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Executive Summary

AARP Foundation, an existing grantmaking institution, is a 501(c)3 organization established in 1961 as the charitable affiliate of AARP. Through the AARP Experience Corps program, AARP Foundation seeks an issue-based Social Innovation Fund award in the Youth Development focus area. Utilizing Experience Corps volunteer-led small group tutoring and literacy assistance models, AARP Foundation will make seven subrecipient awards to non-profit organizations among 19 eligible states: AZ, CA, FL, GA, IL, IN, MA, MI, MN, OR, NJ, NY, OH, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA and WA.

Experience Corps is aligned with key players in the childhood literacy space including the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (GLR), and has established a mutually beneficial partnership aimed at helping multiply the number of children reading on grade level by the end of third grade across the country. GLR will be instrumental in identifying strong GLR communities with a record of execution that have the capacity to launch an Experience Corps program as well as introducing Experience Corps to local funder "huddles" in their communities.

AARP Foundation requests \$1,000,000 per year for five years. Initial matching funds will be provided through a combination of AARP Foundation funds, school fees, and personnel.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps proposes to serve 4,000 K-3rd grade children reading below grade level at seven subrecipient sites, representing 28 schools. Working with the independent evaluator, we will investigate the effectiveness and efficiency of (1) small group (3-4 children) and (2) small group plus classroom-wide assistance strategies. Should evaluation prove that these group interventions are comparable to one-to-one (1:1) tutoring, they could be deployed throughout the literacy tutoring sector to impact an exponentially greater number of high-need children nationwide.

Experience Corps is a program that matches volunteers aged 50+ with children in K-3rd grade classrooms who are struggling to read. Reading on grade level by the end of third grade has been linked through research to success in school, productive work, healthy life choices, and reduced incarceration, among other positive life outcomes. The January 2014 KIDS COUNT® data snapshot released by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, showed that 66 percent of all US fourth graders and 80 percent of US fourth graders from low-income families are not reading proficiently. An estimated 6.6 million children in K-3 have fallen behind in reading. There is a critical need for replicable, scalable and cost effective models to be deployed to reduce the number of children not reaching this important benchmark. It is clear that 1:1 tutoring, while effective, will never be able to address the breadth of this problem, especially for children from low-income families who are typically not able to afford private tutors.

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AARP Foundation Experience Corps' theory of change posits that by targeting schools in high need communities with large percentages of K-3 students who are below grade level in reading and providing well-trained adults who are 50 and older as volunteer literacy tutors, K-3 students will accelerate their literacy achievement and read on grade level by the end of third grade. In the seven subrecipient communities, 4,000 students will be selected to receive one of our two interventions: small group or small group in combination with full class literacy assistance. Working with the independent evaluator we will conduct an in-depth implementation and impact evaluation. As part of this, we will assess the efficacy of each model with the goal that 50% (2,000) will achieve one year of progress per year, and of those, 60% (1,200) will reach grade level each year, as reported by teachers or assessment scores.

AARP Foundation will invest in community-based non-profit host organizations with the mission alignment, school system relationships, capacity, and sustainability to adopt and implement the Experience Corps program.

As a current SIF grantee, AARP Foundation offers significant capacity and experience in evaluation, training, technical assistance, data gathering, and resource development to provide a full portfolio of assistance to promote subrecipient growth -- in both scale and impact -- as well as our identified outcomes. This is achieved by working in collaboration with subrecipients to gather qualitative and quantitative data to create customized subrecipient growth plans.

Program Design

i. RATIONALE AND APPROACH

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: We believe we can achieve the scale and impact we are seeking by serving K-3 children reading below grade level in low-income communities in multiple geographic locations by providing group literacy tutoring interventions.

Experience Corps targets communities with the following characteristics:

- Schools in low-income communities in which nearly all students qualify for free or reduced lunch and where a majority of students are below grade level in literacy proficiency (consistent with the CNCS definition of low-income communities).
- A sufficient student population to make investing in an Experience Corps program cost effective
- A robust older adult population to serve as volunteer tutors.

THE NEED: Reading on grade level by the end of the third grade is a crucial milestone for our nation's children. According to The National Research Council (1998), "Academic success, as defined by high school graduation, can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing someone's reading

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skill at the end of 3rd grade. A person who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by that time is unlikely to graduate from high school." Without a high school degree in the United States, career and other life prospects are severely limited; median income for individuals between 25-34 working full-time without a high school diploma is \$22,900 a year -- less than half of the income of peers with a college degree (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2014). Even more sobering, children who do not graduate from high school are more than twice as likely to end up in state or federal prison than children who are high school graduates (DOJ, 2003). In 2007, nearly 6.2 million young people were high school dropouts. Every student who does not complete high school ends up costing society an estimated \$260,000 in lost earnings, taxes, and productivity (AECF, 2010).

Our children are the nation's hope for building a strong future economy and society. Yet across the country, an estimated 6.6 million children from kindergarten through 3rd grade are struggling with the most fundamental underpinning of all learning: literacy (AECF, 2010). The January 2014 KIDS COUNT® data snapshot released by the Annie E. Casey Foundation showed that 66 percent of all U.S. fourth graders and 80 percent of U.S. fourth graders from low-income families are not reading proficiently. While the 2013 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) found modest improvements in fourth grade reading for all students over the past decade, the gap between scores of low income children and upper income children has widened over the past decade by 22 percent. The students being left behind are the target recipients of Experience Corps services.

Experience Corps is a program that matches volunteers 50-plus with children in K-3rd grade classrooms who are struggling to read at grade level. In the 2013-14 school year, Experience Corps was in 211 schools and 1935 classrooms across 22 high-need communities in the United States. Just over 2,000 volunteer tutors served over 31,000 children with sustained one-on-one or small group tutoring, and whole-class assistance through our literacy assistance strategy. Of 8,000 closely tracked students, 50% (4,000) achieved one year or more of progress per year as reported by teachers -- an indication of accelerated catch up, and of those, 60% (2,400) attained grade level each year. Across the 22 communities the program serves, 94% of students are eligible for free lunch; approximately 61% are African-American; 22% are Latino; and 26% are Limited English Proficient. The program serves approximately the same number of boys and girls. In addition, 65% of our volunteers are also minorities and often grew up and live in the communities they are serving, giving them an added level of informed perspective for the children they tutor. The matching of these demographic characteristics also provides the foundation for a mentoring relationship -- often a by-product of the literacy supports provided by Experience Corps trained tutors.

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AARP Foundation Experience Corps is aligned with the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (GLR), a collaborative effort by foundations, nonprofit partners, business leaders, government agencies, states and communities across the nation to ensure that more children in low-income families succeed in school and graduate prepared for college, a career, and active citizenship. The Campaign and Experience Corps have, at their cores, complementary missions and, most importantly, identical end goals. Like Experience Corps, the Campaign is laser-focused on the important predictor of school success and high school graduation for our nation's children -- grade-level reading by the end of third grade. As such, GLR and Experience Corps have established a mutually beneficial partnership aimed at helping multiply the number of children reading on grade level by the end of third grade across the country. GLR will be instrumental in identifying strong GLR communities with a record of execution that have the capacity to launch an Experience Corps program as well as introducing Experience Corps to local funder collaboratives in their communities. GLR now has 168 communities in its network across the country, overlapping in only 11 of Experience Corps' 22 current communities. The potential for growth through a partnership with GLR is vast.

Because of the importance of reading on grade level by the end of the third grade, educators across the country are actively seeking practical, proven, and cost-effective solutions to address the literacy achievement gap for millions of low-income children. Many schools are labeled "in need of improvement" due to lagging standardized test scores and are seeking effective interventions to help their students close the achievement gap. Increasingly, states are adopting policies that require third graders not reading on grade level to repeat the grade. Given the significant impact and cost of holding back large numbers of children, schools are seeking affordable and effective interventions to improve reading levels for as many K-3 students as possible. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the average operational cost for an elementary school student is \$11,153. Eight of the 19 states we propose to focus on already have grade-level reading mandates. Similar legislation is underway in Texas and Ohio. Holding back the millions of students who are not achieving grade-level reading by the third grade has the potential to cost schools and taxpayers billions of dollars.

PROBLEM WITH CURRENT SOLUTIONS: The cost of interventions with paid tutors, including the popular Reading Recovery Program, can range from \$3,000 to \$8,000 and higher per student and is, therefore, extremely cost prohibitive especially in low-income communities (Wasik, 1997). Volunteer costs for the Experience Corps program are roughly \$540 per student. The evidence base demonstrates that 1:1 tutoring with volunteer tutors is also an effective intervention to help children struggling to read and much more cost effective (Slavin et al 2011; Ritter et al 2009). In view of the

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significant difference in cost and efficacy of volunteer tutors, a primary means to solving grade-level reading may well rest in a volunteer-driven solution.

The AARP Foundation Experience Corps/SIF Initiative is designed to add to the evidence base of additional volunteer tutoring strategies that will accelerate the number of students served with current resources while still being proven effective. Specifically, these strategies are small group sustained tutoring by volunteers and small group sustained tutoring by volunteers supplemented by classroom-wide literacy assistance.

* Small group sustained tutoring is defined by Experience Corps as one volunteer tutor working with up to 4 students for a sustained period throughout the school year -- generally the entire school year.

* Literacy Assistance is defined by Experience Corps as a volunteer tutor providing classroom support to teachers to reinforce literacy skills or concepts introduced in daily lessons throughout the school year.

If funded, AARP Foundation will work with a qualified external evaluation partner to design a rigorous evaluation to test the following two hypotheses:

Hypotheses 1: Small group sustained tutoring by volunteer tutors is an effective intervention for helping students who are struggling to read when compared to a "business as usual" comparison or control group.

Hypothesis 2: Full classroom literacy assistance in combination with small group sustained tutoring by volunteers will a) provide an additional value add to students in small group and b) provide a value add to the full classroom of students when compared to "business as usual" comparison or control group(s).

The hypothesis that small group sustained tutoring supported by literacy assistance will not only be proven an effective strategy but will provide an additional value add to the students in small group and the full classroom, has its basis in the well-researched Response to Intervention (RtI) model which demonstrates that a multi-tier approach, tailored to the needs of children is effective (IES, 2009).

In the 2013-2014 school year, Experience Corps volunteers devoted over 123,000 hours of one-on-one tutoring to approximately 6,500 students. If each one of those sessions included four students (the maximum number recommended for a small group) (US Department of Education, Institute for Educational Sciences, 2009), 26,000 students could be served by the same number of Experience Corps volunteers. Add to this the number of students in all classrooms with an Experience Corps volunteer who may not require the intensive sustained tutoring but would benefit from occasional,

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daily help and the totals continue to rise. Other 1:1 volunteer tutoring programs like Reading Partners and Reading Corps, etc., also have the potential to serve exponentially more children if we can establish moderate or strong evidence to show small group tutoring has a similar impact to 1:1 tutoring, whether or not they adopt the literacy assistance strategy.

THE AARP FOUNDATION EXPERIENCE CORPS PROGRAM THEORY OF CHANGE: We posit that by targeting schools in high need communities with large percentages of K-3 students who are below grade level in reading and providing well-trained adults who are 50-plus as volunteer literacy tutors, K-3 students will accelerate their literacy achievement and reach grade level by the end of third grade. At the school level, Experience Corps school site staff and volunteer leaders work closely with school districts, administrators, and teachers to ensure that the right interventions are getting to the right students and classrooms. Experience Corps volunteers receive at least 25 hours of targeted training and coaching in literacy, behavior management, child development and other relevant areas and are placed in classrooms to tutor below-grade-level kindergarten through third grade students. Tutoring strategies include sustained 1:1, small group tutoring, and literacy assistance.

Sustained tutoring and literacy assistance tutoring strategies are distinguished by the level of intensity of the intervention and the goal of the tutoring. Sustained tutoring is generally a school-year long engagement between tutors and specific students to address identified skill deficits. Tutors work on specific skills with individuals or groups of students to help them read at grade level. Literacy assistance is a school year-long engagement between a tutor and classroom where the tutor supports the teacher's daily literacy objectives. In this strategy, tutors work with all students in the classroom, but focus on students that might need extra help learning the day's lesson. AARP Foundation Experience Corps has adopted guidelines that balance both types of interventions with a focus on sustained tutoring. These guidelines establish that a minimum of 80 percent of volunteer hours be devoted to sustained tutoring, either 1:1 or small-group, and the remainder spent on literacy assistance strategies.

Reaching the long term impact in the Theory of Change of all students reading on grade level by the end of third grade requires a model that is effective, replicable, and scalable. The Experience Corps program is effective as demonstrated in the Washington University/Mathematica Policy Research randomized control trial of the 1:1 program model (Lee et al, 2011). The AARP Foundation Experience Corps program is replicable. It has a well-defined program model, supported by rigorous standards of practice overseen by a system of accountability, tools and resources that support every aspect of the program from start-up through implementation, training resources for tutor training, technical

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support from the national office and the AARP Foundation, database systems and reporting structures, and an active peer network. While we have grown the 1:1 model and proven its success, it is a model whose scalability is limited. To achieve the deep reach needed to address this national issue requires stronger evidence of the efficacy of the more cost effective small group tutoring and literacy assistance strategies. Through SIF funding, we propose to move the evidence base for small group sustained tutoring by volunteers and small group combined with classroom-wide literacy assistance, from preliminary to moderate or strong. Proving the value of these more scalable strategies will promote exponential growth and expansion of the Experience Corps program and, as importantly, serve as a model for other 1:1 tutoring programs as a way to expand their reach, and vastly increase the number of students reaching grade level proficiency by the end of third grade.

INVESTMENT APPROACH AND MEASURABLE OUTCOMES: AARP Foundation is a seasoned grantmaking institution. A critical aspect of our business model is to scan the nation for innovative programs and bring them to national scale through extensive sub-granting processes. The AARP Foundation Experience Corps' investment approach is to expand the reach and impact of existing Experience Corps programs and by launching programs in new communities using the small group sustained tutoring strategy and literacy assistance. The AARP Foundation Experience Corps /SIF proposes to serve 4,000 K-3rd grade children reading below grade level at seven subrecipient sites, representing 28 schools. Working with the independent evaluator, we will investigate the effectiveness of small group (3-4 children) and small group plus classroom-wide assistance. AARP Foundation proposes to award seven subrecipients with approximately four schools per site. This will yield 224 classrooms (28 schools with an average class size of 30) serving a total of 6,720 students. Of these, 4,000 students will be selected to receive one of our two interventions: small group or small group in combination with full class literacy assistance. Working with the independent evaluator we will conduct an in-depth implementation and impact evaluation. We will assess the efficacy of each model with the goal that 50% (2,000) will achieve one year or more of progress per year, and of those 60% (1,200) will reach grade level each year, as reported by teachers.

TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS WE WILL INVEST IN: AARP Foundation will invest in community-based non-profit host organizations with the mission alignment, school system relationships, capacity and sustainability to adopt and implement the Experience Corps program. Host organizations that currently operate Experience Corps programs will be eligible to apply for subrecipient funding as will prospective host agencies in new communities that have the required community characteristics (see Selection ii: Subrecipient Selection). Existing Experience Corps programs must document expansion

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commitments from school systems or districts. Prospective host agencies must submit application materials that satisfy Experience Corps criteria for entering new communities. Subrecipients from new communities must have established working relationships with schools and districts as well as missions that align with Experience Corps in a way likely to generate mutual success on academic and positive youth developmental outcomes. Our experience shows us that these organizations have the greatest chance for implementing the Experience Corps program in the shortest amount of time while ensuring its sustainability and longevity.

VALUE ADD TO SUBRECIPIENTS: AARP Foundation has a wide array of resources in place to grow and support the network of Experience Corps programs throughout the country. Subrecipients will receive the following value-added supports and resources to help them align with the theory of change and achieve desired outcomes:

Standards of practice: AARP Foundation has rigorous standards of practice for both business operations to ensure sustainable organizations and program implementation to ensure that the Experience Corps program is implemented with fidelity. Beginning in Fall 2015, Experience Corps will implement a more robust accountability system that will tie technical assistance to helping Experience Corps programs achieve the standards and culminate in a standards compliance review. This review, conducted by trained peer reviewers from other Experience Corps programs, is similar to an accreditation review. Experience Corps programs that are in compliance with all of the standards will receive a designation as a quality program and will serve as models and mentors to new and emerging programs.

Technical assistance: AARP Foundation develops nationwide (provided to all Experience Corps sites) and individualized (per Experience Corps community) technical assistance (TA) plans based on prioritized needs. As with all Experience Corps programs, subrecipients will participate in nationwide TA events and receive individualized technical assistance. Technical assistance will be provided on-site and through various distance media. The Experience Corps TA strategy is tied to the developmental stage of the subrecipient. For instance, new Experience Corps programs will receive tailored TA relevant to newly forming organizations including orientation to Experience Corps and the requisites for successful launch, assistance with cultivating and formalizing strategic partnerships, and resource development. At the site level, technical assistance will be provided to support successful volunteer training and rigorous site implementation. All subrecipients, in addition to receiving targeted technical assistance to become compliant with the AARP Foundation standards, will be provided with TA to support the SIF-funded evaluation activities and will become part of the SIF learning

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community.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps e-kit: The e-kit is a compilation of tools, resources, policies, and templates for every phase of program development and implementation. The e-kit is housed on the Experience Corps intranet to which subrecipients will have access. This self-service resource houses our practice knowledge from nearly 20 years of operating Experience Corps. The e-kit houses over 100 resources and is continually updated with new materials and documents.

Comprehensive volunteer training resources: By spring, 2015, AARP Foundation Experience Corps will have launched its Training Resource Site that will be housed in the e- kit. This content library will include facilitator and participant guides in all content areas required for volunteer training, activities and handouts to use with children, training videos demonstrating tutoring techniques and typical classroom situations and other resources. Subrecipients will have access to this content to create training agendas, and facilitator and participant materials for their volunteer tutor training. The national office will provide technical assistance to promote coherent and consistent use of these materials.

Grants Management: AARP Foundation will also support subrecipients with TA for resource development, communications, expertise in running large volunteer programs, and operational support and connections to AARP state offices. The AARP Foundation Grants Management department will provide ongoing technical assistance and training to subrecipients to ensure they are able to comply with the requirements for managing federal funds.

Data systems and reports: Subrecipients will have access to tools and technical assistance related to every aspect of data collection and reporting. They will receive licenses to use the Salesforce database system for tracking students and volunteers. Salesforce user manuals and training modules provide instructions for how to enter, update, and access program data in the national program database, and data migration templates are provided to mass-input or update data into the Salesforce database. Subrecipients will also be provided with training on the use of electronic time sheets and required e-surveys, scan technology, and forms for collecting and processing daily volunteer session logs. Surveys are provided to the Experience Corps network by AARP Foundation for the collection of program outputs and outcomes from teachers, volunteers, and local program staff. The surveys collect teacher ratings of student academic performance and engagement behaviors, impact of the Experience Corps program, and volunteer outcomes and satisfaction with the program. All sites receive annual, individualized outcome reports based on the survey data submitted. These reports are used to confirm program effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, report program results to current and potential

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fundamentals and stakeholders, and to ensure quality service delivery.

An active peer network: Subrecipient programs will become a part of an active peer network, which includes all Experience Corps programs across the country. This network holds a wealth of knowledge that is shared and exchanged via monthly network calls and webinars, in-person meetings, and affinity groups. These formal supports promote the informal support and resource sharing that happens as program sites reach out to each other to ask questions and share resources. We are also cultivating a peer-mentoring strategy for leaders of new sites.

All subrecipients, in addition to receiving targeted technical assistance will be provided with TA to support the SIF-funded evaluation activities and will become part of the SIF learning community. PROGRAM STRATEGY: The goal of the SIF/Foundation Experience Corps initiative is to test a model for exponentially scaling the number of students achieving grade level reading within existing Experience Corps cost structure by demonstrating the impact of small group sustained tutoring and small group supplemented by literacy assistance, implemented according to guidelines in the Experience Corps program model. We will accomplish this by investing in subrecipients who have the capacity to grow an existing or create a new Experience Corps program with fidelity and participate in a rigorous evaluation of the small group and small group in combination with literacy assistance tutoring strategies.

APPROPRIATE TO THE ISSUE: Research on the impact of a child's inability to read on grade level by the end of third grade is clear and the scope and depth of the problem is vast. There is a critical need for replicable, scalable and effective models to be deployed to reduce the number of children not reaching this important benchmark (i.e., not reading at grade level by the end of third grade). The proposed AARP Foundation Experience Corps /SIF Initiative is designed to add to the evidence base of additional strategies (small group and small group supplemented with literacy assistance) that will accelerate the growth with quality of Experience Corps programs and exponentially increase the number of students who will benefit across the literacy sector.

ALIGNED WITH THE THEORY OF CHANGE: AARP Foundation Experience Corps' proposed approach supports the long-term goal of the Theory of Change --ensuring all students are on grade level by the end of third grade. By proposing to establish a stronger evidence base for the small group sustained tutoring strategy and small group supplemented with literacy assistance, Experience Corps and other literacy programs will be closer to reaching the expected long-term impact of all students reading on grade level by the end of third grade.

LIKELY TO PRODUCE DESIRED OUTCOMES: The 20-year history of Experience Corps has

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affirmed the power of an intergenerational tutoring model. Years of experience and rigorous study have led to refinements in the model over time. Our recent experience has demonstrated that we can replicate in new communities and go deeper in our existing programs with no loss in fidelity and with consistent outcomes. In 2013, Experience Corps opened a program in Chicago that served 14 schools and 1,230 students in small groups in its first year of operation. The Experience Corps program in Phoenix, AZ began serving students in the fall, 2014 and is currently in 10 schools with 316 students receiving 1:1 tutoring. Our rigorous process for vetting and identifying communities with high potential for successful implementation of the Experience Corps program and ongoing support ensure that programs have the resources they need to produce the desired outcomes. We hypothesize that small group sustained tutoring will have similar results to 1:1 volunteer tutoring programs and the small group supported by literacy assistance will match or exceed the student level outcomes of 1:1 and will produce classroom level outcomes as well. These hypotheses are based on an internal evaluation of Experience Corps' small group sustained tutoring model during the 2013-2014 school year, which revealed promising reading results for the small group model -- as well as research on the popular Response to Intervention model. (Please see section below "PRELIMINARY EVIDENCE AND POTENTIAL TO ACHIEVE MODERATE LEVEL OF EVIDENCE" for more information).

In addition to strong preliminary evidence, AARP Foundation Experience Corps can boast a stable core of well-trained volunteers, further ensuring program stability and desired outcomes. Satisfaction surveys from the 2013-2014 school year indicate that:

- More than 90% of teachers felt that Experience Corps tutors had a strong or moderate impact on students' reading and literacy skills and progress toward grade-level reading.
- 95% of teachers found the quality of Experience Corps tutors' service and ability to address student learning needs to be good or excellent.
- 98% of tutors were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall Experience Corps program.
- Tutors return to the program for an average of three years; 44% have served for three or more years, including 16% that have returned for at least five years including many who have served for more than 10 years.

ii. SUBRECIPIENT SELECTION

a. Type of organization you plan to fund and how it aligns with rationale and approach: The current Experience Corps evidence-based model for achieving grade-level reading leverages nonprofit organizations with a strong volunteer base and existing relationships with school districts where nearly all elementary students qualify for free or reduced lunch and where a majority of students are

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below grade level in reading proficiency. While a nonprofit organization or school district may apply for funding, the application itself must present a clear existing relationship between the two entities in which the nonprofit is actively engaged with the current elementary school preferably in an academic or social service activity. The prospective subrecipient must demonstrate that they possess the key capabilities to build a sound Experience Corps program prepared to implement our model with rigor and fidelity. These capabilities include having a robust business structure, the capacity to bring community partners to the table, the resource development capacity to launch and grow the program, and the community support to promote long-term success. Based upon these qualifications, we anticipate a mixture of current and new Experience Corps sites will be funded.

b. Plan for competitive selection process:

AARP Foundation anticipates that seven Experience Corps /SIF awards will be made in the first year of the SIF Initiative. The range of the grants will be \$100,000-\$200,000 depending on the number of students and volunteers required for each site. The criteria for selection include:

- * Existing relationships between the nonprofit organization and school district.
- * Existing volunteer base with demonstrated engagement in long-term activities.
- * Experience recruiting new volunteers.
- * Nonprofit organizations with experience providing low-income students with academic assistance (preferably around literacy) and/or student and family services that reduce barriers to grade-level reading.
- * School districts where a majority of students qualify for free or reduced lunch.
- * Elementary student population in which a substantial number students are below grade level in literacy proficiency.
- * Demonstrated capacity to collect student information/performance data.
- * Significant population of older adults (50-plus) who have the capacity to volunteer.
- * Urban and suburban school districts located in 19 states: Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington.

As part of its planning process, AARP Foundation Experience Corps recently completed a demographic study of the U.S. to determine the top 15 states with the greatest number of K-3rd graders reading below proficiency and the top 15 states with largest number of older adults (age 50-years and older). There was considerable overlap in these two groups resulting in a target list of 17 states with high potential to successfully launch or expand the Experience Corps program: California,

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Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Indiana, Arizona, Massachusetts and Washington. Oregon and Minnesota will be added to this list because they currently house successful Experience Corps programs capable of scale and evaluation for a total of 19 priority states to be targeted for consideration in this initiative. All demonstrate key demographic characteristics to ensure a viable Experience Corps program. As a result, our geographic focus will be limited to those specific states. Experience Corps currently has a presence in at least one school district in eleven of these 19 states.

Timeline for selection process: As a current SIF Intermediary, AARP Foundation has learned how to manage the subrecipient selection process in order to maximize success. Because of the need to enter into grant agreements with subrecipients six months after the project starts, preparation prior to the start of the actual grant on August 15 is necessary. Developing a communication plan and drafting our subrecipient selection process are two key components that will begin immediately upon notification of the award. Though we are hopeful in receiving the grant, we do realize there is the risk of allocating time to the project prior to any award notice; however, we believe this will be time well spent as it will allow us to provide ample time for the open RFP window. We believe an extended RFP window will be necessary because of the time it will take for an applicant to secure the necessary commitments with the school district to participate for the Experience Corps group learning and evaluation initiative. Our selection timeline is as follows:

- * August 24: Subrecipient selection process submitted to CNCS
- * September 15: RFP publicly announced
- * October 1: Programmatic Webinar
- * October 8: Technical (application and compliance requirements) Webinar
- * October 21: LOI Deadline
- * November 13: RFP Deadline
- * December 3: Internal Review Completed
- * December 8: External Review Completed
- * December 10: Clarification Period Begins
- * December 19: Clarification Period Ends
- * January 11-22: Site Visits to Finalists
- * February 1: Finalists Reviewed with CNCS
- * February 15: Grant Agreements signed

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c. Description of Selection Process

Demonstrated experience awarding competitive grants: Since 2011, AARP Foundation has completed at least one round of open competition grants each year. Most recently in 2014, AARP Foundation successfully completed two open competitions concurrently: Social Innovation Fund subrecipient competition for its BACK TO WORK 50-+: Women's Economic Stability Initiative (resulting in five subrecipients totaling nearly \$800,000) and a competition for AARP Foundation Tax-Aide (tax-filing assistance program) to identify multicultural organizations that can assist with increasing the diversity of AARP Foundation's Tax-Aide's volunteers and clients (resulting in 12 grants to 11 organizations totaling \$945,000). Through the recognition of the AARP brand, earned media of AARP Foundation's competition for awards is extremely high. In addition, AARP has state offices in every state plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia resulting in a local community presence that can generate additional awareness of its competitive grant programs.

Likelihood of identifying high-performing subrecipients: With an estimated 6.6 million students below grade-level reading proficiency by 4th grade, there is certainly no shortage of school districts looking for cost-effective and impactful solutions. To reach the most students, there is a need for the entire community to be a part of the solution -- not just the school districts. Experience Corps seeks out communities that demonstrate a commitment to grade level reading as evidenced by, for example, state mandates and level of activity with the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. As previously mentioned, Experience Corps has a strong relationship with the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, which will be leveraged to assist with promoting this opportunity across the 19 identified states, where Campaign for Grade-Level reading currently has a total of 101 communities in its network. While being in the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading network will not be a requirement for Experience Corps / SIF eligibility, GLR's presence in the state will help ensure that communities with greatest capacity to succeed as a subrecipient are aware of the opportunity.

How you will assess subrecipients for readiness and capacity to implement growth as part of the participation in SIF: Potential subrecipients will provide the following information as part of the RFP process. These data will be fundamental to assess subrecipient readiness and capacity to implement growth as part of the SIF.

- * Community demographics, including numbers of K-3 students in poverty and reading below proficient level, numbers of low performing schools, potential number of students served, volunteer pool of older adults.
- * The funding potential including district expenditures, Title 1 funding, existing funder interest,

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supportive local business and philanthropic community.

- * The school environment, including priority on early literacy, charter schools, number of districts with potential need.
- * The existence of other national partners/initiatives, including alignment with the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, external champions or stakeholders, CNCS initiatives like City of Service or Promise Neighborhoods, precedents for other national non-profits in the market.
- * AARP support, as evidenced by an active AARP state office committed to Experience Corps and strategic national priority.

Organizational assessment focuses on the sustainability, financial health, mission alignment, and capacity of the potential host organization to commit to and grow the Experience Corps program over the long term. Three-year growth targets with annual benchmarks will be established collaboratively with each subrecipient based on anticipated capacity and school system/district need and commitment. Progress towards growth targets will be monitored through frequent contact with the subrecipients and the use of annual planning templates currently used by all Experience Corps programs.

Allocation of Awards: Subgrants will be allocated based upon several factors: number of schools within school districts participating in the program, number of classes for each school, and number of volunteers needed to implement the program. These will be the greatest factors in determining award amounts.

iii. PROPOSAL FOR EVALUATION

a. Capacity to ensure successful evaluation(s):

Experience in managing and supporting evaluations of past funded program models: AARP Foundation Experience Corps has deep-seated experience managing and supporting evaluations of program models. Particularly relevant to the proposed SIF project, is Experience Corps' experience and capacity in providing strategic direction, hands-on management, and technical assistance to evaluation sites over the course of the randomized control trial (RCT) of the Experience Corps 1:1 program model. This evaluation is cited in the Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse as a well-implemented RCT (WWC, 2010). Starting in 2006, Experience Corps partnered with Washington University and Mathematica Policy Research to evaluate the effectiveness of the Experience Corps 1:1 program to improve the reading skills of elementary school students who were at risk of academic failure. Nine hundred first through third grade students in 23 schools in Boston, New York City, and Port Arthur, TX participated in the study. These students were randomly assigned to

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either a treatment group that participated in the Experience Corps program or a control group that did not. The study estimated effects by comparing changes in reading achievement over one academic year for students in the two research groups. Reading achievement was measured using a teacher assessment of grade-specific reading skills, as well as standardized tests measuring comprehension, receptive vocabulary, and phonemic awareness. The results showed that students who worked 1:1 with Experience Corps tutors for a single school year, experienced 60% greater gains in two critical literacy skills -- sounding out new words and reading comprehension -- compared to control group students. This evaluation indicated that results were equally impressive for all students regardless of gender, ethnicity, grade, classroom behavior, or English proficiency (Lee et al, 2011). In addition to the Experience Corps study, there have been numerous other studies and meta-analyses of studies, which have demonstrated the effectiveness of both paid and volunteer tutors in 1:1 tutoring models (Slavin et al, 2011; Ritter et al 2009).

In addition to managing the multiyear, multi-site Washington University/ Mathematica Policy Research study, AARP Foundation is currently managing and supporting the evaluation of the SIF-funded Back to Work 50+ initiative. Staff from the Experience Corps evaluation team have been actively involved in this evaluation start-up to ensure learning is fully transferred across program areas. Additionally AARP Foundation Experience Corps is currently managing a Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Program (OJJDP) grant-funded implementation evaluation of the mentoring/social emotional learning component of the Experience Corps program. The internal team has begun thinking through an overarching approach and timeline for the SIF evaluation should we receive funding. The plan is structured to make sure we that we have moderate to strong evidence within 5 years.

- * March 2016-March 2019: Implementation Evaluation/ submit subgrantee evaluation plan in summer 2016 / design rigorous impact evaluation.
- * March 2018-August 2019: Wrap up implementation evaluation and prepare for rigorous QED or RCT. evaluation of effectiveness of small group and blended small group /literacy assistance model.
- * August 2019-May 2020: Rigorous QED or RCT evaluation in schools.
- * June 2020-March 2021: Analyze and disseminate results. Integrate learning into subrecipients and national Experience Corps program.

We will begin with a high quality implementation evaluation of all subrecipients in the first three years of evaluation. Subrecipients, in partnership with our evaluation partner, will develop evaluation plans that will include a plan for collecting student outcome data identified in the Investment

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Approach and Measurable Outcomes Section. By the end of three years, we anticipate that most subrecipients will be ready for more rigorous evaluation. In year three of the evaluation, we will complete preparation for the quasi-experimental/RCT evaluation and build the evaluation design including the needed power analyses. The final two years of rigorous evaluation will focus on random or matched assignment in schools through a QED or RCT yielding at a minimum, moderate evidence of effectiveness and likely strong evidence within five years of program implementation.

Experience influencing and supporting recipients to use evidence to improve program performance: AARP Foundation Experience Corps has systems, tools, and processes in place to ensure that subrecipients are using evidence to improve program performance. For example, Experience Corps collects program results annually from subrecipients/sites. Working with American Institutes of Research (AIR), Experience Corps creates customized reports for each subrecipient including critical outputs and student and volunteer outcomes. Subrecipients use the information to make program refinements and set performance targets for the following year. Experience Corps also uses the automated Salesforce database system for monitoring and tracking of student and volunteer activities and hours across all subrecipients. Using Salesforce, subrecipients produce automated reports as they need them, and in so doing, use data for day-to-day program decision-making.

Additionally, Experience Corps has rigorous standards of practice and an accountability process that has recently been refined to include high-touch technical assistance to subrecipient sites. The Experience Corps standards are reviewed annually with subrecipients and tailored technical assistance is provided if there is an area of weakness in the program model or business processes.

AARP Foundation itself has a strong history of supporting grant recipients in using evidence to improve program performance. Over the past two years AARP Foundation has implemented its Foundation Impact System (FIS), which is a client management system for most grant-funded programs. For example, AARP Foundation's BACK TO WORK 50+ program focuses on providing wrap-around services, coaching and ultimately employment to low-income older women. Participating community colleges track each step and engagement with their candidates (number of coaching sessions and length of each, number of training sessions attended, employment status and salary 30 days, 90 days and 6 months after employment, etc.). What makes FIS successful for BACK TO WORK 50+ and our other programs (it is customized for each of the services we provide) is that organizations are not just entering data, but they have access to a variety of reports that demonstrate which programs and at what dosage are they most effective. AARP Foundation staff also analyze and review the data in conjunction with the grant recipients, who, in turn, can provide the qualitative

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information that the quantitative data cannot capture. This learning circle ensures ongoing program improvement at the recipient level.

Demonstrated ability to apply evidence/evaluation results to decision-making and investment strategies: The Washington University research confirmed the effectiveness of the 1:1 Experience Corps tutoring model and provided implementation feedback that led to program and standards adjustments. For example, the research found that the 35 session mark is important for making sure that students make significant gains on student standardized reading tests and, subsequently, that threshold became part of Experience Corps program standards.

When awarding grants, subrecipients are evaluated on their capability to use data to monitor performance and when applicable, conduct evaluation. We only invest in subrecipients who can prove this capability. Our eight AmeriCorps National Direct subrecipients, for example, must demonstrate their ability to access and safely store student standardized test data from schools/ school districts. These data are collected and used annually to gauge subrecipient performance against annual performance targets.

Staff or contractor ability to ensure successful evaluation of their subrecipients' program models: AARP Foundation has a strong team of field, research, and evaluation professionals that will dedicate substantial time to carefully manage this expansion and evaluation (please see staff/budget section for detail). Some of these staff are currently responsible for ensuring successful monitoring and evaluation of AmeriCorps grantees and SIF BACK TO WORK 50+ subrecipients.

Additionally, if funded, AARP Foundation will seek a qualified vendor to design and conduct a high quality implementation evaluation of the expanded programs in the first three years (March 2016-March 2019), as well as developing a plan for rigorous OED or RCT, which will take place in the final two years of the project.

b. Plan to assess sub recipient applicants for readiness and capacity to implement a rigorous evaluation plan: AARP Foundation will assess subrecipients on a variety of criteria that are critical to ensure success with evaluation. Specifically we will conduct a rigorous subgrantee RFP process in the first 6 months of the project. Subrecipients must meet the following criteria:

1. Demonstration of existing relationships or clear ability to partner with targeted schools districts.
2. Ability to access standardized assessment data from schools.
3. Demonstration of ability to safely store and analyze data.
4. Demonstrated staff and organizational capacity to work with and manage data and external evaluator.

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5. Dedicated staff time for data collection and reporting.

We expect that substantial portions of SIF funding and the requisite match will support increased subrecipient resources dedicated to the SIF evaluation. We fully recognize that staff time will be needed for reporting of outputs and outcomes and increased staff time will be needed to work with the evaluation firm.

c. Plan to assess needs for and provide technical assistance to subrecipients as they design, implement, and monitor evaluations of the Experience Corps program model: One of the core responsibilities of the external evaluator will be to provide in-person, and phone technical assistance to subrecipients as they design, implement, and monitor evaluations of their Experience Corps program model. Building the capacity of subrecipients to evaluate is one of our goals with the SIF project and therefore external evaluators will only be considered if they have proven expertise in providing technical assistance to grantees. Four of our seven core evaluator selection criteria (listed in full under Role of External Evaluator) address technical assistance:

- * Experience and expertise in offering consultation and technical assistance around evaluation and performance measurement;
- * Proven capabilities to design and conduct multi-site implementation evaluations and quasi-experimental and experimental evaluation studies;
- * A strong collaborative working style with the ability to be responsive to the needs of multiple stakeholders; and
- * Desire to participate as a full partner in the SIF learning community.

d. Roles of Staff and Contractor: AARP Foundation brings a strong internal team which will dedicate substantial time to this project. Specifically, Kathy Brennan (see personnel section below for bio), in partnership with Susan Siegel (see personnel section below for bio), will oversee the evaluation lifecycle of this project -- from selecting a strong external evaluator, to selecting sites with the capacity to participate in evaluation, to managing the evaluator, as they oversee evaluation efforts in the local sites. Ms. Brennan and Ms. Siegel combined have 35+ years of managing large scale multi-year evaluation efforts. This team will provide strict internal oversight of the evaluation and regular guidance to the evaluator and local subrecipients. Additionally, it is anticipated that subrecipients will bring on new capacity to manage day-to-day evaluation operations and additional data collection, storage, and monitoring efforts.

Role of external evaluator: We will seek evaluation support from a qualified vendor who will serve as our evaluation partner. The evaluation partner will support Experience Corps in designing and

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evaluating the small group and small group combined with literacy assistance models with subrecipient organizations and providing evaluation technical assistance to the subrecipients. The initial evaluation contract will be for three years to: 1) plan and conduct implementation evaluations of approximately seven subrecipients; 2) develop a detailed impact evaluation design plan; and 3) execute preliminary activities including an evaluability assessment to prepare subgrantees for a rigorous impact evaluation.

This vendor will demonstrate:

- * Technical expertise in social science evaluation methodology (preferably with background in the areas of primary education, social services, and standardized assessment);
- * Experience and expertise in offering consultation and technical assistance around evaluation and performance measurement;
- * Expertise in using multiple methods of data collection and analysis as well as an appreciation and commitment to using quantitative data to track outputs, outcomes and impact and qualitative data to understand context, processes and the meaning behind the numbers;
- * Familiarity with literacy and education programs including an understanding of standardized assessments in K-3;
- * Proven capabilities to design and conduct multi-site implementation evaluations and quasi-experimental and experimental evaluation studies;
- * A strong collaborative working style with the ability to be responsive to the needs of multiple stakeholders; and
- * Desire to participate as a full partner in the EC learning community.

e. How budget will support the cost of evaluation: We anticipate \$174,000 in evaluation funding for a third-party evaluator in the first year to: 1) develop a Subgrantee Evaluation Plan; 2) conduct a strong implementation evaluation in each of the subrecipient sites; 3) assist with review and selection of subgrantee applications. Because we have not chosen an evaluation firm, the first year costs reflect engagement with an evaluation firm for eight to nine months. We expect the level of funding needed for evaluation will increase in subsequent years as planning and implementation of a rigorous impact study gets underway.

PRELIMINARY EVIDENCE AND POTENTIAL TO ACHIEVE MODERATE LEVEL OF EVIDENCE:

To build a preliminary research base, Experience Corps conducted an internal evaluation of its small group sustained tutoring model during the 2013-2014 school year. As part of the evaluation, teacher-reported reading outcomes were compared between students in 1:1 and small group interventions. The

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pilot revealed promising results for the small group model: the percentage of students making a year or more of reading progress was comparable between students in 1:1 (50%) and small group (53%).

The hypothesis that small group tutoring by volunteers supported by full classroom literacy assistance will not only be proven an effective strategy but also will provide an additional value add to the students in small group and the full classroom has its basis in the well-researched Response to Intervention (RtI) model which demonstrates that a multi-tier approach, tailored to the needs of children, is effective (IES, 2009). It also has its basis, in a pilot study by Johns Hopkins University on the Experience Corps literacy assistance model that showed a full classroom effect of literacy assistance when compared with matched classrooms (Rebok et al, 2004). Because of the preliminary evidence of small group and literacy assistance independently, and the RTI research, we hypothesize that the combination will prove a particularly effective intervention.

If awarded the SIF grant, we will move the evidence base on small group volunteer tutoring and small group in combination with full classroom literacy assistance from preliminary to moderate or strong evidence by the end of 5 years.

iv. GROWING SUBRECIPIENT IMPACT

a. Capacity to Support Subrecipient Growth:

Experience Corps Expansion: Data collected over the past three years (2010-11 school year to 2013-14 school year) clearly show that Experience Corps is capable of growth. However, these data give only a partial indication of Experience Corps' full potential to scale. The growth over three years highlighted below happened without the intentional growth plan that is now in place. Experience Corps has positioned itself in 2013-2014 to multiply the number of students served and to go to scale because of laying the following groundwork:

- 1) Creation of an intentional growth plan in 2014, with growth goals integrated into each subrecipient's individualized technical assistance plan. For each plan, a national office point of contact prioritizes program goals, develops relevant strategies, and deploys resources to promote success in organizational development, meeting Experience Corps standards, or expanding program reach.
- 2) Focusing on a blended strategy to serve more children and testing that model as part of the SIF project.
- 3) Intentional pursuit of funding for growth.
- 4) Merger with the AARP foundation.

Comparison of numbers 2010-11 to 2013-14:

* Experience Corps served 17,684 students in 2010-2011 and 31,677 students in the 2013-14 school

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year --80% growth over the past three years due in large part to the addition of more Literacy Assistance tutoring.

* In the 2010-2011 school year Experience Corps was in 1,496 classrooms in 174 schools in 16 communities across the US. In the 2013-2014 school year Experience Corps was in 1934 classrooms in 211 schools in 22 communities across the US.

- growth of 30% into new classrooms over 3 years.
- growth of 21% into new schools over 3 years.
- growth of over 30% into new communities over 3 years.

* Experience Corps utilized the skills of 2,034 highly trained volunteer tutors 50-plus to deliver tutoring to students in 2013-14 up from 1677 in 2010-11 -- growth of 21% over three years.

City of Phoenix -- a case study: With assistance from the AARP Foundation Experience Corps staff, the newest program in the Experience Corps network began serving children in Phoenix, AZ in the 2014-15 school year. Phoenix met all of the criteria for a new site and was identified as having high potential for successful implementation and growth. The City of Phoenix is the host agency and the program is run out of the City Manager's Office. Phoenix is a "Read On" city for the Read on Arizona initiative, a statewide, public/private partnership of agencies, philanthropic organizations, and community stakeholders committed to creating an effective continuum of services to improve language and literacy outcomes for Arizona's children from birth through age eight. In addition to this network of support from the community and the high priority on reading, Arizona demonstrated a great need for the Experience Corps program. According the 2013 Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) testing data provided by the Arizona Department of Education, only 10 of the 25 school districts serving third grade students in Phoenix have more than 70% of the student population passing the reading portion. Twenty-seven percent or 7,000 third-grade students in Phoenix are not reading proficiently. The school districts reported low AIMS scores largely located in central and south Phoenix -- neighborhoods which, historically, have had the highest rates of poverty and serve a majority of minority students. According to AIMS data, approximately 1,000 students are at risk of being retained in the third grade. Experience Corps national staff provided intensive support to Phoenix during its development process, conducting site visits, providing resources and hosting Phoenix staff at the Experience Corps annual meeting. They received assistance with volunteer recruitment and training, school relationships, communications, and other essential functions. For the 2014-15 school year, the Phoenix Experience Corps program opened in 10 schools across five school districts. They have 79 tutors serving 316 students in 1:1 sustained relationships. Over the next three

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years they plan to grow into 18 schools in ten districts and serve 800 students with 200 tutors. Currently, the Phoenix Experience Corps program does not do small group tutoring or literacy assistance. If we can demonstrate the effectiveness of these strategies, Phoenix can transition to these strategies, greatly increasing the number of students they can reach without increasing their volunteer base.

Approach to Growing and Supporting Subrecipients: We will support subrecipient growth through providing in-depth technical assistance regarding the program model and operational standards from our field team led by Dr. Dave Handy (see personnel section), as well as in-depth evaluation technical assistance from our contracted evaluator. If awarded funding, local subrecipients will build staff capacity in the area of program management and evaluation.

AARP Foundation Experience Corps Field Services team has developed a hands-on technical assistance strategy that provides quality targeted support and technical assistance to subrecipients. Our approach to technical assistance utilizes an assigned Field Services Team member who builds a support plan based on the subrecipient's unique needs and aspirations, with a focus on ensuring that all programs demonstrate meeting the Experience Corps standards of operation.

We have an in depth online resource center called the "Experience Corps e-kit" which was piloted this year and used successfully in this year's launch of our Phoenix site. The Experience Corps e-kit contains over 100 resources for subrecipients within the following categories -- a few examples are listed below to give a sense of the depth of these resources:

1. PROGRAM MODEL

- AARP Experience Corps Theory of Change and Program Model Implementation
- Program Planning Template

2. GETTING STARTED

- External Landscape Assessment (ELA)
- Internal Capacity Assessment (ICA)
- Strategic Growth Plan
- Early Implementation Check List

3. FUNDING YOUR WORK

4. MANAGING YOUR WORK

5. YOUR VOLUNTEERS

- Recruiting Your Volunteers
- Training Your Volunteers

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- National Training Content
- Managing Your Volunteers

6. MANAGING YOUR FINANCES
7. COMMUNICATING YOUR MESSAGE
8. DATA AND IMPACT
 - Salesforce Training Materials
 - Salesforce Data Migration Templates

Surveys

Additionally, Stephanie Okpala and Rachel Cannon (see personnel section for bios) will provide phone and on-site TA for all technical needs regarding the Salesforce database, teacher surveys, data collection and other technical systems.

Technical Assistance: An individualized Technical Assistance plan will be mapped to support new affiliates through stages of organizational development toward a sustainable affiliate implementing the Experience Corps model with a high degree of fidelity. Where the subrecipient is an existing affiliate, the Field Services team will conduct an organizational needs assessment with a focus on building capacity for sustainable growth. Examples of support provided include program implementation, partnership and resource development, volunteer recruitment and training, and program monitoring for continuous improvement. Additionally, all new subrecipients will be trained on using the program's national Salesforce database and the annual surveys used to collect program output and outcome information.

Other means to ensure long term sustainability beyond this project: The SIF gives AARP Foundation Experience Corps the opportunity to offer participating schools a model that has the potential to reach more students while retaining clear outcomes and generating moderate to high evidence of impact. By moving the proposed model from preliminary level of evidence to moderate evidence (and ultimately high level), we will be able to offer schools a model that exponentially increases volunteer impact and delivers decreased per students costs as the program grows.

Combining a more efficient and evidence-based model with existing funding mechanisms (fee-based model where sites raise funding locally), this model will be well-positioned for sustaining itself past the SIF funding period. Given that this model could provide not just improved literacy outcomes for students but also broader community and tax payer benefit, AARP Foundation Experience Corps plans on actively pursuing Pay for Success bonds from state and local governments.

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Beyond funding, volunteers have been -- and will continue to be -- an essential element in how AARP Foundation and the larger AARP enterprise successfully meet our goals. A vibrant volunteer strategy is an essential component of growing our impact, relevance and revenue. Currently, AARP as an enterprise oversees more than a dozen volunteer efforts or programs nationwide. Nearly 300,000 volunteers work to enhance their communities through a variety of AARP Foundation and other AARP Enterprise efforts (an additional 150,000 work through AARP Chapter Offices). Working alone, in partnership with staff, and in positions supervising other volunteers, these volunteers help move our social mission forward. AARP State Offices assist in outreach and recruitment of volunteers -- ensuring a viable and sustainable pipeline of volunteers. Additionally, AARP has a current and growing relationship with CNCS: Experience Corps operates a Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in Chicago and AARP Foundation has just been awarded three additional RSVP awards to commence in 2015. We will work to leverage both RSVP and existing AARP enterprise resources to ensure a sustainable pool of eligible and well-trained volunteers for this program.

Organizational Capability

Track Record, Resources, and Experience Operating and Overseeing These Programs: AARP Foundation receives over \$2 million in funding (in addition Senior Demonstration Project designation) for activities directly related to Experience Corps. AARP Foundation has demonstrated its ability to meet outcomes since its first CNCS grant in 2001. Most recently, Experience Corps participated in the CNCS-led National Performance Measure Pilot under its 2011 AmeriCorps National grant with seven subrecipients. Experience Corps was able to meet all outputs and outcomes by 2012-2013. Currently, Experience Corps oversees 8 CNCS subrecipients. The most recent monitoring visit and IPERA testing resulted in zero findings. The Grants Management department proactively trains all subrecipients in compliance, provides daily technical assistance, and regular webinars throughout the grant year to ensure subrecipients have the tools to meet compliance requirements and performance goals.

Experience and capacity to collect and analyze data for improvement and compliance: The Experience Corps program uses a variety of indicators and data collection tools to measure and track program outcomes. We use standardized assessment data and teacher ratings to track student academic improvement in reading. Improvement in student behavior is measured by teacher ratings of student participation, concentration and motivation on beginning and end-of-year surveys. All volunteers participate in an end-of-year outcome survey to gauge improvements in their quality of life and satisfaction with the program. Teachers in participating classrooms take part in an end-of-year evaluation to get feedback and measure the overall quality of assistance provided by the Experience

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Corps program and volunteer volunteers. We also track the numbers of students served (and through which form of intervention); tutoring sessions per student; new schools engaged; volunteers recruited, trained and engaged in classrooms; volunteers retained; and hours volunteers served in classrooms.

At the end of each year these data are reviewed and aggregated by an external vendor. The reports generated from this analysis are used to make program adjustments, report to local and national funders, provide program performance to new and existing schools and principals, and to develop communication materials to further promote the Experience Corps program.

We have addressed the challenge of data collection by: (1) requiring all sites to have MOUs with the school or district that states that the entity will be able to provide standardized test data; (2) no longer serving in schools that are unable to provide data; and (3) requiring subrecipients to report their data collection methodology for the 2014-2015 school year, so that we, as the primary grantee, know that they all have access to the required data.

Current organizational budget and % this project represents: In its most recently available fiscal year (2013), AARP Foundation's total revenue was nearly \$188 million. The project size for the first year, \$2 million, represents slightly more than 1% of its operating budget. This demonstrates AARP Foundation's strong financial position and its ability to ensure the project has the resources necessary to meet the matching requirement and also ensures its subrecipients are meeting the subgrant requirements as well. AARP Foundation is invested in this model for the long-term.

Experience and Qualification of Staff and Contractors:

- Lisa Marsh Ryerson: AARP Foundation President: Prior to AARP Foundation, Ms. Ryerson served as President of Wells College in Aurora, New York from 1995-2013. Ms. Ryerson led the transition of Wells College to becoming a co-ed institution. During this period, Wells was so successfully repositioned in the marketplace that enrollment increased 45% in just six years. She served as Chair of Aurora Inn, Inc., the college's for-profit enterprise whose holdings include the four diamond Aurora Inn and E.B. Morgan House. Ms. Ryerson led the launch of an endowed Center for Business and Entrepreneurship and raised \$17 million to build a state of the art science education facility. In recognition of the outstanding leadership she provided during her 18-year tenure as President, the Wells College Board of Trustees recently named Ms. Ryerson President Emerita. With a career in education, Ms. Ryerson understands the need of grade-level reading and has made the growth of the Experience Corps program a strategic priority over the next three years for AARP Foundation.
- Lester Strong: Vice President, AARP Experience Corps and Development: Mr. Strong is a leader in the educational entrepreneurship and development fields. Prior to joining Experience Corps, he was

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the Chief Development Officer for the BELL (Building Educated Leaders for Life) Foundation, which also provides tutoring and mentoring services to underserved children. His efforts doubled the foundation's endowment and propelled expansion from three to five cities: Baltimore, Boston, Detroit, New York, and Springfield, MA. A longtime proponent and practitioner of meditation, he was also CEO of the SYDA Foundation, an educational organization provides instruction in yoga and meditation in 46 countries. He spent 25 years in the television industry as an executive, producer, reporter, and anchor in Charlotte NC (WBTV), Atlanta (WSB), New York (ABC Entertainment), and Boston (WHDH). His work earned him a host of national and regional awards, including five regional Emmy Awards and a White House commendation from President Ronald Reagan. He serves as a member of the board of trustees for both the Noyce Foundation and Editorial Projects in Education (Education Week). He holds a BA from Davidson College and is a graduate of the Columbia Business School's Institute for Non-Profit Management.

- Marc McDonald, Director of Grants Management, oversees the application, award, assessment and accountability of all AARP Foundation grants and provides guidance on the Foundation's strategic grant making. He is currently Project Director for AARP Foundation's current Social Innovation Fund grant for its Women's Economic Stability Initiative. Focusing on a streamlined approach toward outcomes-based grant making, Mr. McDonald has developed new processes and workflows to align AARP Foundation's grant making with its mission and three-year strategic plan, with a sharp focus on improving performance management and evaluation. He also ensures timely reporting and compliance for nearly \$80 million in government grants received by AARP Foundation. Mr. McDonald was elected to the board of the Grants Managers Network (the largest grant management professional association) in 2014 where he serves on the audit committee. Prior to joining AARP Foundation, he was Director of Grant Policy and System Analysis for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. He oversaw distribution policy, compliance and grantee reporting for a \$300 million Community Service grant program serving nearly 600 public radio and television grantees. Mr. McDonald earned his BA from Dartmouth College and his MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

- Barb Quaintance, Managing Director of AARP Foundation Experience Corps, has a rich history of collaborating with volunteers, running national programs, developing AARP's field structure and creating AARP's annual Day of Service. She established AARP's Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program, an early model of what ultimately grew into the State Health Insurance Programs (SHIP). She led the effort at AARP to bring Experience Corps into AARP in July 2011. She continues to be

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AARP's lead on national service and civic engagement. She is a graduate of University of Southern California and the University of Illinois.

- Susan Siegel, Manager, Education & Evaluation, leads the team responsible for the research, evaluation, learning and program improvement of the Experience Corps program. Ms. Siegel has 15 years of nonprofit leadership experience and over 20 years as the president of an education consulting service. For 10 years as Vice President of the Research, Evaluation and Learning Management team at the national office of Communities In Schools, she was responsible for promoting knowledge development and training on the CIS model of integrated student services, internal and external research and evaluation, and quality assurance through a national accreditation system. She led the five-year, \$5 million dollar evaluation of the CIS model, conducted by ICF International. She holds master's degrees in instructional design and measurement and evaluation from the University of Pennsylvania.

- Kathy Brennan: Research and Evaluation Advisor, is responsible for designing and managing internal and external evaluation efforts of the Experience Corps programs. Ms. Brennan has over 15 years of experience managing and evaluating government, nonprofit and foundation social welfare initiatives, beginning her nonprofit evaluation career at the Urban Institute with the multi-year, multi-site, evaluation of the Department of Labor's Welfare-to-Work grants program. Since that time she has worked as an evaluation consultant for Innovation Network, and independently, managing mixed-methods evaluations of domestic initiatives aimed at helping vulnerable populations. In 2010 while at Innovation Network, Ms. Brennan served on the external advisory team to CNCS on the creation of the national level evaluation plan of the Social Innovation Fund. Most recently, Ms. Brennan was Director of Evaluation at Living Cities -- a NY-based collaborative fund comprised of 22 of the largest philanthropic and financial institutions in the world. Living Cities is dedicated to bringing philanthropy, investors and the public sector together to help re-imagine underinvested neighborhoods and find new ways to connect low-income people to economic opportunities at scale. Ms. Brennan holds a B.A. from Lawrence University and a MS from the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

- David G. Handy, Ph.D.: Director of Field Services: Dr. Handy is responsible for leading the team charged with providing Technical Assistance to Corps implementors and branches. After graduating from Davidson College, Dr. Handy worked in a wilderness-based, therapeutic recreational facility for youth at risk for delinquency. With a deeper appreciation for prevention and the role of systems, Dr. Handy earned Master's (East Carolina University) and Ph.D. (Florida State University) degrees in

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Marriage and Family Therapy, logging over 2,000 clinical hours with families. Prior to joining AARP Foundation, Dr. Handy worked with Communities In Schools where he built expertise in organizational development, leadership, promoting quality in line with network standards of practice, evidence-based decision making and strategic action. Mr. Handy is passionate about helping communities organize around effective solutions to poverty and social injustice.

- Julie Hecker, Field Services Advisor, has been with the Experience Corps program for four years. As part of the field services team, Ms. Hecker is responsible for providing technical assistance to new and existing subrecipients as they implement their startup /expansion strategies -- with a focus on strong financial management practices -- her area of expertise. Prior to joining the Field Services team, she managed branch and grants accounting for the Experience Corps organization. Julie has also served as Budget Manager for Global AIDS Alliance, Accounting Manager for the San Diego Foundation, and Finance Director for the San Diego Symphony. Julie holds a B.S. in Accountancy from the College of Business Administration at San Diego State University

- Christina New-Waiting, Field Services Advisor, has been with the Experience Corps program for seven years. As a member of the field services team, Christina is responsible for providing technical assistance to a subset of new and existing subrecipients as they implement their start up or expansion strategies. She previously worked for several non-profit organizations focused on domestic violence advocacy, including Safe Horizon in New York City, and the Office on Violence Against Women, in Washington, D.C. She has a BA in Psychology and an MSW in Social Work Administration.

- Peggy Goldberg: Volunteer Services Advisor. In this capacity she provides guidance and consultation on best practices in volunteer policy and management for current and new Experience Corps programs across the country. Prior to joining the national office, Peggy was instrumental in the establishment of the AARP Foundation Experience Corps Tempe program hosted by the City of Tempe. Ms. Goldberg has over 30 years of experience in program management, development, training and grant writing for the City of Tempe, State of Massachusetts and Federal Office of Education.

- Rachel Cannon Frazer, Technology Analyst, provides supports to the Experience Corps network by researching and implementing the use of new and existing technology to improve the program. As part of her role, she maintains and provides continued assistance to the network on using the program's national Salesforce database. The data contained here includes records of time spent by Experience Corps volunteers providing the program's literacy assistance intervention. Using the national database along with other technology tools, Ms. Frazer promotes more consistent, accurate,

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complete, and meaningful data.

- Stephanie Okpala, Analyst, Grants Management is responsible to managing the Experience Corps survey data collection and reporting function. She focuses on tracking and monitoring program performance as it relates to the goals of grants, collecting and analyzing data on performance measures, drafting grant reports, and providing regular training and technical assistance to subgrantees as needed. She also oversees the collection and use of ongoing assessment data for the purposes of continuously improving AARP Foundation Experience Corps programs and operations and demonstrating program effectiveness.
- Joanna Wald, Monitoring and Compliance Manager, oversees monitoring and compliance related to federal grants. This includes ensuring that subrecipients are prepared to manage federal funds through extensive training. She also oversees the day-to-day technical assistance related to grants and subrecipient oversight, through on-site and desk reviews. Ms. Wald has four years of grants management experience, specifically related to CNCS regulations, and a certificate in grants management.

Ability to develop systems to maintain a federally compliant grant program: Not only has AARP Foundation been a Federal grant recipient for nearly 50 years with its Senior Community Service Employment Program and Tax-Aide, but it has been a recipient of CNCS funding since 2001. AARP Foundation receives \$1.75 million in AmeriCorps funding and \$225,000 in RSVP funding -- both of which are utilized toward the Experience Corps program, which has clearly defined processes for CNCS Criminal History Checks. At the beginning of a grant, all prospective subrecipients are trained on the National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) procedures via webinar. In order to receive a subaward, subrecipients are required to have or create policies and procedures for managing federal grants. Within these policies, the subrecipient must have a process for meeting the NSCHC. Subrecipient policies and procedures are reviewed at the beginning of each year by the Foundation for compliance with the NSCHC. This includes a review of the state repositories that are being used and vendors if applicable. In addition to the policies and procedures and annual webinars, the Foundation provides background check consent forms that are compliant with the NSCHC and a checklists for volunteer files that include each step necessary to properly document the NSCHC. The Foundation annually monitors subrecipients' compliance with the NSCHCs through on-site monitoring visits and desk reviews.

Commitment to long-term relationships with subrecipients: Short and Long Term Goals: Subrecipients will set three-year growth goals and create a three-year plan to meet program

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standards, including student outcomes. Short term goals consistent with the three-year plan are established during annual planning calls with the program sites. Sites complete a planning tool that reflects targets relative to the program standards and important national metrics. Targets for growth and other benchmarks are established based on capacity and school district requests. Program staff have ongoing communication with their Field Services representative and are monitored for progress relative to their targets. TA is provided and goals are adjusted as needed throughout the year.

Increasing grade-level reading is a long-term goal that requires years of effort. As a result, identifying the right partners to execute the Experience Corps program is immensely important. The longevity of Experience Corps programs across the country is a testament to their ability to adapt to their unique markets and to the support they receive from the national office. Five of our sites date back 20 years to the start of Experience Corps. Another 6 have been in existence for 17 or 18 years. Excluding our newest programs, the remainder range in age from 7-10 years.

ii. SUBRECIPIENT SUPPORT, MONITORING, OVERSIGHT

Prior experience setting and implementing goals with recipients: At the beginning of each program year, the Foundation works with every Experience Corps site to set program goals. This goal setting activity occurs on a standard template that tracks a site's progress from year-to-year. Experience Corps programs use this template, along with current conditions and demands for growth in their district, to set their goals.

When programs apply for federal funding from the Foundation, each applicant is required to submit projected program outputs and a budget. The program outputs are evaluated against the site's overall plan for the year (or multiple years) and against the program's budget. The Grants Management department and Field Services team negotiate with each site to ensure that program numbers are in alignment with the site's capacity.

Unlike outputs, outcomes are set in advance by the Foundation. Each site is expected to meet the outcomes established by the Experience Corps program model. These expectations are included in the RFP and applicants are required to address how they will meet the outcomes.

These processes were followed for the recently closed AmeriCorps 2012-2013 National grant, where Experience Corps was able to report having met its priority performance measure, ED5 -- the number of students who demonstrated improved academic performance.

TA and other services you will provide to subrecipients to achieve proposed outcomes: Subrecipients' ability to achieve the proposed outcomes will be directly related to the substantial amount of planning that will take place in advance of setting the outcomes. In addition to this support, the Foundation will

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monitor progress of the subrecipients on a quarterly basis to ensure they are on track to achieve their outcomes. If subrecipients are not on track to meet their outcomes, the Field Services team, Grants Management staff, and subrecipient will meet to put corrective action plans in place.

Plan for building subrecipient capacity to develop compliant federal grants management systems: Ensuring that subrecipients have the capacity to develop and implement compliant federal grants management systems will begin with the review of applications. A section of the RFP will require applicants to address their capacity to manage federal grants. Sites that have a history managing federal grants or that demonstrate the knowledge and staffing capacity to manage federal grants will be favored. Applicants will also be required to complete a financial management survey, in compliance with 2 CFR 200, so that AARP Foundation can determine, in advance, if an applicant has financial systems in place to adequately oversee federal funds. After these review processes, the Foundation will have reasonable assurances that the selected subgrantees already have the capacity to manage federal funds.

After subrecipients are selected, the Foundation will implement its standard practices to ensure that all of the selected sites have the necessary tools to ensure that they are compliant with the specific requirements of the SIF grant. All subrecipients will be required to develop policies and procedures for implementing the program. A template will be provided by the Foundation to ensure that all aspects of the Foundation/SIF program are covered. The policies and procedures will be the best tool to combat the most frequent disruption to compliance--staff turnover. Additionally, regular training webinars will be provided on program compliance and desk and on-site monitoring visits will occur annually (see below for details).

Plan for developing subrecipient performance measurement systems and how you will use these to monitor and improve performance: Experience Corps continually assesses student improvement to evaluate the success of the intervention and improve the program on an ongoing basis. Experience Corps utilizes standardized assessment data, surveys, and the Salesforce database system to monitor subrecipient performance as it relates to grant performance measures and overall program performance. Student reading and literacy performance will be monitored via literacy assessments administered to students at the beginning and end of the school year. Results from these tests will help inform program staff and tutors on which areas of focus individual students need to address. Student reading growth will be calculated by converting beginning and end of year reading assessment scores to a uniform numeric scale that can be used to report student progress in terms of yearly growth.

Experience Corps surveys will be used to collect beginning and end of year information on literacy-

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related measures such as student academic engagement behaviors. The Salesforce national program database will be used to track program outputs as well as student, member, school, and placement information.

Plan for monitoring subrecipients for compliance and progress towards goals: For the purposes of internal verification and compliance, AARP Foundation Grants Management department conducts monitoring reviews of each grant recipient's program design and delivery, member files, financial systems, and organizational policies. The goal is to identify and correct not only mistakes that may occur because of human error or staff turnover, but also to flag any systemic problems or misinterpretation of federal grant procedures.

Each year, every Experience Corps site receives a site monitoring review from the national office. Sites receive either an on-site or a desk review that includes: (1) both a programmatic and a financial interview to determine whether local policies and procedures are compliant with the grant, (2) a volunteer file review to ensure all documentation is completed, accurate, and stored correctly, (3) volunteer interviews, (4) review of financials, and (5) a data verification review to ensure data reported on grant reports align with hard copy records. We utilize the findings of our annual reviews to inform and improve our technical assistance and training for each grant recipient as well as our processes at the national level.

AARP Foundation, like the Social Innovation Fund, believes in measurement and accountability. If a program is not demonstrating an ability to provide meaningful outcomes, then the program will no longer be funded. As a result, staff and grantees are constantly analyzing and evaluating their programs to determine the program's efficacy. Establishing expectations from the beginning is critical to ensure that all parties are holding themselves accountable. While we establish these expectations before any grant agreement is finalized, we also reiterate them during our on-boarding call. Each on-boarding call provides an opportunity for all constituents -- essentially anyone who has any involvement with the project -- to review the grant agreement from top to bottom, including the basic terms and conditions, the scope of work, logic model and budget. AARP Foundation has found that many of the grantee's program staff never view or never receive the final copy of the agreement. Therefore, the on-boarding call provides an opportunity to level the playing field in terms of project knowledge and expectations. Data reporting, monthly calls and quarterly reports provide us with an opportunity to interact with the subrecipient to review project status and decide if we need to change course or reallocate resources. The Foundation holds grantees accountable to achieve program goals and outcomes. Every project has a key project timeline (we use Microsoft Project to assist in

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managing the project timeline with the grantee) and key milestones. Reassessment when reviewing the project and reaching the milestones provides the opportunity for the project to pivot, when necessary, in order to reach its goal -- not just programmatic goals but capacity and fundraising goals as well. The same framework is one that we also use with CNCS. We are very encouraged about CNCS's level of engagement with grantees and believe their expertise and experience will be a tremendous asset to achieving the program goals.

AARP Foundation implements an intervention-centric strategy for its grantmaking. The interventions may be extensions of its own programs (e.g., Experience Corps) or other organizations (e.g., L.A. Kitchen/Strong Food). All programs (internal and external) are required to develop a logic model, which provides a clear understanding of the expectations and goals among all constituents. While Experience Corps has a logic model for its overall program, each subrecipient will also develop a logic model as part of the implementation and evaluation process so they are the local owners of the program with on-going support from AARP Foundation.

Through its experience with large federal grants, AARP Foundation Experience Corps has developed the expertise to manage a breadth of volunteer, budget, and program data accurately and efficiently. Proper controls have been developed and systematized throughout the program and accounting departments to avoid duplication of cost allocations and volunteer activities for the various grant programs.

We have developed a continuum of training and technical assistance for our sub-recipients that ensures high standards in the areas of program implementation, budget development and financial management, volunteer supervision, fundraising, and evaluation. Subrecipients are required to report on their progress to the Foundation quarterly, we have regular check-in calls with key staff, and we complete an annual desk review or on-site visit for every subrecipient. We have developed policies and procedures that dictate how internal site and desk monitoring visits are conducted. The policy includes a risk assessment tool that is used to identify high risk programs that may need additional technical assistance and monitoring throughout the year. When noncompliance is detected, consequences can include special conditions on future subgrants, reduced funding and/or slots, having to pay back funds to CNCS, and the creation and monitoring of a corrective action plan. The prevention, detection, and enforcement of the rules, regulations, and program deliverables are overseen by the grants department. Special attention is given to ensuring that all staff volunteers and subrecipients understand the prohibited activities. Although many volunteers return from year to year, we ensure that there is training in every pre-service orientation dedicated to prohibited activities. As a part of the

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site monitoring visits outlined in our policies and procedures, the national office interviews volunteers to ensure that they are being trained appropriately on the prohibited activities. During the interviews, we also ensure that all of their service activities are listed in their position description.

iii. STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY

AARP Foundation understands and is fully committed to the SIF requirement of building program sustainability and capacity for subrecipients to implement the Experience Corps program with a focus on group tutoring effectively over the long term. For the SIF initiative, AARP Foundation has a 5-step approach for growing subrecipients impact by: 1) Creating networks and building a learning community among subrecipients; 2) Building the internal business case for school districts to cover costs for Experience Corps during and after SIF funding; 3) Supporting subrecipients to use data effectively for learning, program improvement and decision-making; 4) Assistance with identifying sustained funding at the national, state and local levels; and 5) Promoting the deepening of local partnerships to expand capacity to serve students and recruit older adult volunteers in their communities.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

Lester Strong -- Vice President of Experience Corps and Development. Lester will provide overall strategic guidance and focus on partnership outreach and engagement. He will allocate 20% of his time to this project.

Marc McDonald -- Director of Grants Management. Marc will be the project director and oversee the subgrantee selection process in collaboration with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). He will work closely with Barb Quantance to ensure project achieves stated objectives. He will also provide oversight for AARP Foundation and subgrantee contractual and financial compliance. He will allocate 25% of his time on the project.

Barb Quantance -- Managing Director of Experience Corps. Barb will provide overall programmatic and evaluation oversight to the project to ensure proper allocation of resources. She will also assist in coordinating resources across AARP enterprise, where appropriate, to include support from AARP state offices, Multicultural Markets and Engagement and the Integrated Communications department. She will allocate 25% of her time on the project.

Susan Siegel -- Manager Evaluation and Education. Susan's role will be to guide effective implementation of the program model in new schools and communities, coordinate program with the evaluation project lead, and ensure that the evaluation findings inform practice throughout the project period. She will allocate 50% of her time to the project.

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Dave Handy -- Director of Field Services. Dave will oversee programmatic implementation and ensure the Field Services team provides programmatic technical assistance and relationship management. Dave will allocate 50% of his time to the project.

Kathy Brennan -- Research and Evaluation Advisor. Kathy will coordinate selection of evaluation firm and be the evaluation liaison and technical assistance lead for each of the seven sites in coordination with the evaluation firm. She will allocate 50% of her time to the project.

Julie Hecker -- Field Services Advisor. Julie will manage a portfolio of subrecipients and will provide technical assistance and oversight to programmatic implementation in the field. She will allocate 25% of her time to the project.

Christina New-Waiting -- Field Services Advisor. Christina will manage a portfolio of subrecipients and will provide technical assistance and oversight to programmatic implementation in the field. She will allocate 25% of her time to the project.

Peggy Goldberg -- Volunteer Services Advisor. Peggy will provide volunteer recruitment and management technical assistance to the subrecipients. She will allocate 25% of her time to the project.

Stephanie Okpala -- Grants Management Analyst. Stephanie will manage survey data collection and reporting. She will also provide technical assistance to subrecipients to ensure data is captured accurately and timely. In addition, Stephanie will assist in the monitoring the grant performance measures and developing programmatic grant reports. She will allocate 15% of her time on the project.

Joanna Wald -- Monitoring and Compliance Manager. Joanna will be responsible for AARP Foundation and subrecipient compliance to the CNCS grant terms and conditions. She will also provide compliance technical assistance to subrecipients and coordinate subrecipient monitoring visits. She will allocate 15% of her time on the project.

Rachel Cannon Frazer -- Technology Analyst. Rachel will integrate subrecipients into the program's Salesforce database and provide on-going database technical assistance. Rachel will allocate 10% of her time to the project.

FRINGE BENEFITS

The total fringe benefit cost is \$139,845. It is broken into the following categories:

- Employee fringe benefits (e.g., health and life insurance): 12.53%
- Retirement (401K employer matching): 3.90%
- Payroll taxes: 1.45%
- FICA expense: 6.20%

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- Incentives (based upon ability for project to meet goals in a cost-effective way): 8.00%
- Fringe for incentives: 0.92%

TRAVEL

Total travel costs are \$93,680. The costs are allocated as follows.

- Subrecipient pre-award site visit to review applicant's capacity to achieve project deliverables. We anticipate three staff will participate in seven site visits with \$910 as average cost per site visit totaling \$19,110.
- For our application review, we anticipate 10 reviewers will travel to AARP Foundation in Washington, DC for an on-site convening. \$1500 is anticipated average cost per reviewer totaling \$15,000.
- The volunteer services advisor will travel to each site to oversee a volunteer training event. The average cost for travel per site will be \$1500 for each of seven sites totaling \$10,500.
- Field services advisors travel to subrecipient sites to assist with and review program implementation. We anticipate \$1070 per site for seven sites with four visits per site totaling \$29,960.

EQUIPMENT

The most effective way to capture survey data for each recipient is through ScanTron. A ScanTron machine costs \$3843 and we will purchase one machine for each of seven subrecipients totaling \$26,901.

SUPPLIES

General supplies for the project will total approximately \$526.

CONTRACTUAL AND CONSULTANT SERVICES

Evaluation firm: While we engage an evaluation firm for three years to develop an implementation study and plan for an impact study, the actual cost for the first year of the grant is estimated at \$174,000. This amount is based upon our experience engaging an evaluation firm for our current Social Innovation Fund award.

OTHER COSTS

- Subgrants: Total subgrant amount will be \$1,000,000 to seven subgrantees. We will be allocating \$907,949 award to the federal share and \$92,051 to the grantee share.
- Criminal History Checks: Because AARP Foundation staff are not regularly interacting the vulnerable populations, they will not undergo an FBI check. Therefore are estimated costs for the NSOPW and state criminal history check is \$20 per individual for 10 individuals on the budget totaling \$200.

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- Volunteer Training: Approximately 75 volunteers over the course of two days at each site will be trained by the volunteer advisor. Approximate cost per site is \$2250 for meals. Total training for seven sites is \$15,750.
- Meals (external reviewer convening): We anticipate the external reviewer meeting will occur over one and a half days. Meals will be covered for the 15 external reviewers (10 from out of town and 5 from the DC area) plus five AARP Foundation staff. The total for all meals for 20 people will be \$2300.
- Meals (Subrecipient Convening): We will hold a two-day subrecipient convening in March, 2016 for all subrecipients. We anticipate 3 participants from each of 7 subrecipients plus 10 AARP Foundation staff. Total costs for all meals for 31 people will be \$6526.
- SIF Convening: \$800 is allocated to four staff that will attend SIF grantee convening in the fall 2015.
- Salesforce licenses: Annual license for Salesforce is \$720 per person. We anticipate each subrecipient will have two licenses. Total cost is \$10,080.
- Marketing and Communications: AARP Foundation provides marketing and outreach materials for each subrecipient to assist with volunteer recruitment for the Experience Corps program. The cost per site for materials is \$1150 for a total of \$8050.

INDIRECT RATE:

AARP Foundation has a negotiated indirect cost agreement at 8.5% of total project costs. We are basing our indirect costs on all direct costs with the exception of subgrants. We are only applying our indirect cost rate to the first \$25,000 of each of the seven subgrants (\$175,000 in total). Therefore, the actual costs in which the indirect rate will be applied is \$1,082,949 resulting in indirect cost of \$92,051 of which the entire amount will be allocated to the federal share.

ii. CAPACITY TO RAISE MATCH

AARP Foundation is committed to leveraging SIF funding to raise the profile of the Experience Corps program among partners and prospective funders. Funding from CNCS via the SIF program for Experience Corps will help open the door with many established funders that work in the youth space but would be new funding sources for AARP Foundation. While we are fully committed to leveraging SIF funding to generate new funding for Experience Corps, AARP Foundation is at the same fully prepared to meet the matching requirements with our own unrestricted cash as shown by the supplied matching letter signed by AARP Foundation's CFO Patricia D. Shannon.

Based on existing funding (internal and external) as well as the new opportunities SIF will help

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create for AARP Foundation, we have a high level of confidence we will be able to meet the intermediary matching requirements. AARP Foundation will look proactively for opportunities to write sub awardees into national funding requests to existing and new funders and existing funders.

Finally, we will help bring attention to the AARP Foundation/SIF initiative and our subrecipients by leveraging the AARP brand. As AARP's affiliated charity, AARP Foundation has access to the full suite of AARP resources. AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the definitive voice for Americans 50-plus and the world's largest-circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin, the go-to news source for the 50-plus audience; www.aarp.org; AARP VIVA, a bilingual lifestyle multimedia platform addressing the interests and needs of Hispanic Americans; and national television and radio programming. These assets reach an audience in the tens of millions and thus can help bring significant attention to the AARP Foundation/SIF initiative and our sub-awardees, which have the potential to open new doors for funding.

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Clarification Summary

Programmatic

1. Your list of project personnel includes several AARP Foundation staff members who are currently working on the existing SIF grant. How do you plan to ensure that staff have the capacity to manage their time?

Marc McDonald, Director of Grants Management, is the only individual listed on both AARP Foundation's existing Social Innovation Fund grant budget and the current application budget, which is a tremendous asset to the proposed project. The initial ramp up of activities -- particularly as it relates to the subrecipient selection process -- is very intense at the start of the Social Innovation Fund. Because Marc managed the start-up of the existing SIF grant, he will bring a deep understanding and a level of expertise to the proposed SIF project that will ensure an immediate ramp-up of activities in coordination with the Social Innovation Fund team while also understanding the intricate compliance elements (e.g., criminal background checks).

While he is the Social Innovation Fund lead for the existing SIF grant, the most intensive period of his time on the grant was during the selection and on-boarding of the subgrantees. With subgrantees selected for the existing SIF grant, that grant is now focused primarily on programmatic execution. AARP Foundation's program and evaluation teams are the primary drivers for current and future existing SIF grant activities.

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In addition, over the past four months the Grants Management staff has grown from two to five individuals. As a result, there is greater capacity within the Grants Management team to handle the existing and proposed SIF projects. Within AARP Foundation's current SIF proposal two additional Grants Management staff are included in the project. The additional staff would help coordinate performance measurement, reporting and compliance responsibilities. Also, much of the non SIF-related Grants Management activities have been delegated to other staff on the Grants Management team, providing additional capacity for Marc McDonald on the proposed Experience Corps SIF project with a particular emphasis on the subrecipient selection process.

2. Are Experience Corps volunteers through RSVP implementing the same services being proposed here? If so, how do you plan to separate funding streams? How will you differentiate?

AARP Foundation currently operates a single RSVP grant that includes volunteers for Experience Corps Chicago. However, this site is among four Experience Corps sites that are operated directly by AARP Foundation. As a result, the four sites would not be eligible for a SIF subgrant. Rather Experience Corps sites managed by independent nonprofits as well as other eligible organizations could participate in the subrecipient selection process. Therefore, there will be no direct overlap between AARP Foundation's existing RSVP volunteers and the services proposed in the SIF grant.

Evaluation

1. Per the guidance provided to SIF applicants, SIF has found that a budget allocation of 15-20% of the total program budget (at the grantee or subgrantee level) is necessary to complete a compliant QED study. You have listed \$174,000 for year 1 to cover mainly the evaluation planning phase activities. You note that the evaluation budget allocation will change in subsequent years of the grant. Please explain how you will ensure that sufficient funding is available to cover full costs of a compliant evaluation.

Because Evaluation questions 1 and 2 are closely aligned with each other, we have answered them together below in question 2.

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2. Your application did not identify a qualified evaluator to conduct the implementation or impact evaluation and did not provide a clear timeline for when you will engage the evaluator. Please clarify the steps and timeframe of the planning and implementation of the evaluation. Specifically, what is the rationale for why you are proposing to spend years 1 to 3 on implementation evaluation and years 4 and 5 on impact evaluation?

Earlier this month Experience Corps completed a competitive and rigorous procurement process to select an external evaluation firm to conduct an implementation evaluation. Shortly after submitting our SIF proposal, we secured funds from internal and external sources to support an in-depth implementation evaluation of the Experience Corps program, as well as preparation for an impact evaluation should SIF funding become available. We are excited to have found a team that has the capability to conduct the implementation evaluation, evaluability assessments, impact evaluation, and provide evaluation technical assistance at the national and local site level. In addition to these important skills, they have deep-seated content knowledge in education and literacy evaluation. We are currently finalizing the evaluation contract and are on schedule to begin work on June 1, 2015.

Since we will begin working with the external evaluation partner earlier than anticipated, we will adjust the implementation evaluation timeline activities described in the SIF proposal. Rather than three years of implementation evaluation prior to beginning the impact evaluation, we will conduct the implementation evaluation from September 2016-June 2018. Because we will likely have new sites coming on in March 2016 we will need at least one full school year (September 2017- June 2018) of implementation evaluation at these new sites in order to make a sound judgment on their readiness for an impact evaluation. The impact evaluation will then begin in the 2018-2019 school year. We have proposed rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of our small group sustained model (likely through a RCT) and the value add of our classroom literacy assistance model (likely through a QED). If we receive SIF funding, we plan to work closely with our evaluation partner to develop a detailed SIF Evaluation Plan (SEP) to include the impact evaluation design, timing, and cost. However, based on our internal team's experience and many preliminary conversations with internal and external evaluation experts, we believe that we will likely need to conduct both an RCT and a QED to answer our evaluation questions/address our hypotheses (from page 6 of proposal):

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* Hypotheses 1: Small group sustained tutoring by volunteer tutors is an effective intervention for helping students who are struggling to read when compared to a "business as usual" comparison or control group.

* Hypothesis 2: Full classroom literacy assistance in combination with small group sustained tutoring by volunteers will a) provide an additional value add to students in small group and b) provide a value add to the full classroom of students when compared to "business as usual" comparison or control group(s).

Both the QED and RCT can be completed over the course of one school year. We may do both studies in 2018-2019 or stagger these studies and do them in two consecutive school years: 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. Whether we stagger or conduct them in the same year will be dependent on the findings from the implementation evaluation, evaluability assessment and recommendations from our evaluation partner. Both scenarios leave time for analysis, reporting and dissemination in the final year of the project. Based on several estimates, we estimate we can conduct the QED for between \$275,000 and \$475,000 and we can conduct an RCT for between 1.5- 2 million dollars. The costs for these evaluations in the ensuing years of the SIF project will be funded through our matching dollars. We anticipate many costs (such as certain personnel, Scantron, travel) in year 1 can be reallocated towards evaluation costs in years 2-5.

Budget

Please answer the following questions in your clarifications narrative or make the changes requested below directly in the application budget narrative section in eGrants.

1. In the budget narrative in eGrants, Section D. Equipment, please provide more information on the Scranton charge. If indeed there are to be 7 purchased, at a cost of \$3,843 per item, it is not equipment but supplies and should be moved to that category.

Change has been made directly to eGrants budget section.

2. In the budget narrative in eGrants, Section H. Other Costs, please include sub grantee 1:1 match in

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the "Other Costs" section.

Change has been made directly to eGrants budget section.

3. On page 39 of your application, you state that the AARP Foundation is prepared to meet the match requirements. In the clarifications narrative, please confirm whether you plan on supplying all of the match or whether you plan to do additional fundraising to meet the match from other sources? If the latter, what is your progress in raising funds from other sources?

If awarded the SIF, AARP Foundation expects to raise 100% of the match externally. However, if it is unable to raise the match funding from external sources then AARP Foundation is fully committed to fulfill the matching requirements through its unrestricted funds.

To date, AARP Foundation has raised externally \$100,000 from Target (grant agreement in process) for the first year of the Experience Corps SIF project.

To secure the remainder of the match, AARP Foundation will focus on our existing institutional and individual funder lists, which will include asking for increased support to meet the SIF match as well as potentially doing matching campaigns that can help leverage support from our active donor file, which stands at over 2.25 million donors.

In addition, since the submission of our SIF grant, AARP Foundation has continued to strengthen our relationship with the Campaign for Grade Level Reading (CGLR), with which we will work closely to secure match funding from new national and regional funders.

4. In the clarifications narrative, please explain why you plan to apply the indirect cost rate to just the first \$25,000 of each of the seven subgrants (page 39).

AARP Foundation utilizes a Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) for grants in which there is a significant subaward component. Per the Uniform Guidance (200.68), the MTDC allows the first \$25,000 of most expenses of subawards to be included in the total direct cost to which our indirect

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rate applies. While there are indirect-related costs in managing the subawards, the majority of the indirect-related costs belong to the subrecipients. As a result, more of the grant funding is dedicated towards direct expenses that have an impact in the execution of the grant.

5. The expense for travel and meals seems high, can you provide more detail in the clarifications narrative about the costs and an overview of what the External Reviewers Convening, Training Volunteer and the implementation travel for Experience Corps sites will entail?

The expenses are based upon our actual expenses for the current Social Innovation Fund grant, the Experience Corps program and other projects. Much of the travel that may appear high is based upon visits to Washington, DC. We have found airfare to be ever increasing throughout Washington, DC area airports. In addition, while we always seek low-cost options for hotels close to AARP Foundation's office in Washington, DC, we have found hotels to be particularly pricey -- almost no matter the time of year. These higher costs often offset by a reduction of transportation expenses from hotels to AARP Foundation national office. In addition, because we host our convenings within our national office, we do not incur any fees or costs related to meeting spaces in a hotel. In general, we prefer to estimate on the high side because we do not know the locations of the subrecipients and travel expenses to those locations can vary widely.

AARP Foundation does have specific guidelines to identify low-cost travel options. We balance the low-cost travel options (e.g., multiple stops on flights to and from Washington, DC) with the need to minimize travel time and maximize productive time spent among participants through convenings, training, site reviews, etc. In addition, we do not provide per diem. Rather, we reimburse for travel actual costs incurred within AARP Foundation guidelines. All travel requires pre-authorizations (which includes a budget) and managerial approval prior to any expense that occurs. All travel reimbursements are also subject to multiple levels of review and approval to ensure they align with Foundation policies. All expenses greater than \$25 require a detailed receipt in order to process the reimbursement request.

The External Reviewers Convening will utilize around 14 external reviewers who will provide their subject matter expertise towards assessing the subrecipients' applications. We anticipate around 10 of the reviewers will be from outside the Washington, DC area. We determined 14 external reviewers

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based upon anticipation of 30 applications. Each application will receive three different reviewers and no reviewer will receive more than 6-7 applications (based upon feedback from past reviewers more than seven applications become overwhelming). We do not provide any stipend to the reviewers for their time. We have found a day and a half will be necessary to review, discuss and recommend potential subrecipients. AARP Foundation has utilized different meeting technology such as video or phone conferencing; however, the focus of reviewers who are not on site varies widely and their engagement is inconsistent. Our goal is to ensure each reviewer has an equal voice in the conversation and having them present in the same location is the best option. In the long term, convening all external reviewers is most cost effective option to minimize the risk of selecting a subrecipient that underperforms.

Training Volunteer travel is a necessary part of the project in which one individual from our Field Services staff will travel to each subrecipient to complete a four-day training. The first day is with the subrecipient (train the trainer approach) and the remaining three days is with the volunteers. The volunteer training is critical to the success of the program and is necessary to ensure each site understands how to implement the program. The hotel rate and airfare are estimated averages across the seven locations as the actual travel costs for each site will vary.

Implementation Travel for Experience Corps sites includes initial training and preparation as well as on-going quality control and assessment. The number of visits may also vary depending on each subrecipient's familiarity with the Experience Corps program. However, our expectation is that we will average four visits per site. Again, with the sites unknown actual travel costs will vary widely.

As a nonprofit, AARP Foundation understands the needs to maximize the funding it receives from the Federal government and private donors who expect us to be good stewards of their investments in our work. AARP Foundation has a very low administrative rate for our Federal and private grants as a result of our focus on maximizing programmatic costs. AARP Foundation will continue to utilize its prudent approach of its financial resources towards the SIF Experience Corps grant particularly as it relates to travel costs.

CLARIFICATION FOLLOW-UP QUESTION:

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1. Your response to the evaluation clarification questions speaks of a new development and suggests that the implementation evaluation doesn't fall under SIF. We think it's great that you are already developing an implementation study, but because the implementation study will inform the impact study, we are wondering if you would be willing to roll in the implementation study under SIF so it is subjected to the feedback and vetting process that we have?

As mentioned in our first clarification response, after we submitted our proposal we received additional funding to undergo an implementation evaluation of our current Experience Corps programs. You are probably aware that one source of the funding is from CNCS's AmeriCorps program and the implementation evaluation would focus on sites in which the Experience Corps program is implemented with AmeriCorps members (which total eight sites). AARP Foundation is also putting forth a small funding amount to expand the implementation evaluation to non-AmeriCorps Experience Corps sites to conduct a more comprehensive implementation evaluation of the Experience Corps program. The potential for a Social Innovation Fund grant provides CNCS with an opportunity to fully leverage and capitalize on its current investment to AARP Foundation Experience Corps, which will result in achieving greater results in a shorter time period. If we were to receive the Social Innovation Fund grant, we want to take full advantage of its evaluation resources to ensure our implementation evaluation aligns with the SIF evaluation structure and provide a seamless integration with an impact evaluation through SIF subrecipients. We will work with the Social Innovation Fund for review of our implementation evaluation plan to make sure it is consistent with not only AmeriCorps goals but also SIF goals and evaluation preparation.

The evaluation firm we have identified and with whom the contract will be finalized within the next couple of days is very familiar with the Social Innovation Fund. When we drafted our RFP to identify an evaluation firm, we included language to make the firm aware of our SIF application and to provide a timeline and overview of costs if we were to receive the SIF grant and the firm continued its work as part of the SIF project. As a result, we are also very comfortable and encouraged about the potential for the firm to be a fully engaged partner with us and the Social Innovation Fund team if we were to receive the grant.

While we hope it is clear that our intent is to work closely with the SIF evaluation team for this

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implementation evaluation that is starting immediately, we also would like to level set expectations so we are all on the same page.

The intent of the implementation study funded primarily by AmeriCorps is to better understand and increase fidelity of the program model across the three interventions we use to achieve grade level reading: one-on-one, small group and full-class literacy assistance through volunteers (primarily AmeriCorps members) in preparation for a potential impact evaluation. Our SIF proposal focuses on two of our tutoring interventions: small group and full-class literacy assistance. There are multiple approaches we could take, in coordination with the Social Innovation Fund team, to make the necessary tweaks to our implementation evaluation plan to fit both AmeriCorps-funded study and the SIF project.

In addition, we anticipate three or four of SIF subrecipients would currently be organizations that are implementing the Experience Corps program. These potential subrecipients may or may not be AmeriCorps sites as well. While the implementation evaluation for these sites will be completed in a short period of time, we still would need to complete an implementation evaluation for subrecipients that are first-time Experience Corps sites.

We would like to address these logistics with all those involved (SIF and AmeriCorps evaluation team and project officers, JBS International, AARP Foundation and our evaluation firm) immediately if we were notified about receiving a SIF grant. We appreciate the SIF's acknowledgement to work with each intermediary on an individual basis and we welcome its resources, feedback and vetting to ensure there is consistency with our implementation study so it will be clearly aligned with the SIF project.

Continuation Changes

n/a