Proposal Example #4 – Basic Proposal Model for Ongoing Program

This sample is an edited version of a proposal submitted by a participant during a Grantsmanship Training Program Class. It is used with permission.

EnergyAid Winter Program

Summary

For the 27% of residents in the St. Louis metropolitan area who live below the poverty line (approximately 756,000 people), winter months are a time of hardship. For many, energy bills are such a large a percentage of their limited income that they struggle to make payments to keep the heat on. Some go without food and medication to stay warm, and others are unable to keep up with payments and face winter with no heat at all. People who can't heat their homes face serious problems such as hunger, poor health, hypothermia, and homelessness.

EnergyAid's Winter Program helps vulnerable people stay safe and warm during the winter. Services provided include help with utility payments, distribution of blankets and heaters, furnace repairs, home weatherization, and information and referrals through a 24/7 Helpline.

EnergyAid, a 501(c)3 based in St. Louis, has a history of helping vulnerable, low-income people solve energy-related crises. Since it began in 1983, it has helped hundreds of thousands of people survive temperatures as low as -18°F and as high at 108°F.[1] During the winter of 2018-2019, the Winter Program provided direct services that helped 1,206 clients stay safe and warm in their own homes. It also provided 5,122 people with information, advice, and referrals through its Helpline – an increase of 18% over the previous year.

The annual cost of the Winter Program is $136,450 and EnergyAid is requesting a grant of $25,000 from WeCare Foundation to support 2020-2021 services. Other cash and in-kind resources will be provided by individuals, community organizations, and a group of committed foundations and corporations that provide ongoing support (budget provides details).

Introduction to EnergyAid

For over 30 years, EnergyAid has helped low-income people in the St. Louis metropolitan area solve energy-related crises. Our mission is to promote healthier, safer home environments and independent living by providing year-round services for low-income households with persons who are elderly, disabled, or chronically ill, and families with young children.

Since it began, EnergyAid has provided over 265,000 vulnerable, low-income people with services that helped them survive temperatures as high as 108°F and as low as -18°F. The people who receive services are from some of the most deprived communities in the USA and lack the resources that many people take for granted. Clients are people like Rita and Eddie:

NOTE: The original proposal was written several years ago, so citations in this example are old. Citations are included here as an example of how they may be handled. Citations in grant proposals should be recent.

[1] The low temperature on January 20, XXXX was -18°F and the high temperature on July 25, XXXX was over 108°F. Figures provided by the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)*

Rita *is an older lady who suffers from heart disease and diabetes, and between the rising costs of medication, food, and energy she struggles to make ends meet. EnergyAid weatherized Rita's home in December 2018 and provided her with an electric blanket, making a huge impact on her ability to stay safe and warm in an old, drafty house.*

Eddie *has prostate cancer, HIV/AIDS, and has also suffered a severe stroke. He lives alone in an apartment which had no air conditioning. When EnergyAid installed a simple window air conditioner during the summer of 2017 – the hottest since 1936 – he said, "I thank you and your organization for helping an old man get a good night's rest tonight."*

EnergyAid was founded by Sister Joan Jamison in the wake of a deadly heat wave in the summer of 1980 and a devastating blizzard in 1982. As founder, first president, and executive director, she was a dynamic voice for the poor and initiated projects that warmed, cooled, and educated those most at risk of illness, hospitalization, or death. Her work on the local, state, and national levels earned her the *St. Louis Humanities Award* in 1984. After her death in 1987, her brother, Sam Jamison, MBA, was appointed as Executive Director and continues to serve in that role.

EnergyAid is the only organization in the St. Louis area offering an integrated program of education, emergency goods, services, telephone information and referral, and energy payment assistance. During 2018-2019, it helped over 1,206 clients remain warm in their homes. Services included weatherization of 76 homes, distribution of 195 electric heaters and 110 weatherization kits, payment help to 50 homes, and furnace repair for 33 elderly or disabled homeowners.

Over 63% of EnergyAid's annual revenue comes from donations from individuals who are committed to its mission. Additionally, last year, 136 volunteers contributed more than 1,153 hours of work for EnergyAid clients, a significant increase over previous years. Both financial donations and volunteer time demonstrate EnergyAid's s strong community support.

Problem Statement

For the 27% of St. Louis residents who live below the poverty line, the winter months are a time of hardship[2]. Many struggle to pay their bills and keep the heat on, often going without food and medication in order to stay warm. Others are unable to keep up payments and face winter with no heat at all. People who cannot heat their homes face problems such as hunger, poor health, hypothermia, and homelessness.

The Center for Disease Control defines hypothermia as "…a core body temperature of <95°F (<35°C)" and states that "…excessive exposure to cold temperatures leads to potentially fatal central nervous system depression, arrhythmias, and renal failure."[3] The groups most at risk from hypothermia include people who are elderly, chronically ill, disabled, and small children[4]. For those who can't afford to stay warm, hypothermia is a very real threat. Hypothermia can kill and during the winter seasons of 2017/2018, 295 Missourians visited hospital emergency

[2] 27% of residents of St. Louis City had incomes below the federal poverty level according to the US Census Bureau (2011) http://www.census.gov The federal poverty level varies by household size – the current federal poverty guidelines are defined at: http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/index.cfm

[3] Center for Disease Control (CDC), *Hypothermia-Related Deaths - United States, 1999-2002 and 2005* (2006) http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5510a5.htm

[4] http://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/hypothermia/surveillance.php

departments due to hypothermia[5]. In America the most frequent cause of hypothermia is indoor cold. The World Health Organization recommends 70°F as a safe indoor temperature for the elderly. Indoor temperatures between 50°F and 60°F are considered dangerous[6].

A six-year study of seven U.S. cities, published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, concluded that a higher than normal number of deaths occur during extremely cold weather and "the socially disadvantaged" are most likely to be affected. Lead study author, Dr. Marie S. O'Neill of the Harvard School of Public Health added "Extreme temperatures are as important as many illnesses in increasing deaths and need consistent public health attention."[7]

Long term consequences

The long-term impact of the struggle to stay warm reaches beyond the immediate threat of hypothermia. Utility disconnection or arrearages create financial crises that make families susceptible to homelessness. The Lab for Economic Opportunities states, "For households who live paycheck to paycheck, financial emergencies often make it difficult to pay the rent or utilities. Falling behind on these expenses makes these families susceptible to eviction, and ultimately homelessness."[8] *Strategies for Preventing Homelessness* (a US Department of Housing and Urban Development study) found that energy-related services can enable people to withstand financial crises without becoming homeless.[9]

For people who are elderly, disabled, or chronically ill, supported living arrangements are often the only alternative if they are unable to live alone. Loss of independence can be devastating for those wishing to remain at homes, and supported living is expensive. The American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging reports average annual costs of $77,745 for assisted living and roughly $68,985 for a semi-private room in a nursing home.

Research published in the *American Journal of Public Health* suggests that poor families are forced to cut back on food by an average of 200 calories per person per day in winter, causing adults and children to go hungry[10]. A national study of 1,828 low-income people in receipt of energy assistance found that many suffered real hardship or even put their health on the line just to stay warm:

- 30% went without food for at least one day
- 41% went without medical or dental care
- 33% did not fill a prescription or took less than the full prescribed dose
- 25% had someone in the home become sick because the home was too cold
- 26% kept their home at a temperature that was unsafe or unhealthy

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[5] Figures available from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services http://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/hypothermia/surveillance.php

[6] WHO recommendations (2007) http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/97091/E89887.pdf

[7] O'Neill, M. et al, 'Modifiers of the Temperature and Mortality Association in Seven US Cities' *American Journal of Epidemiology* (2003)

[8] Lab for Economic Opportunities http://leo.nd.edu/research-initiatives/homeless-prevention/

[9] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *Strategies for Preventing Homelessness* (2005) http://www.huduser.org/Publications/pdf/Strategies_for_preventing_Homelessness.pdf

[10] Bhattacharya, J. et al 'Heat or Eat? Cold-Weather Shocks and Nutrition in Poor American Families', *The American Journal of Public Health*, (July 2003)

- 33% used their kitchen stove or oven to provide heat[11]

Each hospitalization due to extreme cold costs approximately $12,500 and 70% of the hospitalizations are paid for by federal Medicare and Medicaid programs–12% are uninsured.[12] EnergyAid's evaluation shows that Winter Program clients are over 1,000 times more likely to have been hospitalized due to cold related illness than others in the general population.

Causes

There are many issues that contribute to the inability of low-income people to heat their homes adequately and to avoid disconnection of their heat.

- Poorly insulated homes – When homes do not retain heat, more energy is required to maintain safe indoor temperature which leads to higher energy bills.
- Increasing costs of energy – Since 2001 the cost of energy as a percentage of household income has grown by 9%, from 12% to 21% for low-income families[13].
- Furnace breakdown – Repairing a broken furnace can be completely unaffordable for low-income people, leaving them without heat.
- Low household income – Since 2007, the US median household income declined by 7% and many people struggle to pay energy bills, and buy clothing, blankets, and heaters.
- Financial planning – In some cases low-income people choose to keep their heating at a lower temperature than is safe because they are frightened of future disconnection.

When the heat is disconnected, it's extremely difficult to maintain a safe indoor temperature and people sometimes take unsafe measures to keep warm. EnergyAid's role is to help each client find ways to mitigate the specific issues that are placing them at risk.

Outcomes

The goal of EnergyAid's Winter Program is to prevent hypothermia and enable vulnerable people to remain safely in their homes. During the 2020-2021 winter, EnergyAid expects to provide direct services to 1,200 people (in over 500 households) and to achieve the following outcomes.

- **Outcome 1**: 90% of clients (1,080 people) at high risk of hypothermia will be reduced to medium or low risk.
- **Outcome 2**: 95% of clients (1,140 people) will be living independently in the same residence after the winter.
- **Outcome 3**: 80% of clients (960 people) will report being better able to stay warm than they would have been without EnergyAid's services.

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[11] Study of LIHEAP program participants in NEADA, *2009 National Energy Assistance Survey* http://www.neada.org/communications/surveys/2010-04-19NEADA_2009_Survey_Report.pdf

[12] Merrill, C. 'Hospital Stays Resulting from Excessive Heat and Cold Exposure Due to Weather Conditions in U.S. Community Hospitals, 2005' *Health Care Cost and Utilization Project Statistical Brief #55* (2008) http://www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb55.pdf

[13] ACCCE, *Energy Cost Impacts on American Families,2001-2012* (2012) http://www.americaspower.org/sites/default/files/Energy_Cost_Impacts_2012_FINAL.pdf

- **Outcome 4**: 70% of clients (840 people) will exhibit a good level of knowledge of how to prevent, recognize and treat hypothermia.

Methods

The current package of services provided by EnergyAid's Winter Program has proven to be effective in helping the target population to stay safely warm. EnergyAid will continue to provide this effective package of services that includes energy assistance payments, provision of survival goods (e.g. blankets and heaters), home weatherization, furnace repairs, and information, advice and referrals to address immediate needs of participants.

The target population for EnergyAid's Winter Program are those at greatest risk from extreme cold.

- Older adults (60+) – 46% of EnergyAid clients are over 60 years old
- People who are chronically ill – 82% of clients have a serious/chronic illness
- People with disabilities – 29% are people living with disabilities
- Families with young children (0-5) – 9% are families with young children[14]

Priority is given to clients who fall into multiple at-risk categories and who are homebound since they are at increased risk of hypothermia. All clients qualify as low-income by federal standards.

Component One: Risk Assessment. Clients who are referred or self-refer make contact via the 24/7 Helpline. Upon contact, staff complete an initial screening to determine whether the caller is in the program's target population and to assess the risk level.

Risk level	Indicators of risk
Immediate High Risk	No heating; indoor temperature below 55°F; no support network; in target population (extremely frail); absence of survival goods (heaters, blankets etc)
High Risk	Home inadequately warm (<65°F); threat of heating utility being shut off; poor support network; limited survival goods; in target population (moderately frail)
Medium Risk	Struggling to maintain indoor temperature above 65°F; utility bill in arrears; some support network; some survival goods; in target population (less frail)
Low Risk	Temperatures consistently >65°F; utility not in jeopardy; strong support network; client has access to survival goods

If the caller is in the target population and is at immediate high or high risk, a home visit is scheduled to verify information gathered by phone and to determine which services will best reduce the risk of hypothermia and enable the client to stay warm.

Component Two: Provision of Services. Our package of services has been developed over 30 years based on research and on experience assisting the target population in this community. Services reduce client's risk of hypothermia and help them stay safely at home.

- **Home weatherization** – By decreasing heat loss, we improve insulation, reduce heating bills, and help clients stay warm. Typical services include plastic sheeting over windows,

[14] This does not add up to "100%" because many families fall into multiple categories.

blocking holes, and adding draft excluders, sweeps and weather-strips to doors.

- **Survival goods** – EnergyAid provides blankets, electric blankets, and small electric heaters to help people stay warm and safe in a cold environment.
- **Cold weather rule** – To prevent vulnerable people from having heat shut off during the winter, the Program registers elderly and disabled people with utility companies (per Missouri Public Service Commission Cold Weather Rule) to prevent disconnection. This also ensures a 3rd party will be contacted, triggering support networks to be mobilized.
- **Utility pledge** – To restore heat or prevent disconnection, EnergyAid make payments directly to utility companies through a secure online portal. Payments keep the heat on while the Program helps clients negotiate payment plans with utility companies.
- **Furnace repair** – To restore heating to elderly and disabled clients who own their homes but cannot afford to repair a broken furnace, we provide minor furnace repairs.

Component Three: Education, Advocacy, and Empowerment. The Winter Program works to help clients and other community members prevent, recognize, and treat hypothermia.

- **Telephone Helpline** – Anyone calling the Helpline during the winter can receive information, advice, and referrals to help them stay warm.
- **In-home counseling** – We provide counseling and education during in-home visits focused on helping clients to stay safe and warm and to access additional resources.
- **Awareness-raising** – By using local media and distributing educational materials we educate the public about heating issues and services to assist low-income people.

The Winter Program is implemented by EnergyAid's team of Service Providers, led by the Lead Service Provider and supported by volunteers. Staff Service Providers are trained and experienced in all elements of the program, including assessment, service provision, and public education. The following timeline provides an overview of when services are provided.

Phase	Months	Activities
Preparation	August - September	• Recruitment and training volunteers • Order supplies for the season • Blanket drives and community education • Focus on public education • Begin processing and prioritizing requests for aid
Delivery	October - March	• Home visits and delivering services • Ongoing follow up w/high risk clients • Continuation of public education
Evaluation	April	• Follow up with clients to carry out service evaluation • Review of program and reporting to funding agencies

During the winter of 2020-2021, the Winter Program expects to deliver the following quantities of service. EnergyAid administrative staff will track this data to monitor service delivery.

Service to be Provided	Target Delivery Number
Home weatherization	175 homes
Survival goods distribution: •Portable electric heaters	200 items
• Blankets and electric blankets	500 items
Cold Weather Rule	100 households
Utility payments	100 households
Furnace repairs	30 homes
Telephone counseling	3,000 people
In-home counseling	500 households
Distribute Hypothermia Prevention & Energy Conservation literature.	1,000 pieces

Evaluation

To evaluate achievement of outcomes, we collect data during service delivery and through a client survey each April. Data is collected with client permission, collected by Service Providers, analyzed by the Executive Director, and made anonymous prior to analysis and publication.

OUTCOME	EVALUATION
Outcome 1: *90% of clients at immediate high and high risk of hypothermia are reduced to medium or low risk.*	Measured using risk assessment form at time of service provision.
Outcome 2: *95% of clients are still living independently in their own homes after the winter.* **Outcome 3**: *80% of clients report being better able to stay warm than they would have been without EnergyAid's services.*	EnergyAid's April client telephone survey
Outcome 4: *70% of clients exhibit a good level of knowledge of how to prevent, recognize and treat hypothermia*	In April telephone survey, clients are tested on their knowledge about how to stay safe in cold weather.

Quantity of service delivery is monitored by Service Providers and reported weekly to the Executive Director to ensure problems are addressed quickly. The Executive Director presents an evaluation report to the Board of Directors (quantity and outcome of services) at the Spring Board of Directors meeting. EnergyAid complies with all funder reporting requirements.

Future Support

Most of EnergyAid's funding comes from individuals, businesses, religious groups, and civic organizations. Individual donations represent about 63% of the annual budget and demonstrate strong community commitment. Reliable support also comes from ongoing grants from foundations and corporations, some of which have funded EnergyAid for over 20 years. A growing, dedicated volunteer base also provides critical in-kind support.

This year, the Winter Program only needs to raise an additional $25,000 to cover its annual costs. As EnergyAid continues to grow its base of renewable donations and expand its volunteer corps, we expect the Winter Program to require decreasing additional outside support annually and to become fully self-sufficient within the next three years.

