

Innovation Grant

Applicant	Mindi Anderson
Applicant ID	APP-000452
Company Name	Idaho Veterans Chamber of Commerce
Recipient Address	Idaho Veterans Chamber of Commerce PO 191341 Boise, ID 83719
Email	mindy@idahoveterans.org
Funding Requested	\$282,753.60
Status	Submitted
Funded	<input type="checkbox"/>

Review Notes:

September 28, 2021 Grant Review Committee Minutes:

The grant funds intended use is to bridge the gap between veterans and employers. Representatives will work with employees on skills transferability and the program would utilize SkillsBridge, US Department of Defense (DoD) to connect with civilian employers. The DoD currently pays for the SkillsBridge access for 6 months. This is a statewide level endeavor to match job seekers to employer by matching military experience to civilian needs. Idaho Department of Labor (IDOL) estimates the Idaho Veterans labor force at approximately 44,000 with 3,000 unemployed.

WDTF Request: \$282,753.60

Discussion:

How many Veterans have migrated to Idaho recently?

- IdahoWorks estimates 562 Veterans have relocated to Idaho

What is the breakdown of the funding dollars requested and sustainability?

- 69% for salaries, 12% for contract services, and the remainder for travel and minimal staff.
- The program is currently 100% volunteers, after 2 years of expanding employer engagement and implementing new protocols, the program will revert to 100% volunteer staff.

Motion by Mr. Reynolds to recommend approval of the Idaho Veterans Chamber of Commerce Innovation Grant in the full amount of \$282,753.60 to the Executive Committee. Second by Mr. Larsen. Motion carried.

Contact Information

Question: Lead entity legal name

Idaho Veterans Chamber of Commerce

Question: "Doing business as" entity name (if Applicable)

N/A

Question: Federal Tax ID Number

86-1521040

Question: Street address

PO 191341

Question: PO Box (If applicable)

Not Answered

Question: City

Boise

Question: State

ID

Question: Zip Code

83719

Question: Website

www.idahoveterans.org

Question: First name of person to be contacted about this application

Mindi

Question: Last name

Anderson

Question: Job title

Executive Director

Question: Street address

2417 E SANTO STEFANO DR.

Question: City

MERIDIAN

Question: State

ID

Question: Zip code

83642

Question: Email address

mindy@idahoveterans.org

Question: Contact phone

12089179977

Project Overview

Innovation grants can fund projects that address local workforce development needs. Projects may provide skills training to individuals and/or assist individuals with connecting to careers.

Question: Please provide a brief overview/executive summary addressing what you're trying to accomplish with this project. (You are limited to 2000 characters for this section so please be concise.)

Idaho Veterans Chamber of Commerce is seeking funding to support the full launch of the Workforce Management Navigation Services Model to bridge the gaps between the Civilian Employers and the Military job seeker communities. Job seekers will be military in transition, veterans that have already transitioned and family members. We will fully launch the workforce navigation services after 1 year of piloting throughout The State of Idaho virtually and in person. We have established partnership relationships with the Idaho Division of Veteran Services, Idaho Department of Labor, Workforce Development Council, and Senator Crapo's office to develop MOU opportunities to support The State of Idaho, NDAA FY20, Section 20 that now requires Department of Defense to notify states of military members leaving the military and have declared on their discharge checklist that they will return to Idaho. The partnership team is requesting the Idaho Veterans Chamber of Commerce to take on the role of receiving the data from DoD as the first state in the country to pilot the process. With our Chamber being fully mission capable and ready to use our navigation services to support the pilot, we are seeking funding to hire positions that will allow for us to be the pipeline for the information provided by DoD to be then processed and support the military member and their families in transition by using resources within the Chamber and also creating the pathways and connection for the military in transition to find work upon their arrival in Idaho.

Our model along with roles/responsibilities can be further reviewed in Attachment A. Navigation Services Model & Roles. Currently the navigation services model is supported by volunteers and

has been for the last 1 year. To be ready to process the volume of data we would be provided through the NDAA FY 20 Pilot Project and our full-scale marketing launch plan, the navigation services model will need part time staff to support the workload. We are requesting funding for all 6 regions to hire part time employees to fill the roles of a Project Manager, Community Outreach Director, Navigator Specialists, and supporting marketing support for the duration of the grant if awarded. Funding would also support, education, training, workshops, summits, job career fairs, and increase the amount of SkillBridge employers in the State. SkillBridge is an internship opportunity to receive a military member in transition for 6 months prior to their discharge to be integrated into the workforce of the state they will return too. Idaho currently has 4 employers, 3 are not being utilized, the 4th is the Idaho Veterans Chamber of Commerce. We have piloted the program and have had 3 SkillBridge members come to the Chamber to work, and they have been or will be placed in the Idaho Workforce Community through our partnerships and agreements. Hiring positions for the initial launch of the navigator model are critical to being ready to handle the workforce needs increase we are experiencing from both the employers and the military job seekers. This grant will be used to launch a Navigator Model Test

for continued launch and development on a larger scale than what the volunteers can manage currently.

Question: If training is part of the project, how does it address specific employer-identified skills gaps in the community?

Employer skills gaps addressed would be within the military education system, workforce programs and how to find the military job seekers to support their workforce needs will be our primary focus. Training will be educating employers on the different programs through military, education institutes and organizations that promote apprenticeship, OJT, internship programs and veteran workforce initiatives already established. Those include working within our committee's and developing pathways to train and educate the employer community on specific workforce skills that could be sought out from the military community and their family members. We would train our navigators, and the employers to create a pipeline for all military job seekers and their families to come to for workforce placement that would encompass all our objectives identified on what we intend to execute.

Training provided by the Chamber would also support the lack of understanding how robust talent acquisition practices within veteran and family-owned businesses could support the success of their companies. There are significant gaps in the way the military HR systems work and understanding the civilian system. Through training and educating our veterans and their family members and business owners, we would provide them with a better understanding of how to implement good HR practices, support them in establishing and helping them through the process of hiring.

Question: Workforce Development Training Funds are intended to supplement, but not supplant or compete with resources available through existing programs. Are there existing resources available to meet the employers' needs? How are those resources lacking?

There currently are no resources that are primarily focused on building the employer network and educating them on military workforce opportunities deeply rooted in the civilian community. There are organizations that specifically target the military community and prepare the members for jobs however, none that create the space for career placement and creating a pipeline by having all employers in one place to cast a broad and wide net when a job seeker is looking for placement. There is not an organization embedded in the civilian community that is both military and civilian centric to bridge the gaps between the two communities through navigation services. We would not compete with other organizations, state agencies, military or veterans' services but instead be a network hub for referrals, connection, furthering partnerships and collaboration that would complement the current services being provided in the community. Our Referral partnerships established are with Idaho Division of Veteran Services, Department of Labor, Workforce Development Council, Senator Crapo's Office, Hire Heroes, Wyakin Foundation, Workforce Education Institute Programs, Idaho Manufacturing Alliance, Hiring Staffing Agencies, just to name a few.

Question: What employment opportunities does the project seek to fill?

We seek to fill all employment opportunities across all industries by working closely with the job seekers both civilian and military connected, referral partners, and the employers to place job seekers and support our military and family business owners to find talent and staff within the civilian job seeker community. We will provide employment opportunities for not only the veterans and their family members living in Idaho but all of those transitioning back to the State of Idaho. We will establish connection with any and all employers in The State of Idaho through

their registration with our Veteran Friendly Employer Designation program. We have already begun to establish connections and job placement opportunities with those currently registered.

Question: How will the project accelerate the pathway to a career for individuals being trained.

We will support the job seekers in preparing them for their next career path by initiating intake forms to understand their desires for employment, training them on how to bridge their skills from their military experience and match with civilian employers. We will work with job seekers to build their resumes, cover letters, LinkedIn profiles, interview preparation, and applying for positions. We will work with employers to educate them on our services, build strong relationships through workshops, training events, and other opportunities to understand internships, apprenticeships, and OJT benefits military members and their families qualify for that would then allow for individuals to find further career placement through our navigation services pipeline. The SkillBridge DOD program allows for work based learning opportunities where military members in transition can be afforded internship, on the job training, apprenticeship and work based learning, and transition opportunities to become employed with employers that have MOUs in place. We receive at least one request a week from all military services from across the globe looking for an employer across the entire State of Idaho depending on where they will transition too. We will have a pipeline to vet our job seekers to our employers.

Question: How will the project change and/or enhance the current landscape of Idaho's talent pipeline/development efforts.

This project will create a veteran friendly employer network hub for all civilian employers, veteran and family business owners, job seekers throughout the entire State of Idaho. We will break down barriers to finding the talent pipeline and develop a better understanding on how to seek veterans and their families to fill the gaps and workforce shortage. The project will build partnerships and relationships within the civilian communities that will breakdown the siloes and create enhanced collaboration to navigate both the employers and military communities towards each other and save time.

Question: Who will provide the training and/or implement the project?

Our executive Director, Mindi Anderson will be the project manager and community outreach director that will implement the navigation model for workforce management services and further support all positions being requested to ensure success. She has an extensive background in project management from \$10K – 8M in size.

Question: Where will the training be provided/project be implemented?

The community navigator test model will be provided in all 6 regions of the State of Idaho, and also virtually. We will travel throughout the state as well to deliver training and implement the project, most services can be offered virtually in today's remote environment.

Question: Who will benefit from this project, (Examples - adult job seekers, high school seniors, current employees)?

Job Seekers of all types both within the military community, employers of all industries, state, military, and veteran agencies to include other non-profits. We will not turn away any military member that has transitioned regardless of time passed since they left the military. We will help

their family members to include dependents in high school, seeking higher education, and all types of apprenticeship/internship programs. We will also support the Idaho National Guardsmen that are currently serving and perform weekend duties but live and work in the civilian communities. They are across the entire State. We will also serve their family members. We also have community partnerships established with Buy Idaho, Idaho Manufacturing Alliance, FARE Idaho, Idaho Women's Business Center, Idaho Industry Liaison Group, veteran and military installation groups with a large membership base of employers to help us provide community outreach and education, promote our navigation services, and increase training and education to then find talent and develop best practices long term.

Question: List any prerequisites for individuals interested in participating in the project.

There are no prerequisites to participate. We will serve every military member that has transitioned or is transitioning to include their family members. We will serve all currently serving Idaho National Guardsmen and their families. We will serve every veteran that has transitioned into the State of Idaho or those that will transition to The State of Idaho. We will support every employer, agency, organization, and installation that wants to participate in the project and become part of the strong veteran workforce network hub.

Question: How will participants be selected? What are the agreed-upon screening processes, if any?

There is no selection process. Participants will register on our website as employers, veteran/family business owners, and job seekers will complete intake forms to screen for which workforce navigation track they would go down and be assigned to a community navigator specialist with the Chamber.

Question: What outreach efforts will the team use to encourage under-served populations to participate in the project?

We will travel across the state and make stops in smaller, underserved rural communities throughout the State. We have built partnerships in every part of the state and intend to have training events and workshops that will allow for all 44 counties across the State to be educated and trained on our workforce pipeline and community navigator model test.

Question: Please provide a detailed description of why funding is needed for this project?

We currently have on average 5-7 civilian employers reaching out to us weekly to see how they can find veteran and families to employ. We are also receiving 1 SkillBridge request a week with only 4 employers registered and identified with an MOU in place for members. We receive on average 10 veteran business owner's a month in search of employees. We have done minimal marketing, with a full launch of our navigation model and the implementation of the pipeline, we will see a dramatic increase. We are currently building our partnerships, registrations to the veteran business owner directory, and designations to become Vet-Friendly employers. We are at our max capacity of what we can provide for navigation services with our current uncompensated volunteers. We have utilized externships, internships, and SkillBridge military members to build our navigation model and it is ready for full execution. We need to bring on additional part time staff, and fund the current volunteers that are putting an average of over 40-60 hours a week into building the foundation for the navigation model to thrive and grow. We have submitted for an SBA grant to be a "Spoke" in the Hub and Spoke Community Navigator Model with the Idaho Women's Business Center, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Tribal Councils, African American Chamber of Commerce and Veteran Entrepreneur Alliance. This

grant would provide an opportunity for us to complement the grant if awarded by also providing workforce management opportunities to our veteran and family business owners. We would not only utilize the same training for our members and employers but also for those partners within the grant.

Question: Will participants be charged to participate in this project?

All services, training, education, access to services, and community outreach will be free to all participants, there will never be a charge to participate in our program as we implement.

Community-Based Team

Innovation Grants require participation from a community-based team with representation and support from business, education and other community partners as an ideal partnership.

[Letter of Intent](#)

Question: Please describe how the community-based team partners are involved in the project.

We have created a workforce management and veteran/family business owned committee that includes representation from multiple agencies across the State and have seat representation to include the Workforce Development Council. We will lean on each other to create a strong Idaho Connection space that will increase our abilities to bring in our subject matter experts to support training events and workshops. We will work closely with the Education Committee to support workforce programs that would benefit employers, and business owners. Our Education Committee has confirmed seats for all education institutes to provide one representative from each school, primarily their military affairs directors or managers. Our committee handbook outlines our committee's and seat representation that shows how we have brought community-based team partners together. Please reference Attachment B: committee handbook version 2 draft for your review to see all of our community partners that have unanimously agreed, this collaboration space is much needed to further create pipelines for being a network hub between civilian and the military communities. We have over 60 members serving across all committees. We are also working with Senator Crapo's office to support the "Hubs for Veterans Act of 2021" which would provide a non-profit funding to create wrap around services and further build a network hub. We currently have 20+ registered as veteran friendly employers and that is with limited promotion and marketing. Our Workforce Management team has recently sent out opportunities for one-to-one consulting, coaching, and opportunities for further education and training. Our employers are responding quickly that they are interested and ready to see how we can collaborate. Our employer partners that we believe have a greater impact are organizations such as Idaho Manufacturing Alliance, Buy Idaho, FARE Idaho, Veteran Entrepreneur Alliance, HRA TV, ATD TV, and Idaho Industry Liaison Group that have a further reach to employers. They are our multipliers and have all committed to supporting us with driving the registrations, promoting workshops, and helping us establish points of entry across the State to have a greater impact. We do not have letters of support to provide for community-based partnerships due largely because we would reach the entire employer community in the State. What we do

have is community partnerships established and have begun growing our employer vet friendly partnerships with over 30 employers across the state that are small and large corporations.

Question: Number of employer partners involved in this project?

50.00

Question: Number of non-employer partners involved in this project?

15.00

Question: Please upload completed Letter of Intent from each community-based partner. A link to the Letter of Intent is provided above.

[IDVCC Innovation Grant - MFR Letter of Intent and Support.pdf](#) (9/8/2021 3:24 PM)

Project Sustainability

Question: If the community has plans to sustain the project beyond the life of a Workforce Development Innovation Grant, please share. (Not a requirement to receive grant funds.)

We are continuously seeking donations to sustain this grant beyond the life of the workforce grant however, do not anticipate we will have a high need of staff to hire beyond the grant period. A full launch and execution of the navigator model requires additional positions to support the launch. The strategic vision is to build up the navigator model, test it and create efficient processes to then utilize volunteers to support our clients and continue to utilize the internship programs and SkillBridge members to support the roles of a navigator model. Funding at this point is necessary to build the infrastructure, train the volunteers, and test our programs to create a value-based case for support to then become more successful in our donor engagement and sponsorships.

We anticipate the funding needed to maintain any management or oversight will come directly from our donor engagement, continued fundraisers, and small grants that we qualify for on an annual basis to maintain our technology platforms.

Project Schedule

Please provide anticipated numbers/methods to assess the effectiveness of the proposed project. You will only need to complete one form for the project.

- The 24 Month Project Schedule form should only be used when the project includes starting or scaling work-based learning efforts. (i.e. internships, pre-apprenticeship, co-ops, and/or apprenticeship)

[12 Month Project Schedule Form](#)

[24 Month Project Schedule Form](#)

Question: Please provide an anticipated project start date.

10/1/2021

Question: How many training sessions/events will be held during the 12 months of the grant?

5 large events, 96 training workshops and 24 outreach and education events throughout the state over the course of the 2 year grant period.

Question: Please download and complete the project schedule form. The completed form can be uploaded here. To download the form click on the link provided above.

[Innovation Grant Project Schedule.xlsx](#) (9/23/2021 11:24 AM)

Project Outcomes

Question: How will employer satisfaction be measured?

Through surveys sent to measure their satisfaction in education, training, and navigation services being delivered. We will provide both mailed paper copies and virtual links.

Question: How will participant satisfaction be measured?

Through surveys sent to measure their satisfaction in education, training, and navigation services being delivered and the outcomes of their end goals will be measured which will be successful career placement.

Question: Total number of individuals served by this project?

1800.00

Question: Number of individuals receiving credential(s)?

0.00

Question: Number of individuals already employed who will receive training?

0.00

Question: Anticipated wage gain for individuals already employed? If applicable.

0.00

Question: Anticipated starting hourly wage for individuals entering employment? If applicable.

0.00

Question: What additional metrics do you propose to gather to measure the success of the project?

1. #of employers educated and trained.
2. #of employers that pursue an MOU with DoD
3. #of employers that utilize members that qualify for voc rehab, and IDVS services, apprenticeships, and internships.
4. #of workshops, trainings, and attendee's at all events
5. #of veteran and family business owners that we successfully supported career placement for
6. #of members we supported during transition from military that resulted from hand off from NDAA Act pilot program.
7. #demographics of population reached throughout The State of Idaho
8. #of referrals to community based partners and services provided through navigation

Budget

The application must provide a detailed explanation of how grant resources will be used to directly support the identified skills training. Provide the line item budget amount and detailed narrative for each item listed below to delineate how Innovation Grant resources will be used. Each line item's narrative should clearly describe how the line item amount was determined, as well as the necessity of the line item to develop/deliver the project.

- The 24 Month Budget Sheet should only be used when the project includes starting or scaling work-based learning efforts. (i.e. internships, pre-apprenticeship, co-ops, and/or apprenticeship)

[Budget Sheet - 12 Month Projects](#)

[Budget Sheet - 24 Month Projects](#)

Question: Why do you think WDTF is a good source of funding for this project?

There is no veteran or civilian organization whose mission is to be deeply rooted in the civilian community to bridge the gaps between them and the military community. Veteran Service Organizations primarily focus on the military member or their family when it comes to workforce and primarily those that are in transition. We are aiming to serve the entire veteran community from 18-100 years old with no limitations on when they transitioned. We believe the WDTF to be a good source of funding because this is innovation focused on an underserved population and demographics across The State of Idaho that has not been done before. There are multiple civilian community grants that are simultaneously being executed that would complement this grant with a potential for more to truly execute a navigator model that brings communities together that have not been brought together in this way. The military workforce is the 5th largest employer in The State of Idaho with most of that population to be underserved due to lack of awareness in navigating the employer community, translating their skills, or seeking opportunities to combine education with workforce initiatives. The employer community continues to reach out to us daily for help in finding veteran job seekers and we hear too often; they don't know how to find them. The workforce shortage will not subside in the immediate future, and the military community is a highly talented underserved population. Data is currently not being collected to look at military workforce management and our organization could capture data that could provide valuable insight into how to target this specific population. We are

strategically preparing our organization to assume the opportunities that will result from sizeable grants in relationship to the NDAA FY20, and the “Veterans Network Hub” Bill introduced by Senator Crapo’s Office. We must test the navigation services within the civilian communities to create validation that a network hub could potentially be the missing element to fill the gaps we have in serving our military communities while also connected our civilian communities together. There is not any organization in The State of Idaho whose primary mission is to bridge the gaps, create the space for collaboration, and build strong partnerships that are deeply rooted in the civilian community.

Question: How else have you sought to fund this project?

To date we have received \$15,000.00 in grants and estimate \$50,000.00 in grant applications pending to support the other navigation services to hire more team members. We are also pending announcement for the SBA Community Navigator Hub and Spoke Model Grant that could provide 125k in funding each year for 2 years. We are partnering up with Idaho Connect to work with organizations such as the Idaho Women’s Business Center, Idaho Hispanic Foundation and Chamber of Commerce, Veteran Entrepreneur Alliance, African American Chamber of Commerce, Brown Like Me and several Tribal Councils across the State of Idaho. We hope to hear by 9/10/21 on the announcement from the SBA.

Question: Please download the attached budget. A link to the budget is provided above. Once completed, upload budget here.

[IDVCC Innovation Grant Budget.xlsx](#) (9/23/2021 11:23 AM)

Organizational and Fiscal Capacity

Question: Provide the accounting structure, job titles and qualifications of staff responsible for fiscal actions.

The newly hired personnel will cost \$106,782.00 for 5 part time positions. The new hires will work 220 hours a month and the grant will cover the salary for two years. Internships would continue to be utilized for 2,400 hours per year to help offset the part time costs and to perform a portion of roles across each of the part time hired positions to offset costs and to increase productivity. Fringe benefits would cover pensions at \$16,000.00 per year. Travel costs for \$18,000.00 would allow for services to be offered, provided, and promoted across all 44 counties. Our Customer Relationship Management Database would have to upgrade to the next level to support the increase in client tracking, metrics reporting, and grant management with costs of \$5,000.00. It also has marketing features that would allow for us to set up automatic registrations, entry into CRM of client information and support more community outreach, education, and training opportunities to an unlimited number of people, our current CRM package allows for up to 1,000 members and we currently have 550 members on our email list. Training materials and workshop costs of \$5,000.00 will cover technology platforms, printing materials for in person workshops, and supporting job seekers to print resumes, cover letters, and assessments of skills. Contracted services to partner with career fair organizations to provide sponsorship and hosting opportunities will cost \$7,000.00 and one education summit costs will be \$3,000.00. A portion of employee costs for grants management and project

management will be provided by the Chamber to support additional funding to cover costs for work not related to the workforce management totaling \$10,000.00. We have applied for an SBA grant that would support the launch of the entrepreneur navigation service line for \$250,000.00 each year for 2 consecutive years that would provide employee compensation to the same positions in this grant request and with the same number of matching hours and compensation rates. We have received several small grants and will continue to apply for small grants. We currently have raised \$10,000.00 in cash and will raise over \$10,000.00 more in the coming months with events. We have also received \$5,000.00 in membership fees for sponsors, community partnerships, and non-veteran memberships. We are seeking grants from organizations that would support funding mechanisms for all our navigation services. The project manager and grants manager would oversee all aspects of the grant and ensure fiscal responsibility. Both have extensive experience working with small- and large-scale grants. The project manager worked for the Idaho State Department of Health and Welfare and was part of the SHIP Grant and further part of the execution of the model test award to transform the healthcare system in The State of Idaho. The Project Manager has a doctorates in healthcare administration and has managed large multi million dollar budget

Question: Please provide a short summary outlining your organizations capacity to complete this project.

We have over 15 volunteers currently that would provide a good pool of candidates to transition into paid positions with a commitment from 2 volunteer directors to support the bulk of the work ahead. We have created the infrastructure and have established workflows, processes, and have piloted our navigation services for the last year on a small scale and are ready to fully execute and launch our services however, it cannot be done with all volunteers, the lift is too big. Our volunteers to this point believe in the Chamber and know the model is working and supporting our veteran and civilian communities. We have over 150 clients with testimony that we have served in the last year and want to see that number increase. We must build capacity to truly have a larger impact.

Question: Upon request, the lead organization may be asked to provide a statement from the entity's independent auditing firm regarding the entity's most recent fiscal audit to include a statement of any audit findings. Is an audit available?

Yes

No

Tracking and Reporting

Innovation Grant funds must be expended within a one-year time period. Quarterly tracking and reporting of individuals participating in the project will be required. Individual names, start and end dates, and outcome data must be collected and reported.

Question: Entity responsible for tracking and reporting.

Idaho veterans Chamber of Commerce

Question: Contact Person First Name

Mindi

Question: Contact Person Last Name

Anderson

Question: Job Title

Executive Director/Project Manager/Community Outreach Director

Question: Contact Phone

2089179977

Question: Email Address

mindy@idahoveterans.org

Question: Street Address

2417 E SANTO STEFANO DR.

Question: City

MERIDIAN

Question: State

ID

Question: Zip Code

83642

Terms and Conditions

[Terms and Conditions](#)

Question: I certify I have read the terms and conditions governing the Workforce Development Training Fund grant and agree to comply if awarded a training grant. Click on the link above to view a copy of the terms and conditions.

Yes

No

