

a. Organization Information

1. Background: Hour Exchange Portland (HEP) is a non-profit, 501©3 organization founded in 1996 and governed by a six member volunteer board of directors. HEP's members exchange services based on the currency of time. Every service is valued equally, hour for hour, selected from among ranging from the practical everyday needs of transportation to work, to more specialized services such as a medical appointment with a doctor. In 2008 over 20,000 hours of service were exchanged, which, in the market economy would be valued at approximately \$400,000 according to United Way Volunteer rate of \$20/hr. The exchanges are tracked by software as time dollars.

HEP has three staff, one consultant and 700 members. The IRS does not recognize HEP's members as volunteers; however, it is relevant to note that its members contribute service hours that favorably impact the operation of HEP.

ii. Current Programs: In addition to its daily operation of connecting its mostly lower income members to services, HEP is lauded as a national model for Time Banks/Exchanges. HEP operates a national training center for Immersion Training for startup Time Banks and manages a regional Americorps*VISTA contract to place VISTA Workers within Time Banks in the Northeast Cluster. Its extensive service menu (1800 choices) also includes health care, small business development, adult education classes and access to the arts. These cash saving exchanges enhance the quality of life for its members while building social capital in our shared community.

2. Project In January, 2009, HEP launched a pilot initiative, the Hour Weatherization Cooperative, for the purpose of providing home energy audits and weatherization. Hour Weatherization is the first hybrid Time Bank-Cooperative in the country. Members may receive energy saving benefits for their homes paid by in part by time dollars, or they may earn time dollars helping other members receive benefits.

iii. Funding History: HEP was originally funded by one local philanthropist whose primary passion is preserving the environment. It was his realization that to awaken people to care for their earth, they must first care for each other. HEP connects individuals, businesses and non-profit organizations to each other, addressing primal social and emotional needs—friendship, housing, health, the arts and personal want, due to lack of financial or personal resources. In 2007 the board of directors actively reorganized HEP management with an infusion of new funding sources. These now comprise a federal Americorps*VISTA contract, grants, sales revenue from micro-enterprise development, training fees and revenue from the weatherization cooperative. This diversified base has successfully reduced dependence upon its primary donor and postured HEP to expand its programming through many channels.

b. Project Information:

i. Need: Maine has the oldest housing stock in the nation and energy prices are expected to rise again this winter. There is a one to three year waiting list for weatherization for income eligible Mainers through federal grants administered by the local community action agency (PROP). Additionally, fuel assistance is provided only to individuals at 125% of the federal poverty guideline. HEP's membership is 70% low income and 50% of its members own their homes. The demand for simple winterization and full weatherization of homes is very high.

Purpose, Targeted Population & Geography: *Hour Weatherization* was created to weatherize houses in Greater Portland, Maine in the form of a community co-op owned by HEP. In February, 2009, Hour Weatherization held an Open House to present the concept of its program and receive feedback. This resulted in an application list of 32 members in need of weatherization and 12 members willing to join the "Green Team" to work on member homes. This HEP program improves the economic welfare of the co-op members and will create additional jobs as the co-op grows. The HEP Facilitator serves the essential role of recruiting members who want to have their homes weatherized or to work on homes of other members. HEP members earn time dollars in service to others, and spend time dollars for weatherization or any other needed service. The overall cash price for the home improvements is reduced through application of time dollars for a portion of the work, thereby saving the client for home improvements, *and* related energy heating bills. HEP will receive fifty percent of the profits of Hour Weatherization Co-op to support the salary of the HEP Facilitator, thereby creating long term fiscal sustainability for HEP.

Experience, Staffing & Partners: Hour Weatherization is managed by a Certified Energy Technician, an experienced and qualified carpenter and a business consultant with twenty years as a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity in addition to owning a construction business. The HEP Facilitator is a seven year member who was one of the first Hour Weatherization clients. This team has recruited two energy auditors and two certified energy technicians from within HEP membership. Agreements with PROP, the City of Portland and Earthlight, a private

weatherization company, to create pathways for HEP members to have their homes weatherized have been eagerly received and are in negotiation. There is a shared concern to address this energy crisis.

ii. Timeline & Implementation Plans: This proposal covers a one year period from July, 2009 to June, 2010. The program has spent the past five months building its management team, meeting with state and city officials, PROP and local energy businesses. Additionally, 18 HEP homes have been winterized and the first Green Team has been screened. The program is now prepared to increase the level of services to full weatherization and address the demand for certified home energy audits. To insure the full integrity of this service system, coordination by the HEP Facilitator is essential in assuring a consistent, documented feed of applicants and workers is in place. Once the application and time dollar minimum is completed, the client will receive the following:

Step One: Certified Home Energy Audit (insures state rebates for some elements of home improvements)
Step Two: Estimate for Weatherization separated in terms of cash and time dollar expenditures
Step Three: Actual work performed by Hour Weatherization with referrals by partners above. In some cases PROP or Earthlight will perform a portion of the work, as expertise dictates. Work will be completed in a timeline negotiated between client and Hour Weatherization, ranging from days to months, which is typical for this business.

Goals: This alliance will expedite existing waiting lists with PROP, employ additional tradespersons for Earthlight and serve as a training site for Hour Weatherization. Hour Weatherization Green Team members will be eligible to attend ME State offered Certification for Energy Technician classes after they have worked for a minimum of 48 hours per month, for six months. This job training creates a ladder for employment with a pay it forward approach for HEP members helping themselves *and other members* reduce their energy costs and live in warmer homes.

iii. Budget & Fundraising

This project was launched with a \$25000 low interest loan from a private investor for wages for the two co-op staff, a \$25000 grant from the Rudolf Steiner Fund for co-op development for the consultant and more than \$15000 value of loaned items such as carpentry tools, specialized equipment (infrared camera; door blower) and vehicles from HEP members. Some clients will pay market based fees for weatherization, creating a higher profit margin, which will be returned to HEP. Funding from the Elmina B. Sewall Foundation will pay for halftime salary for the HEP Facilitator position for the grant period. This grant will insure that the first full year of this well defined, managed and community integrated initiative will be successful in serving its target population of recipients for weatherization, and for employment training and economic development.

Fifty percent of the profits earned will be returned to HEP to support the Facilitator position. This feedback loop insures that new clients and Green Team members will have seamless access to services and training. Additionally, this model of the Exchange-Co-op Hybrid will be evaluated, strengthened and applied to the development of other HEP owned cooperatives for other high service needs such as health care and food security. HEP has made an application to the Great Bay Foundation for funding to support additional equipment purchases, ongoing certification training fees for the rotating Green Team and for the HEP Co-op Consultant salary.

C. Outcomes & Sustainability:

i. Monitoring, Assessment & Criteria:

Hour Weatherization provides monthly reports to the HEP Executive Director and quarterly reports to the HEP Board of Directors. Additionally it will comply with all investor and funder evaluations and will be audited as part of the HEP financial review process. Clients are required to submit a pre-weatherization energy document displaying annual fuel costs. These will be measured against post-weatherization fuel costs. All HEP clients utilizing time dollars for a portion of their bill must have fifty percent of the estimated hours in their personal bank accounts prior to job commencement and have earned the full balance of time dollars by the conclusion of the work. This data will be tracked in the HEP reports.

ii. Sustainability:

This grant request is made for one year. Budget projections indicate that revenue earned over the next year will be sufficient to maintain the program independent of future grants.

HEP has already been solicited by the national organization, Time Banks USA, the Cooperative Development Institute (CDI) and The Eastern Conference of Workplace Democracy to prepare and conduct training for other time banks and cooperatives. Training will provide an additional source of revenue for HEP, adding to its current national training menu.

