

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/15/10 11:54 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation -- Wilder Research, (U215P100048)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1.Need for Project	10	9
Quality of Project Design		
1.Project Design	20	20
Quality of Project Services		
1.Project Services	15	15
Quality of Project Personnel		
1.Project Personnel	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1.Management Plan	20	20
Significance		
1.Significance	10	10
Sub Total	100	99
Total	100	99

Technical Review Form

Panel #31 - Panel - 31: 84.215P

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation -- Wilder Research, (U215P100048)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. a) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project.
- b) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers-
 - i) The magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators;
 - ii) The extent to which the geographically defined area has been described; and
 - iii) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities will be identified and addressed by the proposed project.

Strengths:

This PN is comprised of about 250 city blocks of St. Paul, Minnesota with 22,150 residents. The disparities in educational and economic achievement levels of this predominantly African American (40%) and Asian (29%) neighborhood are immense. One in four residents in the PN was born outside the USA: 15% in Southeast Asia, 8% in Africa.

Weaknesses:

The PN definition needs to include more precise demographic definitions of the population that are not African American and Asian; for example Latino, American Indian, and White.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i) The extent to which the applicant describes how it will plan to build a continuum of solutions designed to significantly improve the academic and family and community support indicators in this notice;
 - ii) The extent to which the continuum of solutions includes a strategy, or a plan to develop a strategy, that will lead to significant improvements in one or more schools described in paragraph 2 of Absolute Priority 1;
 - iii) The extent to which the applicant describes strategies for using data to manage program implementation, inform decision-making, engage stakeholders, and measure success;
 - iv) The extent to which the applicant identifies and describes academic and family and community support indicators to be used for the needs assessment during the planning year;
 - v) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a commitment to work with the Department and with a national evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with plans to conduct a rigorous national evaluation of the Promise Neighborhoods Program during the implementation phase and of specific solutions and strategies pursued by individual grantees; and
 - vi) The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources.

Strengths:

This PN proposal offers a community-based research approach to executing a significant and well-designed demographic household survey of 1,000 PN residents. Even the Community Advisory Board will be recruited from scratch through a snowball sampling and door-to-door engagement. A long series of community meetings will inform data acquisition, problem identification, and solution definition. Population demographics are segmented by income, gender, age, and race. Proposed solutions are to be evaluated internally by evidence for effectiveness. Random sampling of household survey is well-designed.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the project services, the Secretary considers
 - i) The extent to which the applicant describes proposed solutions to be provided by the proposed project that are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence;
 - ii) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards; and
 - iii) The extent to which the applicant explains how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis will be used to determine that children with the highest needs receive appropriate services to meet academic and developmental outcomes.

Strengths:

This PN proposal offers a segmented array of potential interventions that are exhaustive. But, more importantly, the precise nature of future interventions by age, gender, language competence, and race, etc. will be determined not by a top-down approach based on existing data, but, on the outcome of the household-survey needs- assessment and an ongoing series of community meetings.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the quality of the project personnel who will carry out the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the project personnel, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the applicant, including the project director, and the prior performance of the applicant on efforts similar or related to the proposed Promise Neighborhood.
- c) Relevant experience includes the applicant's experience in and lessons learned by
 - i) Working with the school or schools described in paragraph 2 of Absolute Priority 1;
 - ii) Serving the neighborhood and its residents;
 - iii) Collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making and ongoing improvement;

- iv) Creating formal and informal relationships, and generating community support to achieve results; and
- v) Securing and integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources.

Strengths:

The PN Project Director is well-trained, experienced, and was born in the proposed PN area. The Executive Director of the Wilder Foundation is a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Minnesota. His accomplishments as an applied sociologist are of the highest magnitude. The rest of the proposed PN program staff and partners are exceptionally trained and experienced. Project coordination with city (Mayor Coleman) and county (e.g., Toni Carter) officials is well defined. The PN team has an impressive record of using data to drive services.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the management plan of the proposed project, the Secretary considers--
 - i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;
 - ii) The extent to which the memorandum of understanding described in paragraph 5 of Absolute Priority 1 describes each partner's financial and programmatic commitment; how each partner's existing vision, theory of action, and theory of change, and existing activities align with those of the proposed Promise Neighborhood; and the governance structure of the proposed Promise Neighborhood;
 - iii) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of families, school staff, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate; and
 - iv) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to sustain and scale up the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

Strengths:

All aspects of the management plan are well-defined and accomplishable within the year's needs-assessment and program-planning time-frame allocated. The diversity of community-based perspectives is assured by the Community and Youth Advisory Board, PN Advisory Board, Social Action Groups, Community Meetings and Internet Updates. Their comprehensive MOU with affiliated groups is concretely defined including a theory of action which aims to achieve a college going culture. The Mayor of Saint Paul has even signed off on the PN project.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. a) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.
- b) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers
 - i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in long-term systems change or improvement;
 - ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population;
 - iii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies; and
 - iv) The potential to sustain and apply the model of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation of the model in a variety of settings.

Strengths:

The fact that planning for this PN will first involve an in-depth household survey of 1,000 residents is a good first step to insuring relevance to the real needs of the PN community. The intimate involvement of community members in on-going meetings and boards is an excellent adjunct to the empirical data accomplished by the household survey. Future funding sources will most likely respond to the new community-based needs assessment resulting from this household survey. The PN team is building on a strategy that has recently proven to be successful in bringing about higher levels of student educational attainment and lower levels of problematic behavior.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 10

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation -- Wilder Research, (U215P100048)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1.Need for Project	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1.Project Design	20	20
Quality of Project Services		
1.Project Services	15	15
Quality of Project Personnel		
1.Project Personnel	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1.Management Plan	20	20
Significance		
1.Significance	10	10
	Sub Total	100
	Total	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #31 - Panel - 31: 84.215P

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation -- Wilder Research, (U215P100048)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. a) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project.
- b) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers-
 - i) The magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators;
 - ii) The extent to which the geographically defined area has been described; and
 - iii) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities will be identified and addressed by the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant has clearly articulated the need for this Promise Neighborhood funding. It has identified and thoroughly described the disparity in academics as well as family and community support needs. With 8,350 children of the 22,150 residents in 250 city blocks, there are numerous disparities that the applicant proposes to address such as, high absenteeism, low high school graduation rates (55%), and significant academic achievement gaps among Blacks in comparison to Whites. The applicant has also identified several family and community support needs, such as 60% of single parent families, high student mobility rate, high violent and property crime rate, and poverty to include a few that will be addressed by this project.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i) The extent to which the applicant describes how it will plan to build a continuum of solutions designed to significantly improve the academic and family and community support indicators in this notice;
 - ii) The extent to which the continuum of solutions includes a strategy, or a plan to develop a strategy, that will lead to significant improvements in one or more schools described in paragraph 2 of Absolute Priority 1;
 - iii) The extent to which the applicant describes strategies for using data to manage program implementation, inform decision-making, engage stakeholders, and measure success;
 - iv) The extent to which the applicant identifies and describes academic and family and community support indicators to be used for the needs assessment during the planning year;
 - v) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a commitment to work with the Department and with a national evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with plans to conduct a rigorous national evaluation of the Promise Neighborhoods Program during the implementation phase and of specific solutions and strategies pursued by individual grantees; and
 - vi) The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or

related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources.

Strengths:

The applicant described an extremely integrated and comprehensive strategy to build a continuum of solutions using Solution Action Groups to coordinate the interventions for the promise neighborhood. The applicant has a proven track record with using data to drive decisions. The proposed plan is thorough and impressive.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the project services, the Secretary considers
 - i) The extent to which the applicant describes proposed solutions to be provided by the proposed project that are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence;
 - ii) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards; and
 - iii) The extent to which the applicant explains how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis will be used to determine that children with the highest needs receive appropriate services to meet academic and developmental outcomes.

Strengths:

Using a myriad of resources and data the applicant thoroughly delineated its plan to implement project services. The applicant is also using a community based participatory research approach to drive this project which enhances the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the project personnel who will carry out the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the project personnel, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the applicant, including the project director, and the prior performance of the applicant on efforts similar or related to the proposed Promise Neighborhood.
- c) Relevant experience includes the applicant's experience in and lessons learned by
 - i) Working with the school or schools described in paragraph 2 of Absolute Priority 1;
 - ii) Serving the neighborhood and its residents;
 - iii) Collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making and ongoing improvement;
 - iv) Creating formal and informal relationships, and generating community support to achieve results; and
 - v) Securing and integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources.

Strengths:

The project personnel are highly credentialed with several relevant doctoral degrees. They also have demonstrated experience in projects similar to the Promise Neighborhood. They are also proficient in using data to make sound decisions to improving outcomes.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the management plan of the proposed project, the Secretary considers--
 - i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;
 - ii) The extent to which the memorandum of understanding described in paragraph 5 of Absolute Priority 1 describes each partner's financial and programmatic commitment; how each partner's existing vision, theory of action, and theory of change, and existing activities align with those of the proposed Promise Neighborhood; and the governance structure of the proposed Promise Neighborhood;
 - iii) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of families, school staff, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate; and
 - iv) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to sustain and scale up the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

Strengths:

The applicant has ten years experience with documented success in a similar program, Achievement Plus. It describes a detailed plan to sustain and scale up the proposed Promise Neighborhood. This applicant details an extremely structured management plan.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Significance

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.
- b) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers
 - i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in long-term systems change or improvement;
 - ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population;
 - iii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies; and
 - iv) The potential to sustain and apply the model of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation of the model in a variety of settings.

Strengths:

The applicant has a similar program, Achievement Plus, which fits hand in glove with Promise Neighborhoods. The Promise neighborhood will certainly build capacity, improve and expand services to ensure a cradle to career approach for the target population. It has the commitment and financial support of several partners within the community to sustain and implement the model.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/16/10 2:21 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation -- Wilder Research, (U215P100048)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1.Need for Project	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1.Project Design	20	20
Quality of Project Services		
1.Project Services	15	15
Quality of Project Personnel		
1.Project Personnel	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1.Management Plan	20	20
Significance		
1.Significance	10	10
	Sub Total	100
	Total	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #31 - Panel - 31: 84.215P

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation -- Wilder Research, (U215P100048)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

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- b) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers-
 - i) The magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators;
 - ii) The extent to which the geographically defined area has been described; and
 - iii) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities will be identified and addressed by the proposed project.

Strengths:

Compelling needs well documented with verifiable data, e.g. community demographics, estimated number of residents, children under the age of 18, single family households, health, vacant buildings and school performance data. Pps. 2-5.

The PN geographic area - 250 city blocks was clearly delineated, described and documented with a map (Appendix F). Relevant data about disparities of community services and needs in the designated PN in contrast to state were described (education, employment, discrimination). Pps 1-2.

Applicant acknowledged the challenges, yet importance of engaging the disparate and high-need community denizens in the process of building their capacity, connections and information based on data. P. 6.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.
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 - iii) The extent to which the applicant describes strategies for using data to manage program implementation, inform decision-making, engage stakeholders, and measure success;
 - iv) The extent to which the applicant identifies and describes academic and family and community support indicators to be used for the needs assessment during the planning year;
 - v) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a commitment to work with the Department and with a national evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods to ensure that data

collection and program design are consistent with plans to conduct a rigorous national evaluation of the Promise Neighborhoods Program during the implementation phase and of specific solutions and strategies pursued by individual grantees; and

vi) The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources.

Strengths:

Applicant describes the existing experience and success of two community collaboratives (SPCC and RCCMHC) and a successful school-improvement model (Achievement Plus) that will bring new services to the PN. P. 7

Infrastructure improvements - Light Rail - have been committed to the PN providing needed structural transportation and urban renewal upgrades to the community. P. 8
In November 2009, the School Board approved the Community Investment Campus, giving the go-ahead for partner organizations to begin to explore the benefits and realities of the Promise Neighborhood concept that would build upon current efforts. P. 9

Applicant committed to working with national evaluator including obtaining MOUs from partner organizations to facilitated data sharing and co-designing a local evaluation strategy. P. 15.

Applicant described in detail the process for engaging stakeholders through advisory boards, surveys, planning meetings, incentives for participation, constituency solution groups, and a timeline for needs assessment activities. Pps. 10-14

Applicant documented their capacity to manage large data systems and described how a data management systems is being researched to support multiple, interlinked projects including PN. Current data sources (education, health) will be used along with newly community-identified data indicators as both base-line and to measure annual progress. Pps. 15-18. A data-system design plan was included in Appendix F.

Categories of PN indicators listed on P. 18 and delineated in Section 3 (Quality of Project Services).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

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 - iii) The extent to which the applicant explains how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis will be used to determine that children with the highest needs receive appropriate services to meet academic and developmental outcomes.

Strengths:

Applicant describes how, with partners, will identify groups or categories of children (listed 12 categories) and mapped within PN who have the highest need aligned with

existing services to facilitate service access leading to improvement. P. 19

Applicant delineated and documented with research each required program indicator by potential data source, solution and evidence-base for improvement. Pps. 20-24.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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 - i) Working with the school or schools described in paragraph 2 of Absolute Priority 1;
 - ii) Serving the neighborhood and its residents;
 - iii) Collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making and ongoing improvement;
 - iv) Creating formal and informal relationships, and generating community support to achieve results; and
 - v) Securing and integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources.

Strengths:

Applicant has a documented, successful track record of providing community support services with and to the community and within the designated PN. P. 24

The Achievement Plus school reform has been successful and is grounded on a recognized school improvement model - America's Choice.

In addition to the designate Project Director - Hamilton Bell, who is a successful school leader, other identified staff demonstrate high levels of experience and capacity related to their PN assigned positions. Pps. 25 and 29-31. Resumes included.

Appendix A contains letters of financial commitment from an array of community organizations - public and private.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.
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- iii) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of families, school staff, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate; and
- iv) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to sustain and scale up the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

Strengths:

Applicant included a timeline (P. 14) and a detailed organizational chart (Appendix F) and detailed reporting, oversight, roles and responsibilities in narrative (pps. 31-34). The project design ensures active stakeholder engagement through community and youth advisory boards, solution action groups, community meetings held in the PN. P. 34. Each partner signed an collaborative MOU where-in their contribution and commitment was individually noted and their agreement to a commonly held theory of action, change and continuation of their current services was confirmed. Appendix A.

Continued support was demonstrated via attached letters of commitment from both partner organizations and public and private community organizations. Appendix A.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Significance

- 1. a) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.
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 - iii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies; and
 - iv) The potential to sustain and apply the model of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation of the model in a variety of settings.

Strengths:

Applicant intends to begin engaging and informing the PN residents of the needs assessment this summer. They will expand a currently successful school improvement model to 2 schools within the PN and employ proven community building, needs assessment, data management and community problem solving strategies based on Wilder best practices. The Applicant has a broad contract base through which lessons and effective strategies can be shared and potentially replicated. Pps. 38-40.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/16/10 2:21 PM