

Subject: New submission ALBANY Workforce Development Application

Date: Friday, June 30, 2023 at 4:25:28 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: jnytko@govsol.org

To: jnytko@govsol.org

General Information
Date of application
06/27/2023
Entity name
Radix Ecological Sustainability Center
Entity TIN, EIN or Social Security Number
27-1216514
Entity physical address
153 Grand St. (site) Albany, NY 12202 United States Map It
Is the entity's mailing address different from the physical address?
Yes
If "Yes" above, what is the mailing address?
59 Elm Street Albany, NY 12202 United States Map It
Contact Information
Primary contact name
Stacy Pettigrew
Primary contact title
Executive Director
Primary contact phone
(518) 605-3256
Primary contact email
stacy@radixcenter.org
What is the preferred method of contact?
Email
Website (if available)
https://radixcenter.org
Entity Info and Structure
Which legal structure best describes the entity?

Nonprofit

What was the date of the entity's establishment?

12/01/2009

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)?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please upload supporting documentation

- [Radix-Board-of-Directors-2023.pdf](#)

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

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify type and amount.

We received 2 PPP loans: \$31,600 in 2020 and 39,034.47 in 2021.

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:

Radix Ecological Sustainability Center requesting support for our Youth Employment Program. We employ youth from low-to-moderate income households; we expect to have up to 8 Youth Employees and 2 Environmental Educators working on this program five days per week.

We will use these funds to provide wraparound services to these employees, such as health and career readiness services. Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region has agreed to provide us with a Community Health Worker; this subcontractor will be able to assess individual employees' health needs and connect them with resources accordingly. This service will extend to employees' families as well, allowing us to serve more of our community through this program. Additionally, we would like to set aside funding for professional development services, such as hosting career counselors, financial literacy educators, and potential employers to share their resources and expertise with our youth. The total program cost from 9/1/23-12/31/26 is \$1,595,984. We are requesting \$418,300 in ARPA funding to support this program.

This expansion of our Youth Employment Program will deepen our ability to connect with these employees and provide them with much needed personal and professional development skills, with the aim of preparing them to enter the workforce full-time. This program is designed to mitigate a lack of employment opportunities for youth, which is made worse by annual losses of businesses, a lack of opportunities for youth to safely socialize and learn collaboratively which has been magnified by the pandemic, and a lack of career and educational opportunities for youth to investigate the intersection between society and the natural environment, an intersection at the forefront of climate change preparedness.

It is our hope that youth who go through this program will receive personalized support that empowers them personally and professionally, helping them to identify their needs, challenges, skills, and goals. This funding will allow us to provide financial support to these youth directly while teaching them to find their own pathways to success upon completing our program. We also expect this impact to reach beyond Radix, as much of our work aims to provide resources such as education, green space, and fresh produce to our local community.

What amount of funding is being requested?

\$418,300

Does the project budget have any additional sources of funds?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify the additional sources below.

NYS DEC, NYSEDA, the Hortense and Louis Rubin Community Health Fund, United Way, other private foundations, program service income, private donations.

I certify that if awarded, ARPA funding will not displace any other project funding

Yes, I certify

Project Description

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

- 4. Expanding an existing program – investment in wraparound services connected to a workforce development program (i.e. childcare, transportation, etc.)

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.

We will be expanding our program and adding wraparound services in a two-fold manner; first, we are partnering with Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region to provide us with a Community Health Worker to address a lack of health support services available to our employees and their families. We will be using \$73,900 to fund this Health Worker, who will work at .33 FTE to assess the needs of our employees and connect with them appropriate resources. It is our goal to have bi-monthly check-ins with each youth and our Community Health Worker to reevaluate their progress. Additionally, we are hoping to greatly enhance our ability to prepare our youth to enter the workforce by hosting professional development seminars, where we will host career counselors, industry leaders, and other experts who can work with youth to build a clear plan for their future. It is our goal to use these seminars to help youth assess their needs and skills, as well as creating actionable plans with each employee for the next step they will take in their careers. We plan to tailor this program to meet the individual needs and interests of our youth employees. We are requesting \$5,229 for these various professional development services.

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

Radix has been employing youth, particularly from the South End of Albany for over 10 years. We provide a safe and educational way for youth to earn money and learn about environmental stewardship. Our employees get hands-on training for many employable skills, from basic career skills such as tracking work hours and understanding payment structures, to ecological and social skills such as public speaking, conducting outreach, maintaining gardens, hosting educational workshops, and growing food in urban settings. Plus, our program is designed to educate the public as a whole about sustainable systems, working with thousands of people each year who range from preschoolers to working adults.

Radix is also a subcontractor for NYSEDA's Capital Region Clean Energy Hub, which is a coalition of local organizations who are working to advance clean energy initiatives in the Capital Region. Radix is specifically focused on expanding the clean energy workforce, and we hired a full-time Environmental Workforce Coordinator (Lillian Triana-Strautmanis) to work on this Clean Energy Hub with our Program Coordinator (Haley O'Brien). These staff members are currently partnering with organizations such as Capital District Clean Energy, TAP, Inc., Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County, and Affordable Housing Partnership to conduct research and outreach around our local clean energy workforce. Our main goal is to connect individuals from disadvantaged communities and/or low-to-moderate income households with economic opportunities that will give them a personal stake in the clean energy industry. This work is very cohesive with our Youth Employment Program, allowing us to gather data and provide training/employment opportunities to our youth. ARPA funds will greatly enhance our ability to do so by allowing Radix to directly provide our employees with individually-tailored wraparound services that will help them succeed in and out of the workforce.

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).

Our main partner on this project will be Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, who has agreed to be our subcontractor and provide us with a Community Health Worker.

Community Health Workers address the social determinants of health that support individuals and families in achieving their health and wellness goals (occupational wellness included). Community health workers provide support with wraparound care and support tailored to an individual's needs and circumstances. Examples of the types of support that Community Health Workers provide include:

- Transportation navigation/assistance

- ID/Documentation assistance
- Navigating benefits/departments of social services (and advocacy at these appointments)
- Housing resource navigation
- Health care access
- Navigating child care
- Navigating education systems
- and other needs as they arise

CHWs provide direct service/intervention where applicable. There is no length of time that a CHW is capped at to provide service; we engage individuals for as long as required in order to provide tailored support and ensure the individual's needs are met. Outside of the services that CHWs provide directly, they also have access to robust networks of service providers that can facilitate and support with needs outside a CHW's scope such as legal, financial, etc. We acknowledge that all aspects of one's life can affect ability to sustain employment and/or excel in employment settings; Community Health Workers support with alleviating stressors that may impact, directly or indirectly, engagement in the workforce.

This partnership will allow us to meet our employees' needs more holistically by providing them support that goes beyond the workplace. This will directly benefit these employees and their families who may not have easy access to health and support services on their own. Radix operates on a belief of intersectionality, and we are confident that adding this wraparound care to our Youth Employment Program will directly benefit our workforce development initiative by supporting the emotional, mental, physical, and financial wellness of our employees and their communities. We plan to use \$73,900 of this award to fund our Community Health Worker's salary.

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).

Those who benefit most from our Youth Employment Program include the youth, their caregivers, South End residents, and our community nonprofit partners, most of whom reside or operate in Albany County. As a result of this program, youth employees gain interpersonal trust building and communication skills, professional development opportunities, environmental awareness, personal accountability, and a regular income to begin practicing financial literacy skills.

The families of our youth also greatly benefit from this program. Radix educators are always available to parents, frequently working with them to address issues youth or the broader community may be having. Additionally, the mental health services we will provide in partnership with Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region will be tailored towards meeting the needs of employees and their families, meaning this support will extend to our employees' communities. Our professional development services will aim to expand workforce development initiatives already in place within Albany County by connecting youth with local opportunities, particularly those that focus on sustainability and/or provide on-the-job training.

Outside of our employees, our work at Radix has a direct, positive impact on Albany residents by providing environmental education, waste diversion, mass food redistribution, urban green space, and access to fresh, local produce which is grown both at Radix and at free-to-harvest gardens we maintain around the city. Our Youth Employment Program supports many of these services we provide and allows us to connect with hundreds to thousands of residents around the County each year.

Finally, our Youth Employment Program helps us stay connected with our nonprofit partners, such as AVillage, Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, and the South End Children's Café. Radix's youth employees are instrumental in maintaining meaningful relationships with our partners. In return, our partners help Radix recruit employees enrolled in their services; roughly a third of our youth employees were recruited through our nonprofit and educational partners.

These partnerships also allow us to work together to better serve our combined communities. For example, we recently hosted South End Earth Day at Radix with the help of our partners listed above. Because of our combined efforts, 50-100 people joined together to volunteer, educate, learn, and ultimately connect with their local community. This level of success was only possible due to the hard work of our youth and partnering organizations.

We will measure success of this program through a variety of metrics; first, we will assess the total amount paid to employees from low-to-moderate income households to track the direct financial benefits to our local community. We will also track their progress as they meet with our Community Health Worker on an ongoing basis and find resources that work for them; we will have at least 3 meetings per year between individual employees and our Community Health Worker, and we will generally track the services employees receive in a progress report with attention to confidentiality. Finally, we will have professional development seminars with our youth, where we will invite experts and partners to provide resources to these employees as they begin planning their future. We will track each of these trainings, as well as milestones such as creating resumes, making a budget, and applying to full-time jobs, college, or apprenticeships.

It is our hope that our youth employees will take the skills and support they receive through their time at Radix to build a successful career after this program, adding motivated and reliable employees into the local workforce. Investing in our youth is always a profitable endeavor, and ensuring these young people are supported while they navigate their transition into adulthood will continue to give them an advantage as they pursue all future goals. This advantage will extend into their homes and communities as well, thanks to the wraparound support we're planning to provide. Connecting families with health services they need could have a lasting generational impact on these communities as a whole, not just on our specific youth employees.

As discussed previously, our youth program allows us to continuously contribute to our community through our services and training opportunities. Many of our programs are community-based, providing a space for networking and collaborative learning. With education at the forefront of our mission, our youth will be able to share the personal and professional development skills they learn from this program with hundreds to thousands of local residents per year, enabling us to support even more community members as they enter and sustain our workforce.

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.

Radix works most directly with the South End community, which is where many of our Youth Employees are from as well. The South End of Albany was designated a potential environmental justice area by DEC in 2003. The neighborhood is also identified as a disadvantaged community by the draft criteria proposed by the NYS Climate Justice Working Group. Home to roughly 8300 residents, the South End is a majority Black, historically redlined neighborhood with a \$27,750 median household income (2019 American Communities Survey). 32% of households live below the poverty line. ARPA funding will allow us to provide meaningful work and a consistent income for students who are traditionally denied access to opportunities, while helping them prepare for a financially stable future. We plan to use these funds only to support youth from low-to-moderate income households; we will provide verification forms from each employee's guardian to corroborate this.

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).

Our short-term career readiness goals aim for youth to understand the basic expectations of being a reliable and confident employee. During this first level, we also train youth to understand what is workplace appropriate through harassment training for everyone and individual discussions, as needed. We will expand on this through our professional development wraparound services, seeking to educate youth on the basics of finding, applying, acquiring, and maintaining full-time employment after completing our program at Radix. We will provide diverse resources about their various potential pathways after high school, including college programs/financial assistance, internships, apprenticeships and training programs, entrepreneurship, and local industries. We will track milestones such as creating resumes and cover letters, completing skills assessments, developing goals, working through challenges, and meeting with experts who can teach them more about their individual field of interest. We will quantify the number of youth hours worked, youth retention in the program, and attendance at professional development opportunities to measure success.

Long-term environmental awareness goals include an understanding of environmental justice concepts and the ability to effectively present on behalf of Radix or lead educational programs for diverse audiences. Radix youth who have achieved these goals have given speeches at South End Earth Day, the Citizens' Climate Conference, and The Black Caucus of the Public Employee's Federation Union's 'Sustainable Choices in the Time of Climate Emergency' environmental lecture. Recently, one of our youth's drawings was used as the County's Earth Day reusable bag design. She was given a chance to speak at a press conference at Radix with County Executive McCoy and other elected officials.

Long-term health goals include improved health and wellness for our employees, their families, and their communities at large. Our trackable performance indicator will be our youth employees developing healthy routines, lifestyles, and conflict resolution skills that support their physical, emotional, and mental health. It is our hope that our Community Health Worker will be able to provide support on an ongoing basis, adjusting as individual needs change over time. We hope that each family will utilize at least 3-5 resources provided if necessary. Beyond this, it is our hope that these individuals will be more able to maintain steady employment and report an overall increased quality of life due to their increased access to this wraparound care. While we will track the number of hours of support provided by the community health worker, we are sensitive to confidentiality concerning types of services and will likely report contact time.

Radix's second-level career readiness goals include the ability to effectively make future goals and assess the steps necessary to reach them. It is our hope that every employee who completes this program will do so with a clear plan in mind, and we will assist them with job seeking, applications, interview preparation, and so on. Our clear

performance indicator for professional development will be our success at bringing youth into our local workforce, especially in the clean energy/sustainability sector, as well as colleges.

What is the proposed project start date?

9/1/23

What is the anticipated date of completion?

12/31/26

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

Milestone	Anticipated Date	Task Description
Youth participation in the program	Monthly	Youth work an estimated 480 hours/month in the program, including attend discussions, workshops, and engaging in direct labor.
Connections with needed support	Ongoing	Youth and their families will be connected to needed wraparound supports via the Community Health Worker

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.

This funding will support the pilot inclusion of wraparound services in our youth employment program. We hope that the program will be successful, and that we will be able to document the impact of these additional services to attract future sustainable funding.

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?

Radix is a small nonprofit with an annual operating budget of \$450,000. We rely entirely on grant funding such as ARPA to facilitate our programs, especially our Youth Employment Program. Our current funding for our youth employment program will run out before the end of this year, and we currently have no capacity for wraparound services like the ones we're proposing here. ARPA funds will enable us to continue employing individuals from low-to-moderate income households and provide personalized support to these employees. We will unfortunately not be able to carry out this program as planned if we are not selected to receive these funds.

Are you a Workforce Development/Training Provider?

Yes

If "Yes" above, describe the industry or industries served by this program. List any specific companies who you will be partnering with.

As described above, we operate a youth employment program for high school aged youth. The program teaches ecology, environmental science, sustainability, food and environmental justice, along with practical gardening skills, general life-skills and job-readiness. The program provides an important learning and development experience that will help the youth successfully navigate the world as young adults. It also provides an experience they can list on their resumes or use in their college applications.

Are you a company?

No

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

- [Workforce-Budget_Radix.pdf](#)

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

2023	2024	2025	2026
40,000	120,000	126,000	132,300

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

Yes

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

While not absolutely necessary, it would be helpful to obtain funding in advance on a quarterly basis. If funding was not received in advance, we request quarterly disbursements.

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?

Radix is a small nonprofit with an annual operating budget of \$450,000. We rely entirely on grant funding such as ARPA to facilitate our programs, especially our Youth Employment Program. Our current funding for our youth employment program will run out before the end of this year, and we currently have no capacity for wraparound services like the ones we're proposing here. ARPA funds will enable us to continue employing individuals from low-to-moderate income households and provide personalized support to these employees. We will unfortunately not be able to carry out this program as planned if we are not selected to receive these funds. A smaller funding level would reduce the amount of youth in the program and the community health worker support hours.

Provide any additional project related information you feel may support your application (optional)

- [Community-Health-Worker-JD_08152019.docx](#)

Tax Information

Please upload Federal tax returns for 2019

- [990_All-forms-2019.pdf](#)

Please upload Federal tax returns for 2020

- [2020-990-Radix-Signatures_smp.pdf](#)

Please upload Federal tax returns for 2021

- [2021-990-signed_NO-B.PDF](#)

If available, please provide your Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov

XYFAJ18R4Y25

Risk Assessment

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

Yes

If "Yes" above, what policies have been adopted?

We have a record retention policy, conflict of interest policy, non-discrimination policies, and a code of ethical conduct.

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

Not applicable

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.

Our finances are managed by our Executive Director with assistance from our Program Coordinator using Quickbooks. We contract with Capital CFO+ as our Chief Financial Officer. Our payroll and health/dental benefits are managed through Paychex Flex.

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)?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please provide additional details below.

We have recieved a small grant from the USDA to build our high tunnel greenhouse. We have also received Community Block Development Grants from the City of Albany.

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

Stacy Pettigrew

