

## Program Overview

Completed by [trussell@ifbsolutions.org](mailto:trussell@ifbsolutions.org) on 4/12/2022 12:53 PM

**Case Id:** 15185

**Name:** Russell, Tatiana - 2022

**Address:** \*No Address Assigned

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### Program Overview

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Please provide the following information.



City of Winston-Salem  
ARPA Transformational  
Non-Profits Application

City of Winston-Salem  
P.O. Box 2511  
Winston-Salem, NC 27102  
336-727-8000  
[ARPA@cityofws.org](mailto:ARPA@cityofws.org)

This application portal is to request funding from the City of Winston-Salem as part of the Transformational Non-Profits Application Process. Applications received through this portal will only be reviewed by the City of Winston-Salem. Other jurisdictions may have separate application processes. Please contact other jurisdictions (e.g., Forsyth County) for instructions regarding requests to those jurisdictions.

Submitting an application does not guarantee funding. Please see the section below regarding the scoring process. The Mayor and City Council will have final decision-making authority regarding program funding requests.

Non-profit organizations may submit funding requests for capital or operating costs.

#### Minimum Criteria

- Must be registered non-profit organization (includes faith-based organizations providing a public purpose)
- Must have been incorporated as a non-profit for at least one year

#### Scoring Process and Matrix

All completed applications will undergo a review to ensure required documents are attached. Fully completed applications will be reviewed by selected City staff members and scored based on the scoring matrix approved by the Mayor and City Council. [Click here](#) to view the scoring matrix. Scored applications will be reviewed by the City's Management Team for potential recommendation to the Mayor and City Council who will have authority to appropriate funding for programs.

Staff reserves the right to contact any applicant to request clarification or additional details regarding application responses and materials.

### Defining Performance Measures

Sections of the application will reference performance measures and outcomes as required by the U.S. Department of Treasury. Specifically, the application will request workload and effectiveness/outcome measures. Please see this video (<https://www.cityofws.org/2809/Performance-Measures-Video>) for general information on performance measures.

### Upcoming Application Orientation Session

The City will host a virtual application orientation session on April 1, 2022 at 10:00 am. The meeting will take place virtually via the Zoom platform and will also have a live simulcast on the City's YouTube page. The link for that meeting will be posted the morning of the meeting to the website: [www.cityofws.org/clfrf](http://www.cityofws.org/clfrf)

### Contact Information

For any questions or concerns, please email [ARPA@cityofws.org](mailto:ARPA@cityofws.org) or call City Link at 336-727-8000.

## A.Contact Information

Completed by trussell@ifbsolutions.org on 4/11/2022 11:14 AM

Case Id: 15185

Name: Russell, Tatiana - 2022

Address: \*No Address Assigned

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### A.Contact Information

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Please provide the following information.

#### ORGANIZATION/AGENCY INFORMATION

##### A.1. Organization/Agency Name

IFB Solutions (trade name of Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind)

##### A.2. Mailing Address

7730 North Point Drive Winston-Salem, NC 27106

##### A.3. Organization Website

www.ifbsolutions.org

##### A.4. Year 501 (c)(3) Status Obtained

1,936

##### A.5. Organization/Agency Fiscal Year

2,022

##### A.6. Federal Tax ID Number

##### A.7. Federal DUNS Number

##### A.8. Federal SAM Registered?

Yes

#### ORGANIZATION/AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

##### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

##### A9. First Name

David

##### A10. Last Name

Horton

##### A11. Title

President and CEO

##### A12. E-mail

dhorton@ifbsolutions.org

##### A13. Phone Number

(336) 245-5606

##### BOARD CHAIR

##### A14. First Name

Brenda

##### A15. Last Name

Diggs

##### A16. E-Mail

bidiggs@aol.com

##### A17. Phone Number

(336) 245-5606

##### A18. Term Expiration Date

10/03/2022

## B. General Project Information

Completed by [trussell@ifbsolutions.org](mailto:trussell@ifbsolutions.org) on 4/13/2022 9:50 AM

**Case Id:** 15185

**Name:** Russell, Tatiana - 2022

**Address:** \*No Address Assigned

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## B. General Project Information

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Please provide the following information.

### PROJECT INFORMATION

#### B.1. Project/Program Title

Job Training and Employment for People Who are Blind

#### B.2. Project Location/Address

7730 North Point Drive Winston-Salem, NC 27106

### PROJECT CONTACT/MANAGER

#### B3. First Name

Pedro

#### B4. Last Name

Rojas

#### B5. Title

Plant Manager

#### B6. E-Mail

projas@ifbsolutions.org

#### B7. Phone Number

(336) 245-5645

## C. General Project Narrative

Completed by [trussell@ifbsolutions.org](mailto:trussell@ifbsolutions.org) on 4/22/2022 8:41 AM

**Case Id:** 15185

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### C. General Project Narrative

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Please provide the following information.

#### C.1. Provide description of project and how funds will be used

Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind, Inc. D.B.A. IFB Solutions is requesting grant funding from the City of Winston-Salem ARPA Transformational Grant Program in the amount of \$300,000 to support job training for 60 new hires including 30 who are blind or visually impaired and retraining 67 current IFB employees in Winston-Salem. The new textile manufacturing projects will create or sustain 127 meaningful and challenging jobs for people who are blind and sighted in our community.

IFB Solutions is a 501C3 organization That supports many underserved communities in Winston-Salem and provides those services within a QCT. We project that this project will serve 127 people that will generally meet or exceed the diversity characteristics that are represented in our current workforce.

- Currently 54% of our 390 employees based in Winston Salem are blind
- 37% of our workforce is African American
- 15% of our workforce is Hispanic
- 3% of our workforce self-identify as Asian
- 4% of our workforce self-report as a U.S. veteran

IFB Solutions will have several major production line changes during FY 2022 through FY 2023 due to new and updated requirements from the Department of Defense. Recently the Air Force, through the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) has entered conversations with IFB Solutions to provide a new product, the Physical Training Gear (PTG) jacket, requiring at least 60 individuals to be trained and retrained. 45 IFB employees will have to be retrained as our work on the Air Force Improved Physical Training Uniform (IPTU) Jacket production ends in October 2022. Preproduction training on the PTG will begin in November 2022 through February 2023. First contract orders from the Air Force for the PTG will be delivered in April 2023 by IFB Solutions. We are expecting a production ramp-up over five months from February through June 2023 with continual training into June 2023 as the delivery requirements increase and new employees are hired to meet the requirement. The new textile manufacturing project requires different sets of textile manufacturing equipment, which IFB would need to purchase.

There will also be an increase in the manufacturing production in two departments. Currently, 36 individuals including those who are blind are manufacturing the Modular Lightweight Load-Carrying Equipment (MOLLE 4,000 rucksack) for the U.S. Army. To assemble this complex textile product over 400 operational steps are required. This department will need 40 more individuals to be trained/retrained due to the Army's demand.

Our Advance Combat Shirt (ACS) department currently employs 60 individuals, and we project the government's contractual requirement will increase significantly, requiring IFB Solutions to bring an additional 52 people into this department by the end of 2023. This will require a significant amount of training/retraining.

The training period is critical to ensure the success of every candidate who is blind or visually impaired on their path to career success and independence. Training will take approximately 12 to 16 weeks, whereas sighted persons will have from 8 to 10 weeks of training to reach full productivity.

An employer's expense of training and purchase and installation of additional workplace accommodations required to provide an accessible workplace for individuals who are blind can create a barrier to the job market for people who are blind. IFB Solutions has calculated this training, accommodation, and vocational support expense to average \$4,000 per year per employee.

Our job conversion team works tirelessly to develop new manufacturing opportunities for individuals who are blind.

The bulk of individuals who are blind are low and moderate-income, are not working, and many are unfortunately dependent on government assistants' programs. By helping people gain meaningful employment opportunities, providing training, and upward mobility, we help these great individuals reduce their sole dependence on family and government assistance programs and become contributing members of our community, earning a paycheck, and gaining access to better healthcare, paid time-off, and retirement programs through our outstanding benefit programs. By providing access to a wide range of services offered at IFB Solutions, we support the development of independence and economic self-sufficiency.

IFB Solutions has seen some drastic reductions and changes to our portfolio of products and services that we have provided to the Federal Government and the U.S. military in FY 2022. Our portfolio approach to our business has traditionally driven a variety of employment opportunities of choice for people who are blind, and, in the past, it has helped balance our budget between our mission objectives and monetary cash flow needs. Coming out of the two-year pandemic slump, however, our FY 2022 revenue is currently 27.8% lower than the past two years in our Winston-Salem location. Further, this revenue reduction has been exacerbated by a change in our product portfolio mix to products that drive lower monetary contributions that support traditionally self-funded training support services for people who are blind. In February, we made the tough decision to reduce our workforce by 50 people across the organization. This included a training position in the Winston-Salem plant. Without public funding, we are not in a position to rehire for this much-needed training position as military production requirements come back to pre-pandemic levels in 2023. We also fear that with the shift to less profitable projects, we may be required to further cut training positions that directly impact the expansion of employment opportunities for IFB Solutions' employees who are blind that meet the statutory definition of developmental disabilities.

Public support to ensure on-the-job training is essential to the continued productive employment of people who are blind living and working in Winston-Salem. It is also essential to ensure that individuals who are blind that seek employment with IFB Solutions can have a successful employment outcome with what might be their first job ever.

If IFB is unable to provide the comprehensive training programs required to train new employees on our complex manufacturing operations and fund the re-training required to take on new projects and expansion of existing product production, we will absolutely see a reduction in employee productivity and, consequently, in our output and revenue. This will further exacerbate our FY2022 financial losses and threaten existing or newly signed contracts. In that unfortunate scenario, we will also have a lower capacity to onboard people who are blind to newly created jobs, and a reduction of productive employment outcomes will occur. Without our one-on-one training programs, more individuals who are blind in the city will be left out of the workforce. In that case, the few individuals that start with IFB will be less likely to achieve long-term employment. The reason for this is that it will be extremely difficult for them to reach a level of self-confidence and productivity that would potentially place them in full-time work making products for our military customers.

**C.2. How will a participant access the proposed project/program, use the services, and derive a beneficial outcome from participation?**

People with visual impairments regularly contact IFB Solutions inquiring about employment opportunities. They hear about programs, jobs, and benefits we provide from various sources, such as the Economic Security Commission, word of mouth (internally known as the "blind vine,") North Carolina Division of Services for the Blind, other associations and advocacy organizations for people with disabilities, resource centers or job fairs. Over 35% of our current workforce who is blind have never had a job before.

IFB Solutions has a waiting list of those seeking employment and if additional work is not created, individuals who could be hired might lose their only opportunity for meaningful employment.

Some individuals who are blind or visually impaired seeking employment with us are not native to Winston-Salem and the Triad area. We help them with relocation expenses and necessary information and resources for them to move to our city with their families. When hired, many are provided with a subsidized transportation option to and from their home to IFB. Many of our employees who are blind or visually impaired reside in the 27106-zip code and the surrounding area, including apartments in the vicinity of our manufacturing location.

Once connected to us, new employees who are visually impaired have access to all opportunities IFB offers, such as support groups, clubs, and social activities, scholarships, transportation, and our onsite health clinic and cafeteria, all currently subsidized by IFB.

Once new hires start participating in our job training programs, they earn the dignity of a job and can start contributing to their neighborhoods and communities as taxpayers, as consumers, and as supporters of their families, while also achieving opportunities for professional development and upward mobility.

**C.3 Total estimated number of unique participants to be served annually**

127

**C.4. Will program beneficiaries be only residents of Winston-Salem?**

Yes

**TOTAL FUNDING REQUEST**

**C.5. Total Operating Funding Request**

\$300,000.00

**C.6. Total Capital Funding Request**

\$0.00

**SPENDING TIMEFRAME**

**C.7 Capital Spending Timeframe**

FY 2022-2023

**C.8 Operating Spending Timeframe**

FY 2022 - FY 2023

## D. Project Budget Categories

Completed by [trussell@ifbsolutions.org](mailto:trussell@ifbsolutions.org) on 4/22/2022 3:14 PM

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### D. Project Budget Categories

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Please provide the following information.

Use templates below to input **the total** Project Budget (**only requested expenses and estimated revenues related to the program or project for which you are requesting funding**) by clicking **Add Column**. Please include all funding from the City and other sources.

Operating Costs	Total
2 Job Trainers	\$96,000.00
Training Incentives for 60 new hires (\$11/per hour x 40 hours/week x 12 weeks x 60 individuals) including 30 days benefits after hire (\$2,323.2 x 60 hires)	\$456,192.00
Retraining for current 67 employees (\$11/per hour x 40 hours/week x 12 weeks x 67 individuals) including benefits (\$1,469 x 67 employees)	\$452,169.00
	\$1,004,361.00

Capital Costs	Total
Sewing Equipment	\$30,000.00
	\$30,000.00

### PROJECT/PROGRAM REVENUE CATEGORIES

Please fill out the revenue estimate table. **Note: operating revenues and expenses must be balanced (be equal).**

Operating	Total
IFB Solutions Operational Revenue	\$532,061.00
National Industries for the Blind New Project Incentive fee Waiver	\$62,300.00
City of Winston-Salem ARPA Transformative Grant Program	\$300,000.00
Support from individuals and fundraising events	\$100,000.00
National Industries for the Blind, Compensation and Productivity Improvement Grant	\$10,000.00
	\$1,004,361.00

Please list below all known/expected **individual** grants and contributions totaling 10% or more of the project's budget.

**Note: capital revenues and expenditures must be balanced (be equal)**



Capital	Total
National Industries for the Blind, Compensation and Productivity Improvement Grant	\$30,000.00
	\$30,000.00

## E. Demographic and Geographic Distribution

Case Id: 15185  
Name: Russell, Tatiana - 2022  
Address: \*No Address Assigned

Completed by trussell@ifbsolutions.org on 4/18/2022 10:12 AM

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### E. Demographic and Geographic Distribution

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Please provide the following information.

Demographic distribution is an assessment of the level of the project funds spent on a program or service provided at a physical location in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT), OR where the primary intended beneficiaries live within a QCT, OR whether the program benefits residents that earn less than 60 percent of median income for the City, OR whether over 25 percent of program beneficiaries are below the federal poverty line.

E.1 Is this project/program located in a QCT or serve residents that live in a QCT?

Yes

If yes, what percentage of clients served are estimated to be residents of QCTs? ([Click here](#) to view the QCT mapping tool)

0.00 %

E.2 If the project or program is not a QCT or specifically serve residents in a QCT, will residents meet the follow criteria:

25% or more of participants below the federal poverty line or participants served make less than 60% of the Area Median Income

The project/program does not operate in a QCT, and beneficiaries neither reside in a QCT nor meet the income thresholds mentioned above.

## F. Alignment to Strategic Plan

Completed by [trussell@ifbsolutions.org](mailto:trussell@ifbsolutions.org) on 4/22/2022 8:56 AM

Case Id: 15185

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## F. Alignment to Strategic Plan

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Please provide the following information.

Strategic planning is a process in which organizational leaders determine their goals and objectives, and allocate needed/limited resources to successfully achieve those goals and objectives. [Click here](#) to view Winston Salem's Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan includes three (3) tiers of priorities:

### Tier 1:

- Focus on job creation/sustainability and workforce development
- Collaboration and funding for pre-K opportunities
- Funding for affordable housing
- Funding for economic development

### Tier 2:

- Poverty reduction/cessation
- COVID reopening plan
- Community engagement (Power of connections)
- Funding for arts

### Tier 3:

- Community Fundraising
- Environmental initiatives
- Address digital divide
- Address childcare needs
- Neighborhood maintenance
- Organization efficiency and public-private partnerships
- Law enforcement reform

**F.1. Please select the primary priority from the list above addressed by your project/program.**

Tier 1

**F.2. Please select the secondary priority from the list above addressed by your project/program.**

Tier 2

**F.3. Please describe how the workload or outcomes from your project/program addresses the primary priority you**

**selected.**

Our project under your review contributes directly to the top two priority tiers of Winston Salem's Strategic Plan 2022-2025. The first two tiers are related to the focus areas of Economic Vitality and Diversity and Livable Neighborhoods, and IFB's project goals align exactly with the city's strategic objectives for job creation and sustainment, workforce development, and economic development, poverty reduction, and pandemic re-opening.

Tier 1: Focus on job creation/sustainability and workforce development.

To meet the demand for employment and the need for professional development, IFB Solutions continually creates new job opportunities for individuals of all skill levels. Ranging from sewing to building mattresses, to making eyeglasses, to assembling and packaging a variety of products, to working in call centers and customer service centers, employment opportunities at IFB Solutions are rapidly becoming more diverse and are requiring more employee flexibility and adaptability than ever before.

With the help of this funding, IFB Solutions will provide job training and job retraining for up to 127 individuals, including those who are blind or visually impaired in Winston-Salem. We will ensure that at least 80% of all new hires who are blind complete assessments, onboarding, and training and are placed into full-time employment.

Tier 2: Poverty reduction.

Every day, it is our goal to decrease one statistic – 70% of working-age adults who are blind are not employed. Individuals who are blind disproportionately fall within the low to moderate-income categories. Their cost of living is traditionally higher, as they often have other health issues and usually incur higher medical and living expenses than those who are sighted. They are dependent on social services programs. Once they start participating in our job programs, they earn the dignity of a job and can start contributing to their neighborhoods and communities as taxpayers, consumers, and supporters of their families, while also achieving opportunities for professional development and upward mobility.

We are proud to employ and serve people who are blind. Investing in job training and workforce development leads to personal independence and economic self-sufficiency. Through training and employment, we transform lives and help individuals who are blind fully integrate into the communities as proud, contributing citizens.

## G. Collaboration

Completed by [trussell@ifbsolutions.org](mailto:trussell@ifbsolutions.org) on 4/22/2022 9:00 AM

**Case Id:** 15185

**Name:** Russell, Tatiana - 2022

**Address:** \*No Address Assigned

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### G. Collaboration

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Please provide the following information.

**Collaboration is when an organization is partnering or proactively working with one or more external stakeholders to achieve the same goal.**

**G.1. How many other external partners, organizations, stakeholders will you be collaborating with to provide the project/program?**

3+

**G.2. Please provide the names of the organizations and the roles they will serve in the project/program?**

IFB Solutions participates in the most collaborative public-private partnership ever conceived by the U.S. Congress. The AbilityOne program offers individuals who are blind or severely disabled an opportunity to work through the manufacturing and sales of goods and provision of services to the Federal government. The Federal government buys goods and services required for mission critical objectives from not-for-profit agencies that have a mission of creating job opportunities for Americans who are blind or disabled. Through this public-private partnership, the Federal government generates over 45,000 jobs for people with disabilities, while procuring over \$3 billion of goods and services needed to operate government programs. No “handouts,” just a “hand up” to better jobs and careers for people who are blind.

The U.S. AbilityOne Commission is a federal agency that provides AbilityOne program oversight. We collaborate with the National Industries for the Blind, the umbrella not-for-profit agency, which allocates AbilityOne contract work and provides leadership training for people who are blind. We partner closely with local small businesses.

We also thrive because of our local transportation partnerships with the City of Winston-Salem, thus ensuring we have an accessible bus route right outside of our building and a helpful paratransit system so that people who are blind can get to work reliably.

Our multiple services to the local community are possible thanks to multiple partners, such as Forsyth County Schools, the North Carolina Division of Services for the Blind, the Twin Cities Host Lions club, the YMCA, and the Here to There Transportation Services name just a few.

An organization's capacity can be defined as its ability to implement the proposed project, as characterized by the alignment of its mission and vision with the proposed project, the existing internal infrastructure to support it, and its plan for implementation and assessment of project success.

## H. Administration/Reporting

Case Id: 15185

Name: Russell, Tatiana - 2022

Address: \*No Address Assigned

Completed by trussell@ifbsolutions.org on 4/25/2022 12:17 PM

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### H. Administration/Reporting

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Please provide the following information.

**Per U.S. Treasury rules and associated guidance, the City's framework for using these funds aligns with specific administrative reporting requirements. The administration/reporting criterion has three core elements: 1) the organization's/project's development of clear performance indicators and measurable outcomes, 2) the use of evidence-based interventions, 3) and the City's evaluation of organization and project risk.**

#### H.1. Please clearly define the workload and outcome measures that are associated with your project/program

Workload	<p>IFB Solutions executive team will be overseeing this project and its successful completion. The Plant Manager will be responsible for the successful execution of the project. Our supervisors, trainers, trainees, and employees will be executing the project. The Program Manager will provide updates about this project and its progress. Our experienced grants coordinator will make sure all reports will be submitted in a timely manner.</p> <p>The project has already been defined and goals set per government specifications and regulations. Our team has already set hiring, training, and production goals. The Plant Manager and Program Manager will be responsible for the successful execution of the project and will rely on a variety of reports and production records.</p>
Effectiveness/Outcome	<p>IFB Solutions' Government contracts require strict adherence to any service level agreements (SLA). Our extensive experience with new programs allows us to anticipate, with a high level of confidence, the requirements to meet any government contract, statutory, or regulatory requirement.</p> <p>Performance indicators for this project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of individuals hired against the goal of 60 individuals by June 2023</li><li>• Number of individuals trained against the goal of 67 individuals by June 2023</li><li>• Measuring the number of people hired or retained within our diversity and inclusion targets to maintain consistency with existing performance.</li><li>• Maintain an 80% long-term successful placement rate after training</li><li>• Maintaining a ratio of hours worked by people who are blind consistent with AbilityOne statutory requirements</li><li>• Maintaining training and startup costs within budget</li><li>• Delivering contract product deliveries on time to our customers with 100% compliance</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensuring 100% of raw materials purchased for production are manufactured domestically in compliance with the Berry Amendment.</li></ul>
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**H.2. Does the project/program use evidence-based interventions?**

Yes

Please provide a link to (or attach a copy of) the evaluation of the program model

**Program Model Evaluation**

Training Report.pdf

**H.3. For transparency purposes, the risk matrix is attached. This is NOT required, however, you can self-assess if you wish. Please fill out and upload the [Risk Matrix](#).**

**Risk Matrix**

IFB Solutions\_Risk Assessment.xlsx

## I. Capacity

Completed by [trussell@ifbsolutions.org](mailto:trussell@ifbsolutions.org) on 4/22/2022 9:05 AM

**Case Id:** 15185

**Name:** Russell, Tatiana - 2022

**Address:** \*No Address Assigned

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## I. Capacity

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Please provide the following information.

**An organization's capacity can be defined as its ability to implement the proposed project, as characterized by the alignment of its mission and vision with the proposed project, existing internal infrastructure to support it, and its plan for implementation and assessment of project success.**

### **I.1. Please provide your organization's vision and mission statements and explain the alignment between the proposed project/program and the organizational mission.**

IFB Solutions (trade name of Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind) began operating in 1936 with a small workshop launched by the Winston-Salem Lions Club. The workshop began with six people who were blind in a two-room building, and production was limited to making mattresses, caning chairs, and assembling loop belts. Currently, IFB Solutions is the largest employer of individuals who are blind in the nation by blind hours worked with 360 employees with visual disabilities. We produce thousands of products for government and commercial markets in our manufacturing facilities in Winston-Salem and Asheville, NC, and Little Rock, AR.

Our mission is "to provide opportunities for persons who are blind or visually impaired in need of training, employment, and services. We believe that all persons who are blind or visually impaired have the right to succeed in every area of life."

Our vision statement is "To be America's leader in building life-changing opportunities for people who are blind."

We offer not only employment and training opportunities for individuals who are blind, but also a wide range of services to local communities, where we operate our plants.

Our Community Low Vision Centers (CLVC) in Winston-Salem, Asheville, NC, and Little Rock, AR have been able to reach thousands of individuals with low vision or blindness of all ages and change their lives by ensuring training and by providing assistive technologies necessary to maximize their remaining vision. The Focus on Literacy (FOL) program meets the needs of school-age children for whom assistive technology is only available in the classroom setting – now these students with visual disabilities are able to study independently utilizing the assistive technologies we provide.

IFB Solutions Programs focus on developing independence in children or adults with vision loss. We provide computer and internet literacy training (on-site and remotely) and support recreational clubs and gatherings, arts and crafts classes, and sports offerings to our employees and the wider community. Our Tracy's Little Red Schoolhouse (TLRS) in Winston-Salem opened its doors to the community in May 2012. The center is a one-stop location for all individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The Schoolhouse is also home to all Student Enrichment Experience (S.E.E.) activities, including our S.E.E. After School program and S.E.E. Summer Camps.

Through a variety of programs and services, IFB Solutions serves thousands of individuals who are blind directly and indirectly every year.



The proposed project perfectly aligns with our mission, which will provide training, employment, and services for up to 127 individuals including people who are blind or visually impaired in Winston-Salem.

**I.2. Describe the organization’s current infrastructure and capacity to deliver the program services or complete the project. Include any relevant current programming and experience providing similar services.**

Despite the pandemic-driven downturn in our contract business, we are proud to say we provided employment for over 400 individuals who are blind last year. For the past decade, On average IFB Solutions has hired, trained, and successfully placed 94 individuals who are blind across our company each year. We’ve provided retraining where necessary to ensure over 400 individuals who are blind maintain full-time employment. Our organization goes well beyond providing “reasonable accommodations” as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and provides customized accommodations (including best-in-class accessible technology) to empower individuals who are blind to perform jobs that previously were only done by sighted individuals.

We have created a diverse and inclusive workplace so that people who are blind have the same opportunities to advance in their careers alongside their sighted counterparts.

Our experience in working on the design and manufacturing development contracts for the U.S. military is extensive. Six out of the past eight projects we have completed have moved from design development all the way to the full distribution to the U.S. Military. Projects include the Advanced Combat Shirt which now employs 60 people, the MOLLE 4,000 (backpack) that now employs 36 people, the Fuel Handler’s Coverall that now employs more than 45 people, and the Extreme Weather Outer Layer garment that now employs more than 20 people.

Our technical services and engineering team will work closely with the government to ensure project success. Our business development team will work closely with our regulatory agency to ensure we capture the project and complete all necessary administrative filings on time. Our operations management team will make sure we set up production timely, train individuals for the jobs, and deliver products on time to the customer.

**I.3. Describe the program/project implementation plan. Include any known barriers to success and how those will be overcome**

This new product line, Physical Training Gear (PTG), will require at least 60 individuals to be trained and retrained. 45 IFB employees will be coming off a Physical Training Uniform (PTU) production line as the Air Force begins issuing this new PTG uniform to our war fighters and as our work on the Air Force Improved Physical Training Uniform (IPTU) Jacket production ends in October 2022. Preproduction training on the PTG will begin in November 2022 through February 2023. First contract orders from the Air Force for the PTG will be delivered in April 2023 by IFB Solutions. We are expecting a production ramp-up over five months from February through June 2023 with continual training into June 2023 as the delivery requirements increase and new employees are hired to meet the requirement. The new textile manufacturing project requires different sets of textile manufacturing equipment, which IFB will need to purchase.

We do not see any potential programmatic barriers to project implementation. Our technical services and engineering team will work closely to ensure project success. Our business development team will work closely with our regulatory agency to ensure we capture the project and complete all necessary administrative filings on time. Our operations management team will make sure we set up production timely, train individuals for the jobs, and deliver products on time to the customer.

**I.3a. Describe the program assessment plan including how the data will be collected for selected performance metrics and any other evaluation tools that will be used to determine program/project success.**

IFB Solutions will maintain compliance in a manner consistent with the U.S. Treasury's Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund's Compliance and Reporting Guidance. We believe The IFB Solutions' project passes all three elements of administration/reporting. It has clear performance indicators and measurable outcomes using evidence-based interventions and has a low level of risk given the organization's past performance in delivering on our commitments.

Our focus is job creation. We monitor hiring through our comprehensive Human Resource Information System (HRIS) Paycom. Paycom allows us to track all hiring and retention statistics for any period of time by blind or sighted, by location, and by the department. We will leverage this system to collect the data required to report on job retention and creation as we start and sustain these projects.

The IFB Winston-Salem manufacturing facility is ISO 9001:2015 registered. It meets the manufacturing industry's international standards for quality assurance and meets or exceeds rigorous ISO quality standards for the manufacturing and resale of textile products. Our customers are assured about the quality, safety, and reliability of our products.

We will track and manage productivity, quality, and on-time delivery as well as supplier performance and compliance using our Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP) Microsoft Dynamics (D365). Operators track and report units produced per hour against the standard. We have manufacturing efficiency reports that measure actual labor cost per unit produced against the standard labor cost per unit. This report is produced daily and can be utilized to examine any period selected (daily, weekly, monthly.)

## J. Impact/Community Need

Completed by trussell@ifbsolutions.org on 4/25/2022 12:11 PM

Case Id: 15185

Name: Russell, Tatiana - 2022

Address: \*No Address Assigned

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### J. Impact/Community Need

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Please provide the following information.

**Impact/Community needs concern whether or not the proposed project will address an identified need within the community and what the short term (One year) and long term (3 years) impact of this project will be**

**J1. Describe the identified community need for this project/program. Cite specific data or studies/reports that have identified this as a community need.**

Individuals who are blind or visually impaired want to work but find it very difficult to find jobs because of a lack of accessible job opportunities and job preparedness in their area. A third of our workforce has never had a job before, not because they have not aspired for one, but because society does not always accept people who are blind as independent, successful individuals. Every day, it is our goal to decrease one statistic – 70% of working-age adults who are blind are not employed. Individuals who are blind disproportionately fall within the low to moderate-income categories. Their cost of living is traditionally higher, as they often have other health issues and usually incur higher medical and living expenses than those who are sighted.

Regardless of the skill level and accommodations needed to be placed in a job, IFB Solutions offers employment for each individual who is legally blind and willing to work.

One of the largest financial outlays for IFB Solutions is training our employees who are blind or visually impaired at all levels. Between the paid training program, trainer's time, specifically engineered accommodations for manufacturing machines, classroom instruction time, and orientation and mobility or independent living skills or assistive technology training, IFB Solutions invests hundreds of thousands of dollars in training people who are blind annually.

We strongly believe, that by providing continuous training opportunities to individuals who are blind or visually impaired, we give individuals the tools for their financial independence. After getting the necessary training, they can continue their careers with IFB Solutions and beyond. Once they have a stable job, individuals who are blind or visually impaired start opening bank accounts, taking loans, and being financially independent members of our society.

**J2. Describe the short-term impacts of the project/program and how they align with the community need identified above.**

Here is the list of short-term impacts of this project:

- provide paid training and retraining for up to 127 individuals in Winston-Salem this upcoming year so each employee can maintain full-time employment.
- employ up to 60 new individuals including those who are blind or visually impaired.
- ensure at least 80% of all new hires who are blind complete assessments, onboarding, and training and are placed into full-time employment.

These short-term impacts of the program perfectly align with the community need identified above.

As a result of this project, we will be able to launch a new product line, Physical Training Gear (PTG), almost double our

Modular Lightweight Load-Carrying Equipment (MOLLE) and the Advance Combat Shirt departments.

**J3. Describe the long-term impacts of the project/program and how they align with the community need identified above.**

The long-term impacts of the project:

- create at least 60 good-paying, long-term sustainable jobs for people who are blind and sustain employment for another 67 individuals.
- grow economic development in Winston-Salem and create opportunities for future infrastructure investment.

Some individuals who are blind or visually impaired seeking employment with us are not native to Winston-Salem. We help them with relocation expenses and necessary information and resources for them to move to Winston-Salem with their families smoothly. When hired, they gain access to transportation to and from their workplace.

We are proud to employ and serve people who are blind. We believe that investing in job training and workforce development leads to personal independence and economic self-sufficiency for people who are blind. Through training and employment, we transform lives and help individuals who are blind fully integrate into the communities as proud, contributing citizens.

**J4. Referencing previous section on outcomes, describe how the impacts noted above will be measured.**

This investment will help to create new jobs and foster independence. As a result, people who are blind will better integrate into the community where they work and live. We are not only building the platform to create equal rights to employment. We are also ensuring opportunities exist for people with disabilities to seize. We have witnessed over the years how this process enriches our community with new talents and skills.

Our focus is job creation. We monitor hiring through our comprehensive Human Resource Information System (HRIS) Paycom. Paycom allows us to track all hiring and retention statistics for any period of time by blind or sighted, by location, and by the department. We will leverage this system to collect the data required to report on job retention and creation as we start and sustain these projects.

We will track and manage productivity, quality, and on-time delivery as well as supplier performance and compliance using our Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP) Microsoft Dynamics (D365). Operators track and report units produced per hour against the standard. We have manufacturing efficiency reports that measure actual labor cost per unit produced against the standard labor cost per unit. This report is produced daily and can be utilized to examine any period selected (daily, weekly, monthly.)

We know City will ensure organizations such as IFB Solutions serving marginalized populations will have access to funding opportunities to support critically underserved communities and disproportionately impacted populations in Winston-Salem and beyond.

## K. Funding Stability

Completed by [trussell@ifbsolutions.org](mailto:trussell@ifbsolutions.org) on 4/25/2022 12:10 PM

Case Id: 15185

Name: Russell, Tatiana - 2022

Address: \*No Address Assigned

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### K. Funding Stability

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Please provide the following information.

**Funding stability is an assessment of both the organization's annual funding and the planned funding mechanism for the project/program from grants, donations, sales, and other income generators. To the extent possible, the City wishes to ensure applying entities have sustainable funding sources outside the City's ARPA allocation. An entity will be deemed as having superior funding stability if it demonstrates at least three years of sustainable grant, contribution, and/or fee-based revenues to cover operating costs. The entity must also demonstrate commitments from other organizations to cover the full cost of project deficits or future-year operating costs (in combination with realistic fee-based revenue assumptions).**

**K.1. Have your organization's operating revenues covered operating expenses the last three years?**

Yes

**K.2. Approximately what percentage of your organization's total budget is covered by competitive grants that you must re-apply for?**

0.01 %

**K.3. What percentage of your project/program's budget is covered by City ARPA funds as part of this request?**

0.70 %

**K.4. Please provide narrative on funding for this program after City ARPA funding has been exhausted.**

Once implemented, this will become a self-sustaining project through the sales of goods to the U.S. Department of Defense. IFB Solutions has always said that for us "sales equals employment." We leverage the purchasing power of the U.S. Government to create jobs for Americans who are blind. We are a qualified not-for-profit entity that produces products and services through the 81-year-old AbilityOne Program that was created in 1938 by the U.S. Congress. Products and services are added to the AbilityOne Program through a regulatory and statutory process. Once products are in the AbilityOne program for DoD customers, the U.S. government is required to continue purchasing those items on contracts from the authorized source of supply. As long as IFB Solutions is able to produce within the government's requirements on time, at a first quality, and at a fair market price, we can be assured of maintaining a contract that creates long-term sustainable employment for people who are blind. For more information about the AbilityOne Program please visit [www.abilityone.gov](http://www.abilityone.gov).

**K.5. Please attach commitment letters from other organizations showing financial support for the project/program.**



Commitment Letters

Budget.xlsx

## L. Representation

Case Id: 15185

Name: Russell, Tatiana - 2022

Address: \*No Address Assigned

Completed by trussell@ifbsolutions.org on 4/21/2022 1:41 PM

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### L. Representation

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Please provide the following information.

**Representation deals with how diverse an organizations leadership is compared with community demographics, which includes Winston-Salem's race/ethnic backgrounds as well as gender. Local non-profit organizations should reflect the communities they serve. Since organizations are requesting to receive ARPA funding through the City, we must ensure these entities hold themselves accountable to having diverse staff and leadership panels**

**L.1. Provide a list of board members including the race, ethnicity, and gender identification for each member.**

Name	Race	Ethnicity	Gender Identification
Brenda Diggs	African American or Black	American	female
Eric Cobham	Caucasian	white	male
Kathryn Garner	Caucasian	white	female
Bob Colucci	Hispanic or Latino	Mexican	male
Leo Stepansky	Caucasian	white	male
Mike Faircloth	Caucasian	white	male
John Googe	Caucasian	white	male
Karen Carey	Caucasian	white	female
Walker Davidson	Caucasian	white	male
Mark Doughton	Caucasian	white	male
Jane Fernandes	Caucasian	white	female
Bianca Marti Johnson	Hispanic or Latino	American	female
Ann Johnson	Caucasian	white	female
Bob Newell	Caucasian	white	male
Andrew Pruette	Caucasian	white	male
David Plyler	Caucasian	white	male
Samuel Richardson	African American or Black	American	male
Heather Robinson	Caucasian	white	female
John Rowland	Caucasian	white	male
Tom Serrin	Caucasian	white	male
James Taylor	African American or Black	American	male

## M. Required Documents

Completed by [trussell@ifbsolutions.org](mailto:trussell@ifbsolutions.org) on 4/21/2022 1:52 PM

Case Id: 15185

Name: Russell, Tatiana - 2022

Address: \*No Address Assigned

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### M. Required Documents

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Please provide the following information.

For North Carolina Secretary of State - Current and Active Status, [Click Here](#)

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### Documentation

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**Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest Policy \*Required**

44506\_9260\_HR-015 Code of Business Ethics (1) (1).doc

**Copy of the agency's latest 990 Form as submitted to the Internal Revenue Service \*Required**

WS Industries for the Blind Inc 2020 Final Return.pdf

**Organization By-Laws \*Required**

44507\_9251\_By-Laws (1).pdf

**Articles of Incorporation \*Required**

44508\_9248\_Articles of Incorporation (1).pdf

**Organization Policies (including personnel, formal non-discrimination, procurement, accounting, etc) \*Required**

44509\_9258\_Accounting procedures (2).zip

44510\_9260\_HR-015 Code of Business Ethics (1).doc

**IRS 501(c)3 Designation Letter \*Required**

501c3formIFB.pdf

**Most recent audited financial statements or a third-party review \*Required**

WS Ind. for the Blind Issued FS 9.30.21.pdf

**North Carolina Secretary of State - Current and Active Status \*Required**

Solicitation License 2022-2023.pdf



## N. Submit

Completed by trussell@ifbsolutions.org on 4/25/2022 12:23 PM

**Case Id:** 15185

**Name:** Russell, Tatiana - 2022

**Address:** \*No Address Assigned

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## N. Submit

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Please provide the following information.

I certify that all information entered into this application is true.

trussell@ifbsolutions.org

*Electronically signed by trussell@ifbsolutions.org on 4/25/2022 12:23 PM*

04/25/2022