

# APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

## 2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** St. Bernard Project

**Application ID:** 15ND170973

**Program Name:** St Bernard Project: Re compete

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

### Reviewers' Summary Comments

#### **Strengths:**

Evidence of the need for stable housing is well-documented. The cited reports and studies clearly reveal that due to a lack of resources only a small fraction of persons who lost homes due to hurricanes Katrina and Sandy have rebuilt. Merdjanoff's 2013 study There's No Place Like Home provides compelling data on the negative financial and psychological effects on disaster victims.

The applicant provides a compelling case for providing disaster recovery services in three targeted communities, which have been hard hit by major natural disaster, citing current studies from reliable sources on the scope of the need and the inability of current resources to meet the need.

The applicant provides a strong case for delivery of the proposed services to fill gaps left by depletion of other funds or end dates of services provided through other agencies.

The applicant provides a persuasive argument as to why the problem exists and how the intervention will address and solve the problem related to loss of housing stability and its associated financial, physical and mental issues.

The applicant provides substantiated evidence for the need of a cost effective program that provides community Members with safe, affordable, and stable housing.

The applicant describes significant plans for introductory and ongoing training of AmeriCorps members as well as supervisory staff.

The applicant provides a clear picture of the effect of the relationship between the AmeriCorps member activities and the outcomes described in the applicant's logic model and narrative.

The proposal clearly identifies the magnitude of damaged or destroyed housing caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, citing creditable sources. The proposal indicates that thousands of housing units remain damaged as of late 2014, and some inhabitants have been waiting for assistance for nine years.

#### **Weaknesses:**

The applicant made little distinction between the two proposed interventions 1) transitioning 315 disaster survivors into stable housing; and 2) delivering disaster recovery services to 1,550 disaster survivors.

With only a few general comments on what specific disaster recovery services the AmeriCorps members are to perform, the applicant's ability to implement the intervention could not be assessed.

The applicant did not make it clear whether the work being performed by AmeriCorps members was different than volunteer activities. The concern is that the applicant does not distinctly delineate the two categories of workers so personal development and building a service minded member may not be a priority for the applicant.

Regarding the 10,000+ volunteers, the application lacks information on the supervision, technical skills training and methods to assure compliance with AmeriCorps requirements.

While the applicant makes clear who the recipients of the their services will be (people whose homes have been effected by disaster) it is unclear how they will make their services known to potential clients or how they will evaluate the client's needs to determine exactly which services will be provided to whom. It is unclear how eligibility and priority will be determined.