



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

RFP Response Form

RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs

PROPOSER INFORMATION

Proposer Name: The Pittsburgh Project

Authorized Representative Name & Title: Rick Mason, Executive Director

Address: 2801 North Charles Street

Telephone: 412-321-1678

Email: rmason@pittsburghproject.org

Website: www.pittsburghproject.org

Legal Status: For-Profit Corp. Nonprofit Corp. Sole Proprietor Partnership

Date Incorporated: 1989

Partners included in this Proposal: [Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you hear about this RFP? *Please be specific.* Announcement at quarterly meeting

Does your organization have a telecommunications device to accommodate individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing? Yes No

REQUIRED CONTACTS

	Name	Phone	Email
Chief Executive Officer	Roderick Mason	412-321-1678 x527	rmason@pittsburghproject.org
Contract Processing Contact	Roderick Mason	412-321-1678	rmason@pittsburghproject.org
Chief Information Officer	Natasha thrasher	412-321-1678	nthrasher@pittsburghproject.org
Chief Financial Officer	Click here to enter text.	Enter number.	Click here to enter text.
MPER Contact*	Del Treese	412-321-1678	dtreese@pittsburghproject.org

* [MPER](#) is DHS's provider and contract management system. Please list an administrative contact to update and manage this system for your agency.

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BOARD INFORMATION

Provide a list of your board members as an attachment or in the space below.
Click here to enter text.

Board Chairperson Name & Title: Brian Johnson

Board Chairperson Address: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Telephone: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Email: [REDACTED]

REFERENCES

Provide the name, affiliation and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization. *Please do not use employees of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as references.*

1. Joanna Deming - Executive Director of Fineview and Perry Hilltop Citizens Councils - [REDACTED] - joanna@ourfuturehilltop.org
2. Dr. Claire Fox - Director of Pittsburgh Science Workshop - [REDACTED] - fox@sciworkshop.org
3. Joel Gray - Manager of Community Outreach at The Pittsburgh Pirates and Executive Director at Africa Book Bagz - [REDACTED] - Joel.Gray@pirates.com

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Date Submitted 3/2/2022

Amount Requested: \$254,400

CERTIFICATION

Please check the following before submitting your Proposal, as applicable:

I have read the standard County terms and conditions for County contracts and the requirements for DHS Cyber Security, EEOC/Non-Discrimination, HIPAA and Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law.

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By submitting this Proposal, I certify and represent to the County that all submitted materials are true and accurate, and that I have not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

Choose one:

My Proposal contains information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information and I have included a written statement signed by an authorized representative identifying those portions or parts of my Proposal and providing contact information.

OR

My Proposal does not contain information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information.

ATTACHMENTS

Please submit the following attachments with your Response Form. These can be found at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations>.

- Partner commitment letters, if applicable
- MWDBE and VOSB documents
- Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
- Audited financial reports or other financial documentation for the last three years
- W-9
- Completed budget template

REQUIREMENTS

Please respond to the following. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 125 points. Your response to the following section should not exceed 7 pages. (Pages 1-3 are not included in the page count).

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Organizational Experience (15 points possible)

1. Describe your organizational experience providing OST Programming or programming that works with youth and families.

The Pittsburgh Project (TPP) has been providing OST programming and serving the families of Perry South since 1995. We offer year-round programming for 200 students in kindergarten-12th grade. Through OST programming, TPP desires for youth to become: 1. more engaged in learning. 2. more viable in future job markets 3. more self-confident and apt to love themselves. 4. more aware of civic issues and likely to engage in positive change in their community.

2. Describe your organizational experience working in high-need communities, especially the community(ies) you are proposing to serve.

Since 1992, TPP has been a staple of the Perry South (and more broadly, Northside) community. In Perry South, 45% of children live in poverty, over half of the neighborhood's families are "Female Householder Only" and 50% of the population holds a high school diploma, a GED or less.

There are 10 schools (Public and charter) located on Pittsburgh's Northside, 9 of which scored well below the state average for proficiency in reading and math. Perry, the only neighborhood high school, ranked last among public high schools in all subjects. Only 19% of Perry students had a GPA of 2.8 or higher and 76% were chronically absent.

TPP is committed to addressing these issues of inequity through OST programs. We believe, and research shows, that by engaging students in positive relationships, providing them with a hands-on learning environment and teaching them social and emotional skills, we can help them find a foothold to propel themselves out of negative generational patterns so that they can become future community leaders.

Program Design (40 points possible)

3. Provide an overall description of your proposed OST Programming:

- Describe how you will provide youth with a physically and emotionally safe space to spend time and how you will ensure that they and their parents/caregivers feel safe. Provide a brief description of current or proposed safety policies and procedures. Describe the physical location you intend to use.
- Describe how you will provide opportunities for youth to engage in enriching activities and how the activities align with the Programmatic Content expectations outlined in Section to of the RFP. Provide an example of a week's schedule of activities.
- Describe how you will provide participants with opportunities to make positive connections with peers, adults and their community. Provide a brief description of your organization's code of conduct for staff, staff training expectations, and policies and procedures.

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- Describe the community(ies) in which you intend to locate your OST Programming. Why did you select those community(ies)? How will you tailor your Programming to respond to the unique needs of the community(ies) you are serving?

The vast majority of the proposed programming will take place in the renovated school and church buildings that TPP operates out of. These buildings are secure and manned by a desk person during program hours. We also utilize the outdoor spaces directly behind our building as well as the park and vegetable garden directly across the street.

TPP places a high value on emotional safety. Social and emotional learning (SEL) and the development of a positive self-identity are high programmatic priorities. TPP's approach to OST programs is very relational and is designed to allow space for strong, healthy adult/student relationships to be formed. At the conclusion of the 2021 summer camp, 100% of surveyed students and parents responded that they felt that they (or their child) were safe at TPP.

In addition to the SEL component mentioned above, TPP's programs have a strong focus on non-traditional learning. Students will learn through play, hands-on projects, and time in our makerspace called the DREAMlab. It is a learning environment that is different from much of what students do in school while still aligning with many PA state learning standards. Students are exposed to a myriad of enrichment activities. These activities pay dual dividends, providing a platform for students to learn skills (both hands-on skills and important soft skills), while also introducing them to things that they might not otherwise experience so that they can find their passions and better understand themselves as individuals.

A typical week of after-school programming for a fourth-grade student at TPP looks like this: Students begin arriving at 3:00, are greeted by staff members, and are given a healthy snack. The student then has time to work on homework either with the help of staff, volunteers or with a remote tutor through a partnership with ASSET. After homework is complete, the student will have some autonomy in what happens next. There are several options each day including drop-in time in our makerspace, board games, art projects, building projects, and active play. At 5:00, we switch gears and have a short community meeting where we discuss what has happened or is going to happen in the program as well as the soft skills that we are working on (perseverance, gratefulness, integrity, collaboration, empathy, etc.) and then move on to our enrichment classes. There are different offerings every day. The full list of weekly choices for a fourth-grader is currently: chess, fitness, visual arts, music production, science (through a partnership with PGH Science Workshop) robotics, strategy games, and additional DREAMlab time. Students are dismissed daily at 6:00.

For the entirety of its 35-year history, TPP has placed equity at the forefront of its programming. 96% of the students that TPP serves are African American or Latinx, and 71% are designated as economically disadvantaged by Pittsburgh Public Schools. Parents in our community (Perry South) have said repeatedly that a safe place for their children to go while they work is a pressing need. TPP not only provides approximately 700 hours of high-quality, affordable childcare each

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year but offers holistic programming designed to supplement in-school learning rather than replicating it.

One example of how TPP leverages OST programming to increase equity is our response to the racial disparities in gifted education. The 2019 report published by the University of Pittsburgh on Inequality Across Gender and Race included the troubling statistic that white students in Pittsburgh Public Schools are five times more likely than black students to be selected for gifted education. Coupling this information with studies that show that “about half of gifted children become mental dropouts at around 10 years of age,” it is easy to see how so many of the brightest students of color are being left behind. TPP engages this disparity by providing every student in our OST programs with a learning environment that is rich with activities that are project-based, hands-on, student-led, and discovery-based. Our students think creatively, problem-solve, collaborate and iterate ideas on a daily basis.

Youth and Parent Experience (10 points)

4. Why do you think youth will want to participate in your OST Programming? Provide specific methods you will use to ensure that they remain engaged and interested in your Programming.

At the end of summer camp, students were surveyed about a number of topics including if they felt safe, cared for, had fun, and learned things. 91% responded affirmatively to every question. Our programming is designed to be engaging and we reevaluate and refine it as the year goes on to make sure that it is effective. However, the relationships that the staff build with students and families, also play a large role in long-term engagement.

5. Describe your approach to communicating with parents/caregivers. Provide specific methods you will use to ensure that parents/caregivers feel comfortable with your OST Programming and confident that their child is safe and well cared for.

It has been different (and more difficult) during COVID because parents are not permitted to enter the program areas when picking their children up. We have relied heavily on texting and emailing them. We have found that a great way to build trust and to communicate that we are taking care of their child, is to reach out to them as partners. We ask them for advice when troubling behavior presents itself, we contact them as a "heads up" if a student doesn't have homework for an extended period of time and we tell them when their child shows a talent for something. These are not always easy conversations, but over time, parents usually come to feel that we are on their child's side.

Operations (20 points)

6. Describe how you will market your Programming and open referral pathways. Provide a description of how you will build and sustain relationships with schools.

Due to its 17-year track record of service, TPP has a strong word-of-mouth network. In addition to this, we receive referrals from schools (we are a PPS partner organization) as well as from neighborhood resource organizations such as Thrive 18 and APOST.

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7. Describe how you will staff your Programming and the strategies you will use to recruit, hire and retain racially diverse staff, staff with relevant lived experience, and staff that reflect the population served.

Racial diversity and representation are a priority in staffing for TPP. The organization is led by an African American executive director and board president. The organization's leadership team is 66% African American and the current after-school staff is 50% African American.

The organization recruits staff from a number of sources including local universities (targeting particularly students studying education) as well as TPP alumni. Over the years, we have been very successful at investing in high school students as leaders in training who then can become staff members after high school.

8. Provide the hours and days you expect your OST program to operate during the school year and summer.

The bulk of TPP's programming takes place on Monday-Friday, from 3:00 PM-6:00 PM during the school year and from 8:15 AM-3:00 PM during the summer. There are also activities that take place outside of this time frame such as sports teams, outreach events, and in-school visits.

9. Describe your plan for storing and providing healthy snacks and meals during the school year and summer.

All snacks and meals are planned in accordance with the guidelines laid out by CACFP. The snacks for the after-school program are stored in a secure room in the building that houses the programs. The food for summer meals is stored in the church building across the street. This building is equipped with an industrial kitchen including a walk-in freezer and refrigerator.

Implementation Challenges (20 points possible)

10. If your Program experiences low attendance, how will you engage more youth?

One way that we will accomplish this is by partnering with schools. We reach out to guidance counselors and ask if there are students that would benefit from our programming that they could recommend our organization to. We also spend time in schools (though this has been affected by COVID) meeting with our students, getting introduced to their friends, and inviting them to our programs.

We also send communications to parents, letting them know that we still have space available and asking them to let friends know about the programs for their children. Another successful strategy is to have outreach nights outside of typical after-school hours where enrolled students can bring friends for an evening of fun and food. The friends get to meet the staff, see the space, and are invited to register for programs.

11. If a youth in your Program experiences behavioral or mental health issues, what will you do?

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TPP staff are not trained mental health professionals and will be careful to not overstep the bounds of what is responsible behavior. Any mental health issues that are observed or that students share with us will be communicated to parents. We will support parents in their efforts to find appropriate care for their child. In extreme cases, such as believing that a child is a danger to themselves or others, we would call the proper agencies so that help can be fast-tracked.

12. If the results of the bi-annual parent survey indicate that parents are not satisfied with the experience of their children in your Program, what will you do?

We believe that our programs should never stagnate and should always be improving. To that end, parent input is incredibly helpful in determining where we should place our attention in growing and refining the programs that we offer to children. In certain circumstances, it may also be the case that we have not adequately communicated what we are doing or why we are doing it to parents. This breakdown in understanding can also lead to parental dissatisfaction. In that case, we would not only look at improving the aspects of programming that they are dissatisfied with but also figure out better ways to clearly communicate about our programmatic design.

13. If a parent of a child in your Program expresses a transportation issue, what will you do?

Our organization has a small transportation budget and during the after-school program deploys two 15-passenger vans to pick students up from schools. We are limited by the number of vans and drivers at our disposal and cannot pick up from every school. We currently pick students up from 4 schools as well as from downtown to support our middle school students that attend magnet schools.

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide transportation during the summer. We can support parents with transportation issues as much we can by helping them navigate public transportation and facilitating carpools when it is possible.

Financial Management and Budget (20 points)

14. Using the budget template available on our website, provide a detailed one-year, line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing and sustaining the Programming. Please include any other funding sources that would contribute to OST Programming, including fees to families. The budget template file attachment will not count toward page limits. Please note:

- Indicate the number of children you expect to serve, with DHS funding, during the school year at a \$27 rate and during the summer at a \$40 rate. Please also share the total number of children you expect to attend afterschool and during the summer (include other seats that will be paid for through other funding streams).
- If you intend to administer programming at multiple sites, please provide the number of youth you plan to serve by site both during the summer and during the school year.

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- Include any other funding sources that would contribute to OST Programming, including fees to families.

15. In the space below, provide a budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in your proposed line-item budget.

Budget Notes:

TPP will utilize DHS funding to serve 50 students during the school year and 30 students during the summer. In total, TPP will serve 85 students during the school year and 100 during the summer. Non-DHS seats are funded by a combination of program fees, private donations, and grant funds.

TPP's programs come in at just under the recommended number of days. During the school year, we operate on PPS' schedule except that we break a week earlier than they do in December to accommodate the holiday-related work that the organization does in the community, we end for the year in mid-May to allow for staff to ramp up for summer camp and typically start a week later than school does in September to accommodate staff vacation time in late August. The summer camp will be 7 weeks with days off for Juneteenth, 4th of July, and 1 in-service day.

Budget Narrative:

TPP puts a high value on staff. Without a quality team, great planning falls flat in implementation. We utilize year-round coordinators and assistant coordinators to plan in both the big picture and day-to-day details for programs. Being able to retain coordinators year after year, allows TPP to operate programs that are consistent and move students along a planned trajectory. Program staff are key for day-to-day success. Having an adequate number of staff people ensures that positive relationships can be built and that learning can be individualized.

Operating a hands-on learning environment necessitates supplies. Some supplies are single-use and need to be kept constantly in stock. Some supplies like tools for the makerspace, are meant to be used repeatedly but even those wear out and need to be regularly replaced when being shared by so many students.

Our transportation budget keeps two aging 15 passenger vans fueled, safe, and on the road to pick students up from school every day as well as to take middle school students on service trips in the summers.

Field trips are expensive, especially as bus prices continue to climb. But they are important. Not only do the children love them and look forward to them, but they present a great opportunity for staff to build relationships with students.

16. Describe the funding model of your proposed OST Program (i.e., do you have a mixed model of private pay, subsidy, and free spots, only free spots?).

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TPP operates in a mixed funding model and is supported by summer program fees, private donations, and foundation grants. After-school programming will be offered to families with no registration fee. While we aim to serve 85 students, we are seeking DHS funding for 50 of them. The others will be paid for with donations and grant funds. Summer camp costs \$275 (\$200 for families at or below 200% of the poverty line) which does not cover the cost of the camp and is subsidized from other sources. TPP is always willing to work with families to provide payment plans. We will reserve 30 camp spots for full scholarships and are seeking DHS funds to cover those.

Please populate only the green cells. If you are proposing to have locations at multiple sites, please complete a tab for each site. If you are proposing to provide over 3 sites, please copy and paste onto new tabs.

	total # of children requesting funding for**	rate	days	total
Afterschool	50	\$27	160	216000
Summer	30	\$40	32	38400
				254400

**DHS funding if for free programming, so children funded through private pay and subsidy should not be included in this request
 **Funding can be requested for a subset of total number of children served

Afterschool	Expense
Personnel	100000
coordinators	50000
program staff	50000
Operations (supplies, rent)	25000
supplies	15000
transportation	5000
trips/events	5000
Other	40000
maintenance	5000
utilities	35000
Indirects	15000
*Total	180000

Total funding request based on seats 216000
 *Total should total funding request based on seats

Summer	Expense
Personnel	18600
program staff	13,200
coordinators	5400
Operations (supplies, rent)	17300
supplies	4000
transportation	2400
trips/events	10900
Other	3000
maintenance	1000
utilities	2000
Indirects	2500
*Total	38400

Total funding request based on seats 38400
 *Total should total funding request based on seats