

Subject: New submission ALBANY Workforce Development Application
Date: Wednesday, July 5, 2023 at 1:59:01 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: jnytko@govsol.org
To: jnytko@govsol.org

General Information
Date of application
06/30/2023
Entity name
Expertise Project, Inc.
Entity physical address
1513 Clifton Park Rd. Niskayuna, NY 12309 United States Map It
Is the entity's mailing address different from the physical address?
No
Contact Information
Primary contact name
Daniel O'Sullivan
Primary contact title
Partner
Primary contact phone
(518) 505-4680
Primary contact email
danosullivan@expertiseproject.org
What is the preferred method of contact?
Email
Website (if available)
https://www.expertiseproject.org/
Entity Info and Structure
Which legal structure best describes the entity?
Corporation
What was the date of the entity's establishment?
01/01/2014
If a business, what is the primary function (select best option)
Child Care, Education, Instruction

If applicable, is the business a M/WBE (Minority or Women-Owned Business Enterprise)?

No

Have you or the entity ever received any form of COVID-19 relief funds?

No

Project Information

Please provide a short summary of your proposed project including a project name, general description, total cost, reason(s) why you are pursuing the project and anticipated impact:

ExPr and Albany County

Expertise Project proposes to video record the workplaces and worker activities at both non-profit and for-profits throughout Albany County with a focus on venues serving the DEI community and on employers in manufacturing, construction, agriculture and the design/build space.

We build mini-documentaries that try to capture the atmosphere of the workplace along with story-telling of:

Suitability - would I fit in here? Does anyone look like me?

Sustainability - will it pay enough? Does this provide safety, security, and some comfort beyond?

Relevancy - lesson plans with trade math showing 'How did they know how to do that?'

We create immersive 360 degree video and distribute to employers to better engage and recruit, and to counselors and teachers to help expose new opportunities to students.

We capture conversations with employees who talk about how they got to that job, what training they had or were receiving, what they liked and disliked, and what they do in their spare time. These stories expose varied backgrounds, and lifestyles, and create role models to follow.

We build Lesson Plans that put trade math into context of what workers in the videos are doing - answering "Why do I need to learn that?"

Counselors and teachers, especially Family and Consumer Sciences teachers, and technology teachers are a core user group.

1) We propose to capture, edit, and distribute both 360 and 2D video and create associated lesson plans which will feature 10 Albany County employers. Expertise Project regularly charges employers 10k for this service and product package. The fee for this service is \$30,000.

2a) We propose to license annual subscriptions to ExPR.Online internet video platform to Albany City School District and Cohoes City School District for \$19,700 per year for a period of two years for \$39,420. This number is an estimate of the Grades 7-12 population (~ 5,400~) multiplied by \$3.65 for two years. We refer to it as the 'penny plan.' As new videos are added to the ExPr platform from employers throughout the ExPr network, they are all available through the subscriptions.

2b) We propose to provide, provision, and service twenty (22) VR headsets to be distributed to the different campuses of the ACSD and Cohoes. The fee for this is \$38,500 for the first year (the school will own the VR Headset) and \$5,500 per year afterwards. As new 360 video is captured throughout the ExPr network of partners, we can upload these new videos remotely to the headsets.

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3a) We propose to license annual subscriptions to ExPR.Online to any Albany County services organization that this Albany County Economic Development Office thinks is a good candidate for such services such as workforce, re-training, diversion and re-entry programs. An example of a community service might be Trinity Alliance, or any of a number of others the County recommends. We guess the population number served would be 10,000 for an annual fee of \$36,500 and propose a subscription term of two years for \$73,000.

N.B. - ExPr subscribers are given one login name and one password for that entire subscribing cohort. We collect no Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and we encourage the cohort's members (students) to share the subscription access with their families to use.

3b) We propose to provide, provision and service ten (10) headsets to any Albany County services organization that this Albany County Economic Development Office thinks is a good candidate for such services. The fee for this is \$17,500 for the first year (the services organization will own the VR Headset) and \$2,500 per year afterwards. As new 360 video is captured throughout the ExPr network of partners, we will upload these new videos remotely to the headsets.

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4) We propose that on a regular basis, every attempt will be made by us to enlist students and other interested persons to come out onsite with ExPr to tour worksites, ask questions of the employers, audio and video capture the entire experience, and when possible, assist in editing the final version for distribution to be shared with everyone

throughout the ExPr network. We provide a video bootcamp that covers the soft skills of workplace visits, basic safety, and basic videography. No Fee.

What amount of funding is being requested?

\$210,000

Does the project budget have any additional sources of funds?

No

Project Description

Identify and describe whether funds will be used in any of the following areas. Check all that apply.

- 1. Establishment of a new training program
- 2. Expanding an existing program – investment in outreach/ community engagement
- 4. Expanding an existing program – investment in wraparound services connected to a workforce development program (i.e. childcare, transportation, etc.)

If "1. Establishment of a new training program" above, describe the purpose of the program in detail including approach, industry focus proposed use of funds, program need, target population

We replace the term 'training' used here with "Establishment of a new comprehensive awareness platform showing workforce career and training pathways."

Purpose is as described above with the inclusion of training pathways such as BOCES, CTE, P-Tech, Community College, and Apprenticeship programs.

Industry focus is 'the trades' as found in manufacturing, construction, agriculture and the design/build fields of architecture and engineering.

In Manufacturing, we work with clients ranging from small to large, ranging from machine shops, to plastic extrusion, to electronic assembly, to fabric manufacture, to brewing, to paint manufacture, to leather manufacture, to machine parts, to wood furniture, to solar farm Developers, to semiconductor manufacturers, as well as some of the NY MEPS, such as Fuzehub, CEG, and AIM.

In Construction we work with clients from large to small employers, ranging from home builder to medium and large general contractors, to NY Department of Transportation.

We currently work with Carpentry, Laborers and Ironworkers Unions.

All employers are encouraged to make sure we get to record and speak with women and minorities at their workplaces. Prospective employees MUST see people like themselves in order to be interested.

Our target population on the subscriber side is anyone who is uncertain of their job and career options, and persons looking for career change. Traditional schools starting at least in Middle School but also High School, Community College, and University.

School can also mean an EOC, adult learning, a retraining, or a re-entry program.

Schools are also skills and job training programs ranging from early BOCES, CTE, and STEM education, to later-stage like Union and company Apprenticeships. We consider the attendees or clients of all these school types to be students.

If "2. Expanding an existing program – investment in outreach/ community engagement" above, describe in detail how funds will be used to support.

There are many discrete workforce and community development programs that have discrete marketing plans -- if any at all.

Expertise Projects builds a unified view into our target industries and builds stronger collaboration and synapse among current workforce stakeholders.

We intervene in early academic boredom, irrelevancy, and failure.

We show other people at work who can serve as role models.

We expect to see better grade results, lower dropout rates, and higher employment training enrollment over time

If "4. Expanding an existing program – investment in wraparound services connected to a workforce development program (i.e. childcare, transportation, etc.)" above, describe in detail how funds will be used to

support.

This project will assist in Increasing Awareness and the Marketing of multiple Economic Development, Workforce Development and Community Development programs - both existing and new - throughout Albany County and beyond.

Describe your organizations experience as a provider of workforce development/ training opportunities, including any experience in Albany County.

We have worked with Workforce Development Institute (WDI), Fuzehub, and Center for Economic Growth to capture, edit and create video showcasing several Albany County manufacturers.

Video venues include NSH (Simmons Tools), Transtech, Curtis Lumber, NY DOT, LaBella, Rifenburg and others.

We have a COSER in place with Capital Region BOCES where participating schools can get state aid for buying Expertise Project based on a school-needs formula. Dr. Joe Dragone is our 'sponsor' there.

We have participated in technology demonstrations at Tech Valley High School.

We are actively working on establishing and/or expanding our relationships with Albany based entities such as NY Dept Corrections, NYS SNUG at Division of Criminal Justice Services, Office of the Albany County District Attorney, Clean Energy Hub via Radix Center, NYSERDA via HVCC, and others.

List any project partners, their role, and any funding they will receive (please note project partners may also be subject to compliance and reporting requirements).

NA at this time.

If an award is made, describe how Albany County residents will benefit. Use specific metrics where possible (e.g. number of individuals sectoral job training programs).

The target Albany CSD and Cohoes CSD population (7 - 12) is 5,400 student plus their families. The estimated community services population is 10,000.

If we assume a coverage of 20,000 we might expect at least 10% or 2,000 people to acquire exposure and an awareness to the trades and the local training programs to get there.

Exposure to employees at site venues, and teachers and administrators in the 'schools' and their families - are not counted in this estimate.

In order to be eligible for ARPA funding, programs must serve low-to-moderate income households/communities (classified as 350% of the Federal Poverty Level) or households that experienced unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please describe specifically how your proposal will benefit unemployed or underemployed individuals meet this requirement and how you will verify this to the County.

We are increasing our activities in working with other community organizations that are not specifically dedicated to workforce development. These service providers are often focused on the DEI community.

We do surveys for schools to students (and teachers!) to measure local employer awareness. We will expand this program to do more 'before-and-after' measurements.

We will follow up with participating employers to see if they are seeing any increased awareness at their recruitment fairs or in their actual hiring.

How Will You Track Performance Goals And Define Success? Include at least two Key Performance Indicators and expected annual outcomes/impact during the reporting period (September 2023 - December 2026).

Most marketing and awareness programs have difficulty tracking effectiveness.

In addition to awareness surveys in the schools themselves, Expertise Project will make additional effort to survey all area employers and trainers to measure training program population rates and 'lead source' wherever possible.

"Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don't know which half." -- John Wannamaker, "pioneer in marketing"

What is the proposed project start date?

August 2023

What is the anticipated date of completion?

Expertise Project is designed to provide value for money and to be sustainable. This Expertise Project in Albany County project will be completed by August 2026.

Please provide key project milestones inclusive of the anticipated timelines and descriptions

Milestone	Anticipated Date	Task Description
Project scope and particulars	August 31, 2023	Provide AC Econ Dev a contract for services with all services and product specifications, deliverables and timelines defined.

Describe how the funding will support a sustainable workforce development initiative that will continue to serve Albany County residents after ARPA funds have been exhausted.

Expertise Project is building a double-sided solution to serve a double-sided problem. A double-sided business model is employed.

Employers will pay \$1000/yr. to be a Directory Member (enhanced listing), or \$3,000/yr. to be a Distributing Member. Additional fees of \$250/yr. per VR headsets may also apply.

Subscribers will pay the \$3.65/yr. for the number of participants in the cohort (school, non-profit, etc)

We believe our biggest challenge is to build ExPr to the point where it provides measurable, sustainable, and growing value to all our clients over time.

Explain why arpa funds are needed to complete the project. Would the project be possible either without arpa assistance or assistance to a lesser degree?

Expertise Project will continue to grow throughout our main activity areas in the Capital Region, Mohawk Valley, and Central NY but are limited in resources to devote much energy to any one region at this time.

We will proceed slowly in Albany County without this ARPA assistance but would love to be able to reach a critical mass of network effect by accelerating our efforts here where we the Principals live.

We can scale this ARPA project to become much larger or much smaller as financial resources allow.

Are you a Workforce Development/Training Provider?

No

Are you a company?

Yes

At the top of this page is a downloadable project budget. Please download the budget form and upload it here.

- [Expertise-Project-in-Albany-County-ARPA2.pdf](#)

If you are funding a multi-year initiative, please provide a breakdown of funding level per year below:

2023	2024	2025	2026
142,210	64,210		

Is any upfront funding needed to successfully implement your proposed project?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please explain how much and why

VR Headset Equipment costs are mostly pass-through from the manufacturer and payments for them must be upfront before they are deployed. It is reasonable that it may take some months to deploy all the proposed headsets.

Quarterly payments for all other products and services are subject to milestones reached and reports from ExPr to

Albany County completed.

Explain why ARPA Funds Are Needed to Complete the proposed program/project. Would the proposal be Possible Without ARPA Assistance? Describe how your proposal would be impacted if you are awarded a smaller grant than requested?

As described above.

ExPr will continue to build our alliances throughout Albany County and NY even as this project accelerates our efforts and effects.

Risk Assessment

Has the entity adopted and/or implemented policies relating to: records retention, conflict of interest, code of ethics, and/or nondiscrimination policies?

No

Is the entity properly licensed or certified by a recognized source ?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please provide additional information.

To be Provided

Does the entity have a financial management system?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please describe the financial system, its capabilities and how it will help to track the proposed project.

Excel and Quickbooks for financials, bookkeeping

Asana for project management

Has there been any change in the entity's key staffing positions in the last 2 years?

No

Has the entity previously done work for or received funds from the Federal government (i.e. Is the entity experienced in managing Federal funds)?

No

The County is careful about identifying and avoiding conflicts of interest, especially with grants awarded through the County. A conflict of interest arises when a person's self-interest and professional interest or public interest intersect. In this situation, there is the potential for biased professional judgment and lack of objectivity which creates a serious conflict when one of the interests can benefit financially or personally from actions or decisions made in the official capacity. A conflict of interest exists whether or not decisions are affected by a personal interest; there only needs to be the possibility of bias for a conflict. If your organization knows of a possible conflict of interest with your application for funds please disclose that information here. Otherwise write "None."

None

Certifications

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 1

- I Have Been Provided a Copy and Understand the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (see link or PDF included at the top of page)

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 2

- Should the County Allocate ARPA Funds, I am Able to and Pledge to Adhere to ALL Compliance and Reporting Requirements of the U.S. Treasury as it relates to any State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 3

- I Understand the County Will Contact me if/when Additional Information is Needed and that Information will be Promptly Provided to the County to Support Reporting Requirements

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 4

- If for Any Reason I am Unable to Comply with the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Requirements I will Immediately Notify the County in writing by email or letter

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 5

- All Information Submitted in this Application is True & Accurate

Electronic Signature Agreement

I agree

By checking the "I agree" box below, you agree and acknowledge that 1) your application will not be signed in the sense of a traditional paper document, 2) by signing in this alternate manner, you authorize your electronic signature to be valid and binding upon you to the same force and effect as a handwritten signature, and 3) you may still be required to provide a traditional signature at a later date.

Type Name Below

Daniel O'Sullivan