



Museums Empowered

Sample Application MA-40-18-0502-18
“Increasing Workforce Diversity: Life Sciences Training Program”

Indianapolis Zoo

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$103,360
Amount of cost share:	\$103,360

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Abstract
- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

Please note that the instructions for preparing applications for the FY2019 Museums for America grant program differ from those that guided the preparation of FY2018 applications. Be sure to use the instructions in the FY2019 Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

ABSTRACT

Lead Applicant: Indianapolis Zoological Society, Inc.

Project Duration: October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2021

Project Need: The Indianapolis Zoo is committed to creating and maintaining a diverse and inclusive culture in which visitors, employees, suppliers and community partners are respected and valued. The Diversity Committee of the Indianapolis Zoo's Board of Directors began discussing the issue of staff diversity in March 2015. In review of the organization's five-year analysis of minority employees and volunteers, it was reported that there was no increase in minority participation despite multiple initiatives that primarily focused recruitment strategies for full-time paid positions.

This is also a trend in the zoo industry at large. Through the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), the accrediting agency for North American zoos, many zoos are trying to address the lack of diversity in zoo related careers, specifically science related and management positions. AZA established a Diversity Committee that provides advocacy, resources and education regarding diversity and inclusion to member zoos and aquariums (this Ad Hoc committee became a Standing committee in 2017). Staff from the Indianapolis Zoo is represented on this committee, and staff diversity is a priority issue.

In order for the Zoo to address this issue, the Zoo's Diversity Committee, established a target of 12% (an increase of 4%) minority employment by 2020 (racial/ethnic minority as used by the Federal government). The Life Sciences Training Program was developed as one way to improve staff diversity at the Indianapolis Zoo, specifically in the keeper area.

Project Activities: The Life Sciences Training Program is a two-year paid position for college graduates that will involve working, learning, and understanding how the animal or horticultural staff cares for its collection. The pre-requisite for the Training Program is the completion of a paid 12-week apprenticeship program offered to college seniors, graduate students or recent graduates. The Indianapolis Zoo will actively recruit through a variety of methods including at national colleges with strong racial diversity.

Project Benefits: The Indianapolis Zoo believes that diversity makes institutions stronger, as science has demonstrated of plant and animal diversity in the natural world. Strong institutions benefit the communities we serve. This program will also provide an improved, well-rounded training program for Zoo staff to ensure the chances of success and staff retention.

Intended Outcomes: The Life Sciences Training Program is designed to better align the Indianapolis Zoo's staff diversity with that of the community it serves.

Measurement of Success: The Indianapolis Zoo will measure success by the completion of two trainees in the Life Sciences Training Program, and into full-time regular employment at the end of the program.

NARRATIVE

1. PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Proposed Activities

The Indianapolis Zoo (Zoo) is requesting a grant for the new Life Sciences Training Program. This is a two-year paid position for recent college graduates with a goal of increasing diversity among zookeepers. The program will involve working, learning, and understanding how the animal or horticultural staff cares for its collection.

The pre-requisite for the Training Program is the completion of a paid 12-week apprenticeship program. The Indianapolis Zoo is actively recruiting through a variety of methods including at national colleges with strong racial diversity; through organizations like Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS); and mid-western and local colleges like Martin University.

Statement of Need

The Diversity Committee of the Indianapolis Zoo's Board of Directors is charged with oversight of management's progress with key diversity metrics and the formulation of specific institutional goals. In review of the organization's five-year analysis of minority employees and volunteers, it was reported that 92% of the Zoo's workforce was Caucasian (compared to the state's demographic of 85.6% according to Census.gov), and that has remained relatively stable despite multiple initiatives that primarily focused recruitment strategies for full-time paid positions.

This is also a trend in the zoo industry at large. Through the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), the accrediting agency for North American zoos, many zoos are trying to address the lack of diversity in zoo related careers, specifically science related and management positions. AZA established a Diversity Committee that provides advocacy, resources and education regarding diversity and inclusion to member zoos and aquariums (this Ad Hoc committee became a Standing committee in 2017). Staff from the Indianapolis Zoo is represented on this committee, and staff diversity is a priority issue.

The Zoo's Diversity Committee began discussing the issue of staff diversity in March 2015, and based on these findings, established a target of 12% minority employment by 2020 (racial/ethnic minority as used by the Federal government). This program was developed to improve staff diversity at the Indianapolis Zoo, specifically in the keeper area.

Who will Benefit

Consistent with the Indianapolis Zoological Society's mission and values, the Indianapolis Zoo is committed to creating and maintaining a diverse and inclusive culture in which visitors, employees, suppliers and community partners are respected and valued. Science has demonstrated that plant and animal diversity makes for strong natural communities and the Indianapolis Zoo believes that diversity makes institutions stronger as well. With

the success of the Life Sciences Training Program, the Zoo as an institution will benefit from a more diverse workforce. The community it serves will benefit from a stronger institution as well.

Based on responses from students being recruited to our unpaid internships, and through our collaboration with organizations like Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences Chapters (MANRRS), we know that a barrier for minority students is financial. The Zoo has traditionally relied on unpaid internships, and the new Life Sciences Training Program will help bridge the gap for those who might base their decision on pursuing a zoo career due to financial need.

This training program is not only a strategy to increase staff diversity, but it will also provide an improved, well-rounded training program for Zoo staff to ensure the chances of success and retention. The cross training will benefit in the care of the collection, the satisfaction of the staff, and the institution as a whole.

Advancing Strategic Plan

As part of the Zoo's Strategic Plan, the institution defines diversity and inclusion by characteristics based on race, gender, ethnic background, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, color, gender identity, and veteran status, socio-economic status, learning styles and even thoughts and ideas.

The strategic direction includes:

- Attract, recruit and retain a qualified, committed, and diverse staff, board and volunteer corps;
- Create programs to encourage individuals from diverse backgrounds to investigate and pursue careers at the Indianapolis Zoo;
- Market, promote and communicate in ways that attract diverse audiences and reflect inclusivity and cultural diversity;
- Actively pursue qualified minority vendors; and
- Develop the Zoo campus to support diverse accessibility.

Advancing Museums Empowered Initiative

The *Increasing Workforce Diversity: Life Sciences Training Program* is designed to better align the Indianapolis Zoo's staff diversity with that of the community it serves. In order to serve our diverse community, we must also represent that community at all levels of paid and unpaid staff. For many years the Indianapolis Zoo has implemented strategies to encourage and increase diversity in various unpaid internship and volunteer programs. Through these efforts, the Zoo has been able to identify some of the barriers to recruiting and most importantly, retaining staff. This program provides trainees with experience in various departments within the Zoo, including daily animal care, nutrition, horticulture, and veterinary services. This structured training program also provides the Zoo with an ongoing system that is sustainable through normal operations.

Alignment with Project Categories

This program aligns with the Museums Empowered Initiative through the Diversity and Inclusion category, specifically the development and implementation of a recruitment and retention program to attract and retain a diverse workforce. While this Life Sciences Training Program will be available to any qualifying college graduate, the Indianapolis Zoo will specifically recruit through a variety of minority focused organizations and institutions. This program will benefit the Zoo and zoo industry as a whole by increasing participation of minorities in zoo careers. It will also benefit zoo professionals through the cross-training and mentoring that will take place during the apprenticeship and trainee programs.

2. PROJECT WORK PLAN

Activities

In spring 2018 the Indianapolis Zoo posted the announcement of the new Life Sciences Apprenticeship Program. This program is a pre-requisite for the Life Sciences Training Program and has established a specific recruiting program.

- Recruit at national colleges with strong racial diversity, including Alabama State University, Central State University, Clark Atlantic University, Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, Grambling State University, Hampton University, Howard University, Jacksonville State University, Morehouse College, Norfolk State University, North Carolina AT&T University, Savannah State University, Spellman College, Tennessee State University, Tuskegee University, and Virginia Union University;
- Utilize Purdue University's Animal Science program as a potential recruiting source;
- Contact the MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences Chapters) at Purdue University, University of Illinois and Ohio State University, as well as other local colleges and universities;
- Host the Purdue Chapter of MANRRS students for a day at the Zoo (we will host these students with Behind the Scenes experiences and lunch along with an overview of the Zoo's training program);
- Reach out to various philanthropic organizations that have youth program initiatives—100 Black Women and 100 Black Men, Links Incorporated, etc.; and
- Continue to attend job fairs such as Congressman Andre Carson's semiannual Job Fair, Black Expo, Fiesta, etc.

The Zoo plans to recruit and hire two qualifying college students for a 12-week paid apprenticeship in late spring/summer 2018 and two more in fall 2018. From this group of apprenticeships, **the Zoo plans to hire two individuals for the two-year paid Life Science Training Program, to start as early as January to June 2019.** The applicants must be a college graduate with BS or BA degree in the sciences preferred. However, another degree is acceptable if the candidate has work or volunteer experience in a zoo, aquarium, vet hospital, animal shelter, etc. The pre-requisite to the program is to have completed the Life Sciences Apprenticeship Program during their senior year in college.

The Indianapolis Zoo is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and Employment is At Will.

The candidates will be hired as a full-time keeper (trainee) into a current open position in the Collections area. If one does not exist, then the trainee will be placed in a full-time floater position in one of the Life Sciences departments. When an open position becomes available in a biome, the trainee will be placed into that position. Expectations of the new trainees include:

- Trainees must be committed to a two-year training program.
- Trainees will attend the Zoo's "Wild U" Customer Service Training.
- Trainees will be assigned to a member of the Zoo's Executive Cabinet for monthly coaching sessions (the Executive Cabinet consists of the Zoo's CEO, President, Executive Vice President, and other senior staff). Trainees will be given the opportunity to meet with other members of the Cabinet for an overview of Zoo operations.
- Trainees interested in animal collections, will be enrolled into a rotation program (about 10-12 weeks) within the Veterinary Facility. They will spend time working in the Nutritional Center and Hospital as well as shadow Veterinary Technicians and Vets. There can be flexibility due to scheduling if necessary.
- Trainees interested in horticulture will work with the horticulture team throughout the Zoo.
- Upon completion of the rotation program, trainees will resume their training program within their respective departments.
- Trainees in animal collections will be required to pass the Collections Core Component Test with a score of 80% or better. This should be done within the first 90 days of employment. There can be some flexibility with the timing of this requirement.
- Trainees will participate in a Shadow Program featuring the Zoo's administrative and support divisions as we want trainees to see other divisions of the Zoo.

The first year of full-time employment, a review will be conducted to determine continuation in the program. In June 2021, upon completion of the two-year program, the trainee will become a full-time keeper at the Zoo.

Evaluation and Performance Measurements

Each trainee will be given a 90-day, six month, and annual evaluation. The annual evaluation must be at a "Good" or above. The trainees will be given a Core Component Test prior to their 90-day evaluation that they must pass at 80% or better. Key measurements will include animal/plant husbandry knowledge as well as those related to veterinary care and nutrition as learned during the rotation program.

The overall performance measurement of the program will include:

- Trainee pre and post surveys to measure the impact the apprenticeship and training had on them;

- Interviews with apprentices and trainers after the program ends to make sure that the skills and opportunities provided met their needs;
- Surveys to colleges and universities to make sure they understand the program and how they are disseminating the information; and
- Data collection on the number of applicants, what schools they come from, and the number of minority students receiving interviews.

Risks

Risk #1: We may not be able to fill the position with a minority student. The Indianapolis Zoo has committed to hiring up to four Life Science Apprenticeships prior to the beginning of this program – heavily recruiting from minority based colleges and universities. While the goal of this program is to increase staff diversity, the Zoo will hire based on qualifications and interest. With several candidates to choose from, the Zoo is accounting for attrition to ensure that there are strong candidates for the two-year program.

Risk #2: One or both of the Life Sciences Training employees may not complete the program. The trainees will have formal evaluations after the first year of the program. It is possible that one or both of the trainees will not meet expectations or decide not to continue in the program. Because there are two trainees, we are expecting that at least one will successfully finish the program and assume a regular full-time position.

Project Budget

The total cost of the two-year Life Sciences Training Program is \$206,720. This includes the salary, benefits, uniforms and supplies for two Life Sciences employees for two years, and the development of evaluation tools and collection and analysis of data. The request to IMLS is \$103,360, with a cost share of \$103,360.

Organizational and Staff Expertise

Mary Jane Bennett, Vice President of Human Resources, Safety and Security, is the project lead for the program. She has over 33 years' experience in human resources and has been with the Zoo since 1994. She directs the planning, development, implementation of all human resources, security and safety programs, and volunteer services. She is also a member of the Zoo's Diversity Committee and was the lead in the development of the Apprenticeship and Training Programs.

As project lead, she will be directly responsible for the recruitment and hiring of the trainees and will work directly with the General Curator to place the candidates into roles within the Life Sciences department. She will also be responsible for the oversight of the training and evaluation process.

Jodie Baker, General Curator, is responsible for all animal and plant care professionals at the Zoo. This includes oversight of selection, acquisition, and de-acquisition of specimens; daily care, and the overall health and welfare of the collections. She has over 27 years of management experience overseeing aquatic and

terrestrial species at the Zoo. She will work directly with the Project Lead to place the trainees into their positions, and provide oversight of the training and evaluation processes.

Karen Burns, Executive Vice President, is responsible for all external communications at the Indianapolis Zoo and directly manages Marketing, Membership, Institutional Advancement, Public Relations, Creative Services, and Education. She is also the Executive Director of the Indianapolis Prize. She has over 33 years' experience in non-profit management and development and has been at the Zoo since 1999.

Karen is the staff liaison for the Diversity Committee of the Board of Directors at the Zoo and has been instrumental in the successful initiatives, including a Minority Purchasing Initiative. In 2012, this program received the Angela Peterson Excellence in Diversity Award from AZA for its achievement developing a program that includes MBE/WBE/VBE vendors in the Zoo's bidding process. It also established a way to increase awareness of opportunities with other cultural institutions in Central Indiana. She will continue to update the Board's Diversity Committee on the progress of this program and will help disseminate the results at the end of the program.

Michele Schilten is the Director of Education at the Indianapolis Zoo. She has an undergraduate degree in Biology from Xavier University and a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Indianapolis. As part of her role as director she oversees the educational content development and evaluation of exhibits and educational experiences. Before coming to the Indianapolis Zoo, Schilten served as the In-Depth and School Programs Manager at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis where she worked for almost 14 years. There she oversaw educational programming for a variety of audiences including school groups, the general public and teachers. She has previous experience serving as a project manager on a NASA grant and other IMLS grants. She will be responsible for the oversight of the development of tools and assessing evaluation results.

Project Dissemination

The Zoo will assess the program after the first year of the trainees' employment and make any changes deemed necessary, along with regular reporting to the Zoo's Diversity Committee. After the completion of the two-year program, a complete assessment of the program will be conducted and a report prepared. The final results will be disseminated to the Diversity Committee, Human Resources Committee, as well as to the Zoo's Board of Directors. Findings will also be shared with the Diversity Committee of AZA.

3. PROJECT RESULTS

Performance Indicators

In order to "train and develop museum professionals," the Indianapolis Zoo will use the measurement of employing at least one, permanent full-time keeper at the end of the two-year program that classifies as ethnic/racial minority under the federal government.

In addition, a summative evaluation of the program will take place at the completion of the two-year training program. Some of the methods to collect data will be:

- Interviews will be conducted with apprentices and trainers after the program ends to make sure that the skills and opportunities provided met their needs. Do they feel ready to start the full-time job? What do they still need? Did it meet their expectations? What would they tell others? Would they promote it to others? If they were to describe it to their classmates, what would they say it was?
- Pre and Post surveys will be given to measure the impact the apprenticeship and training had on them. Did we meet the goals of the program for their development? Did we meet their expectations? How have they grown through the program?
- Surveys will be sent to select colleges and universities to make sure they understand the program and how they are disseminating the information. Where was the information shared? How else can we reach minority students on campus?
- We will collect data on the number of applicants, what schools they come from, and analyze it to make sure the schools we are targeting are represented in the applicant pool. We will also keep track of the number of minority students receiving interviews.

The intended result of the Life Sciences Training Program is to have one of the two program trainees to complete the two-year program and be hired into a full-time keeper position. The ultimate success of this program will be a proven, effective way to develop a pipeline and a process to recruit minority students into the apprenticeship program that leads to successful candidates for the Life Sciences Training Program – and ultimate full-time keeper positions.

The success of this program will help build a positive relationship with the collaborating recruiting organizations and will help in its continuation and growth. Ultimately, zoo careers will be seen as a viable career choice for all science based degree students. An institution with a diverse workforce that is representative of the community will be stronger and better able to meet the needs of the constituents it serves.

With this grant, the Zoo will be able to employ two strong trainees to ensure the successful completion of the program. The Indianapolis Zoo has committed to establishing at least one open position as part of the annual operating budget in order to sustain this project in the future. Plans are to continue to expand this program based on its success.

