through the Greenville Workforce Investment Board to track client- and program-level data. Through an agreement with the Greenville WIB, GRWC accesses wage and unemployment insurance data for participants. The GRWC board meets monthly to review the performance measures from the workforce partnership. Specifically, each board member uses data to assess trends, challenges, and identified opportunities. This process allows GRWC to highlight progress toward outcomes, opportunities for program improvement by focused investment in system or program delivery challenges, and implementation and scaling of best practices.

CAPACITY TO APPLY RESULTS: Using evidence-based decision making strategies is something UWGC takes very seriously. Throughout the year, UWGC convenes two distinct meetings, evaluation meetings and strategy meetings. Each type of meeting informs and influences the other and each involves UWGC staff, volunteers, and funded partners. At evaluation meetings, staff and volunteer review data reports and discuss shared language/terminology, definition of metrics, and progress made on measureable outcomes. At strategy meetings, a trained staff facilitator leads partner organizations and volunteers through peer-to-peer mentoring, training, and issue area activities based on data discussed in the evaluation meetings. This has been an effective means to make modify programs, standardize services where appropriate, highlight best practices, identify systems-level barriers and gaps, celebrate successes, and emphasize both traditional and non-traditional

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partnerships. UWGC provides ongoing technical and networking assistance to partners by leveraging relationships at the city, county, and state level. Until UWGC established this process for sharing data and improving performance, the work of the community's most established service providers was often disconnected and leadership was territorial and protective of information. This new process has allowed providers to understand the value and potential impact of open communication when it comes to creating social and behavioral change.

UWGC program evaluation teams shifted from counting numbers served in the past to analyzing data for participant outcomes and long-term results. UWGC reports results to the community in an annual scorecard and is developing a data dashboard that will provide staff and volunteers a clear picture of the impact of investments.

On a programmatic level, staff uses evidence-based decision making strategies to adjust and improve internal processes. The Greenville Region Workforce Collaborative analyzes client-level demographic data to determine the profile of participants most likely to persist in training. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program uses historic data to determine which census block groups are more likely to use the tax service and where the program needs to target site locations for easier access.

EXPERIENCE INFLUENCING GRANTEES TO USE EVIDENCE: UWGC began its current funding cycle communicating that results-oriented programs with evidence-based decision making strategies would be the winners of United Way investments. UWGC demonstrated this bias toward evidence and results by insisting on two elements required for funding: 1) consistent use of a results-based accountability framework with pre-determined, strategy-specific metrics, and 2) use of an online client management system, for which UWGC provides funding, training, and assistance with program data conversion. These funding requirements have helped nudge partners further along the performance management continuum.

UWGC demonstrated its commitment to performance management by providing an online client management system to partners free of cost beginning in Spring 2013. Partnering with CommunityTech Knowledge, UWGC created and implemented a shared data management system, the Apricot Community Enterprise System (ACES). The Apricot Enterprise System is custom designed for grant making intermediaries who seek not only to track and report on aggregate data across their funded partners, but also to empower these partners to build capacity with their own advanced, all-in-one, outcomes-tracking Apricot database system. Each supported partner has their own unique customized form library, as well as access to forms designed specifically by UWGC to maximize

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clarity in outcomes reporting. UWGC and CommunityTech Knowledge have provided partners hours of support and technical assistance throughout the implementation process and continue to champion the fundamentals of performance management. Partners have started to embrace performance management and use client-level data to improve program service delivery.

STAFF CAPACITY FOR EVALUATION: Brooke Culclasure is the Research Director for the Riley Institute's Center for Education Policy and Leadership at Furman University. She received her Ph.D. in Education Policy from the University of Virginia. Dr. Culclasure has directed the following evaluation and research projects: the South Carolina Public School Montessori study, the Overcoming Obstacles Life Skills Program evaluation, the TransformSC innovative education practices evaluation, the Pickens County Drug-Free Communities federal grant evaluation, and the Orangeburg District 3 Elementary and Secondary School Counseling federal grant evaluation. She also served from 2012-2014 as an evaluator for the Florida Race to the Top federal grant, focusing on Florida's teacher and principal evaluation systems, and from 2005 to 2008 coordinated the Riley Institute's mixed method research study on public education in South Carolina.

David J. Fleming is a statistician and Assistant Professor in the Political Science Department at Furman University, where he teaches courses in research methodology and American politics. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2009. His research examines the effect of education policies on parent and student outcomes. His scholarly work has been published in the American Educational Research Journal, Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Policy Studies Journal, Education and Urban Society, and Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, among other outlets. Dr. Fleming is affiliated with the Richard W. Riley Institute of Government, Politics, and Public Leadership at Furman University, and his current projects include evaluations of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program and a large-scale study of public school Montessori education in South Carolina.

The Riley Institute's evaluation team will receive support from UWGC Research and Grants Manager, Tracy Waters. She received her Ph.D. in International Family and Community Studies from Clemson University. Dr. Waters has experience in diverse non-profit and research settings and manages UWGC's internal evaluation efforts. She has helped plan and implement data collection in several research studies, including an NIH-funded study on rural teen dating violence and a mixed-methods examination of children's neighborhood and civic engagement.

D. PROGRAM SUPPORT AND OVERSIGHT

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EXPERIENCE SETTING AND IMPLEMENTING GOALS: The following examples describe initiatives in which UWGC was instrumental in identifying promising or best practices in specific focus areas and engaging grantees as partners to develop goals and implement programs:

The Early Grades Reading Initiative is a partnership with Greenville County Schools and Public Education Partners, Greenville's local education fund. This initiative supports the school district's implementation of a Balanced Literacy approach in the primary grades. The initiative includes professional development for teachers, benchmark assessment toolkits, books for classroom libraries, and ongoing coaching. Due to low English/Language Arts proficiency in high-poverty schools in Greenville, UWGC championed the initial investment of \$100,000 annually in this initiative. The UWGC Education Council worked with Public Education Partners to determine measurable outcomes that were appropriate and realistic for the pilot. Today this initiative, just one year old, is in 29 elementary schools and has exhibited promising results.

GOALS: (1) Improve the reading achievement of 17,000 students at Greenville's highest poverty schools and prepare them to graduate high school; (2) Increase the percentage of third graders reading on grade level at high-poverty schools by 10 percent; and (3) Increase number of students maintaining their reading levels over the summer; OUTCOME: Early results in piloted schools indicate that the majority of the low-income students maintained or increased their reading levels over the summer.

Individual Development Account (IDA) Network is an initiative that provides low-income families the opportunity to build financial stability. The Assets for Independence grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, uses IDAs to help people move toward self-sufficiency by accumulating savings and purchasing long-term assets. UWGC served as thought leader, program designer, and financial contributor to this effort. Once UWGC convened potential partners with the organizational capacity and social capital to be successful, the organization sought input and commitment to bring this initiative to the community. From grant writing to goal setting to partnership management, UWGC has driven this successful initiative. As shown below, this program far surpassed expectations and UWGC is poised to turn program operation and administration over to a trusted community partner.

GOAL: 170 low-income individuals will enroll in the IDA program and reach their savings goals; OUTCOME: 273 low-income individuals have saved a total of \$201,875 for the purchase of homes, post-secondary education, or to open small businesses.

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Greenville Region Workforce Collaborative (GRWC) emerged in 2011 from a series of conversations with Greenville County nonprofits, educators, employers, and government agencies looking for strategies to match low-to-moderate income, under- and unemployed workers with jobs employers were seeking to fill with qualified workers. To address the skills gap in Greenville County, these conversation partners identified opportunities in advanced manufacturing to participate in the National Fund for Workforce Solutions model. As the convener and fiscal agent for the grant, UWGC plays a lead role in setting goals, developing strategies, and monitoring results.

GOALS: 1) 119 participants earn industry specific credentials; 2) 140 participants placed in jobs;
OUTCOMES: 242 participants have earned industry specific credentials and 197 job seekers have been placed in jobs

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: UWGC staff will provide technical assistance (TA) focused on building subgrantees' organizational capacity, developing evidence-based decision making strategies, supporting the use of rigorous evaluation practices, and sharing best practices. Using UWGC staff and local and regional experts in evaluation, sustainable program growth, and best practices, UWGC will establish a tiered approach to providing technical assistance that increases staff and organizational capacity, strengthens the field of providers, and increases the quality of services provided. UWGC will convene quarterly group meetings with subgrantees to provide TA on evaluation practices (including data collection and analysis and using data to drive decision-making) sustaining program growth, advocacy and public policy, and to support the sharing of best practices among partners.

The next tier of support will include individualized TA plans. First, each subgrantee will nominate one staff leader to participate in a one-on-one 360 leadership development program in order to develop key components of transformational leadership. These leaders will work within their own organizations to implement and share best practices necessary for growing and scaling program impact. Another opportunity for one-on-one TA will be available for subgrantees aligned with out-of-school time. BOOST, Building Opportunities in Out-of-School Time, will work with subgrantees to improve the components of program quality that are related to educational outcomes for youth.

The highest level of support will require the placement of AmeriCorps VISTA members at partner organizations to increase capacity and support evaluation. VISTA members build organizational capacity through systematizing processes related to evaluation, streamlining back-office supports, aligning resources, and providing training to staff. In addition to receiving VISTA members, these partners also will work with UWGC staff and the network of staff leaders in order to quickly increase capacity of existing organizational staff.

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STAFF CAPACITY: The staffing plan for implementing the Initiative requires two staffing phases. Phase I staffing will utilize the experience and skills of current staff and volunteer leadership of UWGC while working to fill open positions. In Phase II, the newly hired staff will take over responsibility of Initiative management while receiving ongoing support from current leaders.

PHASE I: Board & Executive Leaders will serve as community champions, leveraging their influence to secure additional resources and increase understanding and awareness of the Initiative.

Leaders include:

** Ted Hendry, President and CEO of UWGC with 35 years United Way experience.

** Burke Royster, Superintendent of Greenville County Schools with 34 years of experience as an educator.

** Frank O'Brien, Chair of UWGC's Middle Grades Challenge Team and senior relationship manager for TD Bank's Private Client Group.

** Annette Allen, Chair of the UWGC Board of Trustees and a senior executive with Fluor Corporation, currently serving as Vice President of Sales, Marketing & Strategy for Fluor Corporation's Industrial Services business line.

** Susan Shi, PhD, founding chair of The Institute for Child Success and long time UWGC volunteer.

** Tim Justice, Vice Chair of UWGC's Community Investment Cabinet and a member of the UWGC Board of Trustees and Executive Committee, and CEO of Rescom Construction Company.

The following UWGC staff members will manage the Middle Grades Initiative immediately upon grant award.

Interim SIF Program Manager: Jessica Sharp is the Education Investment Manager at UWGC, where she manages educational initiatives, birth to college, and related volunteer committees. She has a BA in Art from Furman University, a MA in Early Childhood Education from Converse College, and is a PhD candidate in Early Childhood Education at the University of South Carolina.

Middle Grades Project Coordinator: Teresa Ware coordinates all activities related to UWGC's current middle grades work. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of New Hampshire, a graduate certificate in Non-Profit Management, and a master's degree in Social Work (concentration in Community Empowerment and Program Development) from the University of Georgia.

Organizational Planning and Public Affairs: Tish Young McCutchen is a Vice President at UWGC whose responsibilities include strategic planning, organizational development, community engagement and public policy. Her career includes 10 years with United Way Worldwide, the

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leadership organization for the global United Way network, as well as a number of years as a community development consultant. She holds a bachelor's degree from Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia, and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Texas.

Strategy and Investment: Phyllis Martin serves as the VP for Strategy and Investment for the United Way of Greenville County. Phyllis has 20 years of experience working in the nonprofit sector and has held positions that include Development Director, Chief Operating Officer, and Director of Community Investment. Phyllis holds a BS in Political Science from Florida State University.

Program Quality and Improvement: JoKeitha Seabrook is an Investment Manager at UWGC. She works directly with programs to ensure accuracy and consistency in reporting results. She provides training, support, and management to more than 90 evaluation team volunteers. JoKeitha holds a BS in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of South Carolina Upstate and a MBA from the University of Phoenix.

PHASE II: UWGC will hire 5 full time staff members to manage the Initiative. UWGC will have position descriptions prepared at time of grant receipt and will work with its staffing agency to recruit skilled professionals within 2 to 5 months. Positions to be hired include:

Middle Grades Initiative Director - Sets strategic vision and direction, overall ongoing operations, community partnership management. Reports to UWGC VP of Strategy and Investment. (hired within 2 - 3 months of grant award)

Grant Accounting Manager - Maintains policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure fiscal compliance and accountability at the grantee and subgrantee level. Provides technical assistance to subgrantees. Reports to UWGC VP of Finance. (hired within 2 - 3 months of grant award)

Quality Improvement Manager & Technical Assistance Manager - Leads the design and implementation of partner training on various topics (data collection, outcome measurement, best practices in finance and resource development). Reports to Initiative Director. (hired within 5 months of grant award)

Data Manager - Designs and implements process flow for sharing data throughout organization and with project partners. Builds reports and dashboards, promotes use of data for decision making. Reports to Initiative Director (hired within 5 months of grant award)

BOOST Education Manager - Provides technical assistance and quality improvement training to subgrantees in the out-of-school time field. Reports to Director of BOOST. (hired within 5 months of grant award)

EXPERIENCE OVERSEEING COMPARABLE PROGRAMS: UWGC manages over \$16 million in

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private donations from its annual community campaign and is administering \$8.8 million in programmatic, strategic, and capacity-building investments. The resources UWGC raises have allowed it to gain experience successfully leading multi-agency collaborative efforts comparable to the Middle Grades Initiative. The following are examples of these efforts:

Success by 6 & Institute of Child Success: Launched in 1994, Success by 6 was UWGC's first large-scale, cross-sector effort around a specific focus area, school readiness. Staff worked with community partners to identify strategies that focused on improving early care and education, parenting and early literacy, and children with special needs. Success by 6 was instrumental in the State of SC becoming one of the nation's first states to have all day five-year-old kindergarten. A \$1 million federal Department of Health and Human Services grant was awarded to improve the quality of childcare. A decade later this work has evolved into a systems-based approach through a UWGC-seeded organization called the Institute for Child Success (ICS). ICS is a statewide research and policy organization that fosters public and private partnerships to align and improve resources for successful early childhood development. ICS produces research studies, pilots cutting-edge financing models (such as Pay for Success) in an effort to scale evidence-based programs, and champions policy change. ICS is recognized as the lead organization working with state policymakers and businesses to promote legislation aimed at reforming and aligning South Carolina's publicly funded early childhood initiatives.

Building Opportunities in Out-of-School Time (BOOST): UWGC established BOOST, an afterschool intermediary, after an Afterschool Strategic Initiative that gathered wide community input. Its mission is to increase access to and quality of out-of-school time and summer programming, particularly for underserved children. In just three years, UWGC was able to fully fund and build organizational structure for this entity. BOOST has built credibility and is now recognized as the county's organization for helping programs achieve quality benchmarks, ultimately leading to better academic and behavior outcomes for students. Currently, there are 209 programs in the BOOST network and nine pilot sites have committed to a rigorous quality improvement process overseen and directed by BOOST staff.

DEVELOPING PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT: The Riley Institute and UWGC will work during the grant start up phase to develop programmatic performance measurements as well as systems and process measurements for analyzing subgrantee data. Significant time will be devoted to this step since data collection and shared measurements will determine whether and to what extent interventions are producing positive outcomes. Efforts will focus on the development of

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measurements that cut across all subgrantee activity collectively.

Performance measurements will be organized in a logic model or results-based accountability framework, depending on the program model being evaluated. UWGC has many years of experience using data systems to collect measurements from funded providers and then using those data for performance improvement and for communicating results to stakeholders. Project data will be reviewed quarterly by the Middle Grades Research Team, staffed by the UWGC data manager, the UWGC quality improvement manager, and the Riley Institute staff. A dashboard will be created and updated regularly and reports shared with all team members and subgrantees.

Results from each site's outcomes-based evaluation (likely a quasi-experimental design) and implementation study will help UWGC inform subgrantee decision-making for improvement. UWGC will relay results to subgrantees on a regular basis and discuss results related to identified measurable outcomes and broader community outcomes to increase impact.

SUBGRANTEE COMPLIANCE: UWGC has a network of close to 100 volunteers plus a Community Impact department of 10 staff members solely dedicated to partner management, evaluation, and rigorous compliance standards. Compliance management has been a traditional role and community value-add of United Ways across the country, and one in which UWGC excels. UWGC has taken steps to become more than just a compliance organization to increase its overall community impact, but always has relied on the foundation of its sound compliance practices to ensure the integrity of fund stewardship. UWGC also remains consistently in compliance with its own funders and state and national partners and has built a reputation over time of being a responsible collaborator.

UWGC will build on this experience to develop a plan for monitoring Middle Grades Initiative subgrantee compliance, recognizing that this project will require higher standards for compliance. Through ongoing communication, UWGC will monitor subgrantees regularly on financial and program compliance. This monitoring will include monthly conference calls and quarterly site visits and will require that subgrantees demonstrate compliance with all OMB regulations and SIF programmatic guidelines. Subgrantees also will submit quarterly financial and progress reports. UWGC will establish and communicate clear processes for how to address subgrantee non-compliance. Subgrantees not in compliance will be placed on an improvement plan and will have the opportunity to correct identified issues during a probationary period. Continuous monitoring and communication will allow subgrantees to stay informed of their compliance status and improve as needed. If subgrantees cannot meet compliance standards, this open process will facilitate corrective

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actions, the most severe of which will be termination of the subgrantee's contract.

SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY: The Collective Impact approach provides a framework for creating a system of shared accountability. This approach utilizes an overlaying governance entity that monitors partnerships and workgroups. UWGC will have a seat at the governance table, but serves as a peer and partner. The members of the Middle Grades Evaluation Team all will hold each other accountable and are tasked with determining if the partnership is effectively meeting its goals and then course-correcting when something is not working. Through continuous communication and open dialogue, the leadership team will create a culture of shared accountability among all partners. When any partner is not contributing to good outcomes, this open dialogue will allow for tough conversations about how to proceed. The leadership team also will maintain results dashboards that communicate progress to the community and other stakeholders, allowing for transparency and shared ownership of results.

E. FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND SUPPORT

UWGC's finance department, with a combined total of 120 years experience in non-profit and for-profit entities, consists of a Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of Finance, a Controller, two Accounting Managers, a Grant Accounting Manager, and one Accounting Assistant. UWGC will hire an additional Grant Accounting Manager to manage the Middle Grades Initiative. The following three staff members will provide financial oversight of the Middle Grades Initiative, ensuring effectiveness and compliance.

Operations and Finance Management: Sean Trask has been the Chief Operating Officer and Vice President for Finance with UWGC since 2010. Previously, Sean worked for 13 years with CIGNA HealthCare, holding a number of different roles in Finance, Accounting, Audit, and Underwriting. He is a graduate of the CIGNA Financial Development Program. Sean holds a BS in Mathematics from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a MBA from the University of Hartford.

Controller: Scott Williams is a Certified Public Accountant and a member of the South Carolina Association of CPAs. He has approximately 10 years of experience in auditing public and private institutions' financial statements and internal controls and currently serves as the Controller for UWGC where he manages the accounting and financial reporting functions. He holds a BS and MS in accounting from Auburn University.

Grant Finance Management and Reporting: Sandra Harper is the Grant Accounting Manager at UWGC. She has 28 years of experience as an accountant for non-profit agencies and is responsible for

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UWGC's Federal, State, and private grant tracking, reporting, and subgrantee compliancy. She holds a bachelor's degree from Millersville State College in Business Administration. Before her experience in the nonprofit sector, she was a staff accountant for a Certified Public Accounting firm in Knoxville, TN and a for-profit corporation in Charlotte, NC.

As noted, UWGC is not new to federal funding or serving as an intermediary. The organization's current federally funded projects include AmeriCorps State (CNCS), AmeriCorps VISTA (CNCS), Assets for Independence (DHHS), and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (IRS). In each of these projects UWGC serves as the fiscal intermediary, coordinating budgeting and ensuring financial compliance among its network partners. UWGC also manages subgrants for a Community Transformation Grant (DHHS) and the Social Innovation Fund (CNCS). UWGC strictly follows the guidelines as outlined in the Office of Management and Budget's Federal Register for uniform administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements for federal awards.

In addition, in April 2013 UWGC began to serve as the intermediary for a State Department of Social Services SNAP2Work grant for six of its workforce development partners. In this role, UWGC has implemented new practices to ensure financial compliance among partners. For instance, the Grant Accounting Manager engages in ongoing training with partners on budget creation, understanding Federal Register guidelines, and maintaining proper documentation. Strengthening partner capacity has been integral to the success of the SNAP2Work grant.

In order to allow for separate tracking of grant program revenues and expenses, UWGC utilizes Sage 100 Fund Accounting Software. This software ensures effective control for all transactions of a specific grant by program year and budget category. Moving forward, this software also will allow for tracking the 1:1 cash match required for SIF.

Once selected, UWGC's SIF subgrantees will receive an initial financial oversight orientation on the guidelines set forth in the OMB's Federal Register. Further, UWGC will provide a procedures manual and instructions on all required documentation and reporting. The procedures and instruction manual will include practices, systems, and rules that will ensure compliancy. Training will begin within a month after subgrantee award notification and will continue on an ongoing basis.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT: The Middle Grades Initiative provides several excellent opportunities for UWGC to deepen and diversify philanthropic giving in Greenville County, an already generous community. UWGC's 2013 workplace campaign set a new record as the largest United Way annual campaign in South Carolina, raising \$16.6 million. This campaign included more than 200 corporate gifts that accounted for 20% of the campaign total. Further, Greenville County's per capita giving to

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United Way is well above the national average. In 2012, the national average per capita giving across all United Ways was \$12.02, while UWGC per capita giving was \$33.90.

While philanthropic giving is a strong community norm, there are clear opportunities to raise the bar and generate additional private sector funds. Several corporations with regional or national headquarters in Greenville County have corporate philanthropic missions aligned with the youth development focus area. These corporations, including Fluor Corporation, Michelin North America, and TD Bank, have expressed a desire to make a larger investment in Greenville County in order to transform educational outcomes in their own backyard. These local leaders in corporate philanthropy have expressed interest in supporting the Middle Grades Initiative. UWGC intends to work with these partners to secure multi-year SIF match above and beyond their annual corporate gift.

UWGC's commitment to generating funds extends beyond its own intermediary match. In the spirit of fostering true partnerships for engendering community change, UWGC will serve as intermediary and partner, leveraging its strong resource development assets to help raise subgrantee match. Strategies for generating subgrantee match include: 1) developing an expanded case for giving that includes subgrantees; 2) joint solicitation with partners; 3) involving subgrantees in strategy development; 4) adding a Middle Grades designation category in the annual campaign; 4) engaging UWGC leadership giving affinity groups; 5) strengthening subgrantee capacity in the areas of grant writing and resource development; and 6) sharing a list of known non-UWGC donors who may be interested in giving directly to subgrantees.

F. STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY

SUSTAINING INVESTMENTS: UWGC's decision in 2012 to engage partners in the middle grades community planning process signaled a major shift in approach. Executive and Board leadership recognized the need to engage deeply in a narrow space in order to achieve community-level results that over time could be scaled.

Both UWGC and Greenville County Schools share a strong commitment to transforming the middle grades and have pledged to implement the Early Warning System and strengthen supports for students and families. The District's investment into a business intelligence solution includes the initial cost of integrating data systems, annual software maintenance fees, and the staff resources necessary to ensure successful implementation. The relationships and resolve are in place to propel this work beyond the life cycle of SIF funding. While initial SIF investments will target a small area of the

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county and similar communities, the long-term vision of the project is to bring the EWRS to scale throughout the entire county and ensure that all students have access to evidence-based response interventions. By the end of the grant cycle, UWGC will have assessed the cost per student required to deliver the Early Warning System and a coordinated menu of response interventions and will have a firm understanding of the resources required to sustain and scale investments.

UWGC will ensure project sustainability through a strategic realignment of resources. With a recently implemented funding model that aligns funded partners around strategic priorities, UWGC will continue to evolve its funding approach to align partners and resources around SIF investments to ensure sustainability.

In addition, UWGC also plans to pursue other outcomes-based public/private funding models to sustain SIF investments long-term, such as the Pay for Success (PFS) social impact financing model. A UWGC-seeded initiative, the Institute for Child Success, is a leader nationally in researching the applicability of the Pay for Success model for early childhood and will serve as a resource as UWGC explores the feasibility of using this model for evidence-based interventions in youth development. Over the five-year course of the grant, UWGC will build subgrantees' capacity to implement an outcomes-based financing mechanism in order to scale and sustain Middle Grades Initiative investments throughout the entire county, region, and state. The state of South Carolina, under the leadership of Gov. Nikki Haley, has expressed a sincere openness and willingness to explore Pay for Success funding models, placing the state well ahead of the curve, especially among other red states.

Other approaches for sustainability include internal and external efforts. Internally, UWGC is finalizing a multi-year resource development Strategic Plan that outlines approaches for increasing major and mega gifts. UWGC recently hired a full-time Campaign Manager of Major Gifts to strengthen these efforts. In the past, UWGC has succeeded in securing six-figure gifts for the endowment and is confident it can achieve similar success to sustain SIF investments. Externally, UWGC will utilize its Manager of Community Advocacy to strengthen relationships with elected officials in order to explore public sources of revenue for sustainability.

SUSTAINING EVALUATION AND GROWTH: UWGC will develop a plan to help subgrantees plan for strategic and effective growth that results in long-term sustainability beyond the scope of the grant period. The Institute for Child Success, seeded by United Way and a strategic partner in education thought leadership, is a national leader in social impact financing and will be a key resource to the middle grades work as it positions itself for sustainability. Through participation in the Middle Grades Initiative, UWGC will build field and partner capacity and increase evidence of consistently

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high-level positive outcomes so that partners are well positioned to engage in social impact financing, leading to sustained program evaluation and growth.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

A. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

UWGC is requesting \$1 million each year for five years from CNCS and plans to match CNCS funding at the required ratio of 1:1. The matching funds will consist of private funds from non-federal sources. UWGC has submitted letters verifying 64.4% of the committed cash match for Year 1 from three private sources and UWGC itself. The proposed Year One budget reflects the estimated costs to create and deliver a successful initiative in the context of the Greenville community. Several expenditures reflect consideration of lessons learned from current SIF grantees, particularly as they relate to evaluation and building staff capacity. Overall costs include conducting a subgrantee application process, creating shared goals and outcome measurements among selected partners, implementation of interventions, data systems, ongoing technical assistance, planning for program growth or expansion, and evaluation of the initiative.

The largest expenditure category is subgrants (\$1.2 million), comprising 60% of the overall program budget. Of this, \$800,000 (80%) is allocated to the CNCS request. UWGC anticipates awarding 6 - 9 subgrantees (each receiving between \$100,000-\$250,000 depending on demonstrated levels of evidence). The second-largest budget category is personnel, including fringe benefits, needed to direct and implement the initiative. This category incorporates a phased staffing up plan that utilizes existing UWGC staff as knowledgeable, interim personnel until permanent positions may be hired. A total of \$346,094 annually is comprised of \$250,686 in salaries and \$95,408 in benefits. Permanent personnel supported through this grant will include a full-time Project Director with an annual salary of \$60,000 and \$18,014 in benefits. This position will be responsible for the overall delivery of the initiative, along with strategic planning and relationship building to ensure its long-term success.

Other proposed staff includes the following full-time positions: Data Manager, Quality Improvement and Technical Assistance Manager, and Grant Accounting Manager. The Middle Grades Project Coordinator will devote 75% of her time to the project; and an Education Investment Manager who will devote 40% of her time, along with support from three other United Way staff in various capacities.

Staff travel expenses represent \$36,859 of the total request and include the costs of attending the annual SIF convening, conferences and meetings for key staff, local mileage reimbursement for staff

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members and the costs for staff to visit subgrantee applicant sites during the NOFO process.

Computers and printers totaling \$4,750 will be purchased, along with typical office supplies for each staff member.

Leadership training has been budgeted for subgrantee staff leaders at a rate of \$2,800 per person. Eight subgrantee staff leaders will attend this training.

\$50,000 per year has been budgeted to cover the cost of support for the Business Intelligence Solution that links all the data systems used by Greenville County Schools. Training on this system has also been included for 200 staff members @ \$250 each.

UWGC will contract with the Riley Institute for evaluation and technical assistance services totaling \$236,761 per year. A further breakdown of evaluation costs is included in the Proposal for Evaluation section. With guidance from UWGC and the Institute, subgrantees also will build adequate subgrantee-level evaluation budgets.

UWGC currently has a Provisional Federal Indirect Costs Rate of 35% for salary and fringe negotiated with the Department of Health and Human Services. This rate will be applied to five key administrative employees' salary and benefits for a total of \$11,378 a year.

RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY: UWGC has started to obtain diverse non-federal resources for program implementation and sustainability. Two of UWGC's sources of private match are from local foundations. Additional foundation support is expected from the local Funders Collaborative, a coalition of private foundations working collectively to align resources in order to address community challenges and produce community-level measurable outcomes.

In addition, UWGC has a detailed plan for creating a team of corporate champions to support the Middle Grades Initiative. With one corporate partner already on board, Wells Fargo, UWGC will continue to build this team and leverage additional private sector dollars. By demonstrating that early and frequent education milestones allow youth to gain the credentials and connections necessary to enter the workforce, UWGC hopes to make a stronger case for support to business leaders, highlighting the long-term benefits of an educated and credentialed workforce.

UWGC's last great resource for promoting project sustainability is its partnership with Greenville County Schools. By providing in-kind support and embracing evidence-based decision making strategies, the District has provided a sustainable public system platform for sustaining the work well beyond the scope of the five year grant period.

B. MATCH SOURCES AND CAPACITY

UWGC has met Social Innovation Fund match requirements for applicants and has secured 64.4%

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of the match required for Year 1. Match commitments for Year 1 include \$300,000 from UWGC, \$200,000 from the Hollingsworth Fund, \$100,000 from the Community Foundation of Greenville, and \$44,000 from Wells Fargo, totaling \$644,000.

In order to secure the remainder of Year 1 match and build a foundation for long-term commitments over the entire five year grant period, UWGC plans to build a team of corporate champions. Identified corporations, including Fluor Corporation, Michelin North America, and TD Bank, have expressed a desire to make a larger investment in education initiatives in Greenville County. These local leaders in corporate philanthropy have expressed interest in supporting the Middle Grades Initiative. UWGC will work with these partners to secure multi-year match commitments above and beyond their current annual corporate gifts. UWGC the balance of Year 1 match commitments will be in place by January, 2015.

UWGC's commitment to generating funds extends beyond its own intermediary match. In the spirit of fostering true partnerships for engendering community change, UWGC will serve as intermediary and partner, leveraging its strong resource development assets to help raise subgrantee match. Strategies for generating subgrantee match include: 1) developing an expanded case for giving that includes subgrantees; 2) joint solicitation with partners; 3) involving subgrantees in strategy development; 4) adding a Middle Grades designation category in the annual campaign; 4) engaging UWGC leadership giving affinity groups; 5) strengthening subgrantee capacity in the areas of grant writing and resource development; and 6) sharing a list of known non-UWGC donors who may be interested in giving directly to subgrantees.

Clarification Summary

1) As a key element of the SIF program, we have found it is critical to be clear on what interventions applicants are proposing to evaluate in order to meet the SIF requirements of getting to moderate or strong levels of evidence. Please confirm whether you plan is to conduct impact evaluations on the Early Warning and Response System model or on individual subgrantee youth-serving interventions.

Researchers will evaluate impact of both the individual subgrantee interventions, once they are selected, and the Early Warning and Response System as a whole. Separate impact evaluations will be conducted on each subgrantee intervention, which together comprise the critical response element of the Early Warning and Response System. These separate impact evaluations will combine with other data collected on Early Warning and Response System impact and implementation to inform understanding of the Early Warning and Response System as a whole, UWGC's Middle Grades

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Initiative, and the collective impact approach.

a. If you are planning to only conduct and impact evaluation on the Early Warning and Response System model, please provide documentation that the Early Warning and Response System has preliminary levels of evidence based on the pilots referenced in Philadelphia and Phoenix.

All selected subgrantee interventions will have at least preliminary levels of evidence demonstrating movement on one or all of the four measurable outcomes of this project. The Early Warning and Response System as a model has demonstrated a preliminary level of evidence in past evaluations at different locations, though final results from the evaluation of the specific pilots mentioned are not yet available. The most convincing evaluation results were from an evaluation of the United Way of Northeast Florida's Early Warning and Response System by Wehry (2014). Results from this evaluation showed an overall increase in the percentage of on-track students from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. A qualitative evaluation of the Diplomas Now Early Warning and Response System in seven cities conducted by Herzog, Davis, & Letgers (2012) found specific implementation recommendations about professional development, identifying students, the matching process, data systems, and interventions. The need for additional and more rigorous research has been highlighted in multiple studies, along with the need for more evidence-based responses that are directly linked to improving attendance, behavior, and course performance (Bruce, Bridgeland, Fox, & Balfanz, 2011).

b. If you are planning to evaluate all supported subgrantee models with an evaluation that will target a moderate level of evidence, please clarify how these explain how these evaluations will be conducted. You have identified the Riley Institute but as they are conducting as an evaluation consultant in selecting subgrantees, they may not meet the qualifications of an independent evaluator. Also, their contract is listed at \$236,761. Per the guidance provided to SIF applicants, SIF has found that a budget allocation of 15-20% of the total subgrantee budget is necessary to complete a compliant QED study. The total subgrantee budget for your program, subgrantee match included, is \$2.4 M which means an additional \$123K would be needed to ensure sufficient funding is available. Please clarify how your program will address both the evaluator independence and funding issues.

EXPLAIN HOW THESE EVALUATIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED. All subgrantee impact

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evaluations and the overall Early Warning and Response System evaluation will be conducted by the Riley Institute using the Early Warning and Response System data dashboard as the central data collection system for tracking not only which students are identified but also which response intervention(s) they receive. Greenville County Schools has agreed, once all data sharing agreements are approved, to also provide data from the district's PowerSchool database so that demographically matched control groups of students not identified by the Early Warning and Response System or exposed to the interventions can be created for comparison purposes. Propensity score matching will be used to create control groups that are as similar as possible to the treatment groups. Students will be matched based on factors such as student demographics, socio-economic status, and test scores. After the sample selection is complete, researchers will establish baseline equivalence between the treatment and control samples. Once the data are collected, multivariate analyses that control for important variables will be used to detect differences between treatment and control groups. For those outcomes for which the researchers have multiple years of data (e.g., test scores), the researchers will examine changes over time, rather than the absolute performance levels. This will account for many confounding factors that may affect this quasi-experimental design.

Using the outline provided in the SIF evaluation guidance, separate evaluation plans, including all of the outlined required elements, will be developed for each of the subgrantees. While each evaluation plan will differ slightly, all evaluations will include a quasi-experimental design using the same four measurable outcomes. This will allow for a cross intervention analysis about each intervention's level of impact. An evaluation plan will be developed for the Early Warning and Response System as a whole, analyzing all data from students identified by the system and receiving one or more of the response interventions as compared to students not identified or receiving an intervention.

While the Riley Institute will conduct all impact evaluations, the implementation fidelity studies for each subgrantee and for the Early Warning and Response System as a whole will be overseen by the Riley Institute, but subcontracted to independent evaluators as needed. Evaluator independence will be ensured during the selection process.

EVALUATOR INDEPENDENCE. The Riley Institute will sign a statement of evaluator independence prior to the commencement of work, as will any individual subcontracted for evaluation work. While the Riley Institute will assist UWGC with the determination of evidence levels of each subgrantee

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applicant, the Institute will not be involved in the actual selection of subgrantees. UWGC will recruit content-area experts to serve on the selection committee, ensuring that conflict of interest statements are in place.

EVALUATION BUDGET SHORTFALL. Not outlined in the evaluation budget submitted previously was the percentage that subgrantees will be asked to earmark of their own budgets to assist with the evaluation. It is estimated that approximately \$15,000 per year be earmarked from each subgrantee budget to this process, depending on the number of subgrantees selected. These funds will be used to help offset the cost of any subcontractors that will need to be hired, which is not outlined in the original evaluation budget, in addition to any general evaluation costs not anticipated since the programs to be evaluated are yet to be determined. Due to the Riley Institute's proximity to the target community, evaluation resources were saved in terms of travel and travel-related expenses. Since the Early Warning and Response System's data dashboard is the primary mechanism for collecting data, costs were reduced in this category as well.

2) Past experience with regionally based SIF grantees has shown that successful fundraising for both the intermediary and grantees can be a challenge. Please describe how you will address this potential competition to limited philanthropic dollars. Include in your answer any ideas to expand fundraising beyond your geographic region to include state, regional, or national funders.

LOCAL: UWGC will address the potential competition for limited local philanthropic dollars in several ways. First, UWGC is a co-founder and leader of the newly established Greenville Partnership for Philanthropy, a funders collaborative comprised of 35 corporate, private, and philanthropic funders. The creation of the Partnership is evidence of the local philanthropic community's maturity and its commitment to work collectively to bring high-performing and promising initiatives to scale. The Partnership's investment strategy, grounded in the collective impact approach, will reward the kind of multi-partner collaboration the Middle Grades Initiative is built on, reducing competition that would exist if those partners were seeking funding separately. Two members of the Partnership, The Hollingsworth Funds and the Community Foundation of Greenville, have committed match support and will champion the initiative. UWGC will use its leadership position in this partnership to 1) raise awareness of the Middle Grades Initiative to allow for more strategic and aligned funding decisions; 2) leverage partners' relationships with other state, regional, and national funders; and 3) present a

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shared multi-year grantee/subgrantee SIF request to multiple funders to eliminate competition.

UWGC has strong relationships with several corporations with national or regional headquarters in Greenville, such as Fluor Corporation, Michelin North America, and TD Bank. As an example, Fluor Corporation has a philanthropic emphasis on education and is already a strong supporter of UWGC's out-of-school-time initiative, BOOST. UWGC's Vice President of Resource Development has a strong relationship with Torrence Robinson, Fluor Corporation's Senior Director of Community Affairs and Fluor Foundation, and will leverage that relationship to secure long-term match funding for the Middle Grades Initiative.

Further, UWGC has spent significant resources strengthening its Endowment. Donors have demonstrated confidence in UWGC's strategic work as evidenced by a \$7.7 million increase in the Endowment over the past three years. The Endowment currently totals \$18.3 million, including \$2.8 million in realized gifts and \$15.5 million in expectancies. The growth in the Endowment is tied to UWGC's capacity to generate high donor gifts and has set the stage for significant individual philanthropic support, allowing UWGC to build momentum as it requests gifts to match federal SIF dollars.

Lastly, UWGC has trained the entire staff in a disciplined product development approach: developing strategies that address multiple community challenges, identifying potential investors whose interests align with the strategies, and framing the strategies in ways that connect with those investor interests. This is not about packaging, but about strategic involvement, commitment, innovation, and support. This process will prepare UWGC to make major asks of current and potential donors. UWGC's Prospective Donor List includes 88 high wealth individuals. As UWGC continues to cultivate relationships with these prospective donors for a five- or six-figure outright gift to support the Middle Grades Initiative, the product development process will be instrumental in matching the right individuals with the Initiative.

REGIONAL: UWGC has strong relationships with regional foundations including The Duke Endowment, Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, and MDC (Manpower Development Corporation). First, UWGC and North Carolina-based The Duke Endowment have a shared board member who advocates on behalf of Greenville-based initiatives. The Duke Endowment supports innovative

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organizations in Greenville, the Institute for Child Success, Julie Valentine Center, and Pendleton Place. UWGC also has a strong relationship with the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, based in Winston-Salem, NC. Mary Reynolds Babcock's mission is to move people and places out of poverty and has a strategic focus on achieving long-term impact through scale. A current funder of UWGC's financial stability work, Mary Reynolds Babcock has an interest in Greenville and deep connections with other regional funders. Finally, UWGC has had a relationship with MDC, a regional foundation based out of Durham, NC, since 2008. MDC is a funding intermediary working in tandem with national foundations, such as the Gates Foundation and Casey Foundation, with a goal of helping communities create the pathway to opportunity by creating equity and removing social, financial and educational barriers that make it harder for those left behind to take advantage of opportunities offered. With a strong interest in Greenville, MDC is in an excellent position to identify additional funders to support this work.

DUE TO EGRANTS CHARACTER LIMIT ISSUE, PLEASE SEE WORD DOCUMENT FOR REMAINING RESPONSES PER KEISHA KERSEY.

Continuation Changes

N/A