UPstream INVESTMENTS SONOMA COUNTY

Wednesday, February 15, 2017 Portfolio Review Committee Meeting Minutes
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
520 Mendocino Ave, Santa Rosa, Laurel Room

Members (listed alphabetically)
Alison Lobb, Child Parent Institute
B.J. Bischoff, Bischoff Consulting
Carlos Ayala, Sonoma State University
Dan Schurman, St. Joseph Health
Emmanuel Moon, United Way of the Wine Country
Hannah Euser, County Administrator's Office
Karin Demarest, Community Foundation
Katie Greaves, Human Services Department
Kristen Fladseth, Department of Health Services
Leah Benz, First 5
Rob Halverson, Probation Department
Teddie Pierce, Decipher HMIS

Staff (listed alphabetically)
Kellie Noe, Human Services Department
Joni Thacher, Human Services Department

Not Present (listed alphabetically)
Matthew Ingram, Driving Force Consultant

Public (listed alphabetically)
Eileen Morris, COTS
Leah Murphy, Human Services Department
Peggy Parlee, Goodwill Industries of the Redwood Empire
Phyusin Mint, Human Services Department

Topic	Discussion	Decision	Next Steps
Welcome, Introductions, Minutes – Action Item	Kellie facilitated introductions and welcomed the committee members.	Motion to approve the minutes: Yes: All No: 0 Abstain: 0	None
Updates & Reports	Joni provided an update of the Portfolio. There are currently 101 programs on the Portfolio. Since we met in September, 10 applications have been approved to the Portfolio, including 6 unique programs: • Tier 1- **Motivational Interviewing** & **Seeking Safety**, COTS; **Safe Dates**, Alliance Medical Center; **Teen Triple P (Primary 3)**; Sunny Hills Services • Tier 2 – **Mothers and Babies Course,** Child-Parent Institute; **Operation Access Sonoma County**, Operation Access; **Child & Adult Care Food Program**, 4Cs • Change from Tier 3 to Tier 2 - **TALLK (Teachers Acquiring Language Learner Knowledge) renewal,** Sonoma County Office of Education • Tier 3 – **Professional Development: Arts Integration Tools for Teachers,** Luther Burbank Center	None	None

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	for the Arts; **Summer Reading & Writing Academy** , Sonoma Valley Education Foundation and Sonoma Valley Unified School District; **WHEEL Plus renewal**, Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce; **Grade Level Proficiency Project**, Sonoma Valley Education Foundation; **Imagine You**, Integrative Medical Clinic Foundation.		
Application to the Portfolio: Rent Right, COTS – Action Item	**Rent Right, COTS** **Reviewers: All present** Recusals : None The committee discussed the Rent Right application submitted by COTS: • Items in question: Literature Review, Logic Model, Policies and Procedures and Evaluation Plan • Reviewers: Carlos (approved), Kristen (recommended TA) Carlos approved: • "I would like to commend the author, this is one of the best applications I've seen for Tier 3. I found evidence that most of the elements from all the pieces were there. I commend Ms. Morris on her exceptional work." • Carlos reviewed Rent Right's logic model long term outcomes. He described the process behind the program design and highlighted strengths throughout the application. He would like to see how the data from the evaluation plan would connect back to making programmatic changes. Kristen recommended TA: • "I also commend Ms. Morris on the hard work she put into this application. What stood out to me were that the goal and problem statement were not tied to the ultimate outcome measured in the application. The goal and problem statement should be reworded. It was unclear to me how some of the outcomes in the logic model would be measured. I needed a little bit more specificity regarding how outcomes would be measured. One other piece I felt needed a better connection was the link between having soft skills and reducing homelessness." Response and additional information from Eileen Morris, COTS: • Percentages in the Logic Model - We are always referring to 100% of graduates. No student graduates from the course without completing all of the requirements. • Measuring Personal Financial Efficacy and Rental Applicant Effectiveness - Currently, we note changes in personal financial efficacy and rental applicant effectiveness by measuring the differences in the student responses to our pre and post survey. We would welcome your	Motion to recommend Rent Right for Technical Assistance: Yes: All No: 0 Abstain: 0	Upstream staff will provide TA to COTS

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	suggestions for additional questions or revisions. Students demonstrate effectiveness through completion of class projects and exercises. • Housing Outcomes - COTS' housing outcomes exceed those of similar homeless agencies throughout the country. But Rent Right is just one factor in those outcomes. Our residents receive job coaching, parenting education, and therapeutic interventions in their residential programs. It is logical to assume that all of these contribute to our high housing outcomes. Additionally, residential programs reinforce the practices and values Rent Right encourages. For examples, residents must save aggressively for moving costs (sometimes up to 70 percent of their incomes) and case-managers review housing applications and credit repair efforts with their clients. Measuring Rent Right's exact role in our residents' success is not possible. We are not aware of research by any homeless agency that can directly credit a course with high housing outcomes. That said, as noted in our discussion of literature related to financial literacy, "just-in-time" interventions have been shown to be the most useful. Since all our students are homeless, our intervention is indeed "just-in-time." • Cost Effectiveness - Attached is our calculation of the cost effectiveness of providing Rent Right in its current format. **Discussion**: Katie - Was the connection made compellingly enough in the literature review about the role of financial literacy in the overall housing solution? Was it evident that financial literacy was a key piece of acquiring and keeping housing? Kristin – No Carlos – I didn't see that link either, but I saw COTS basing their curriculum on research done with landlords. They were augmenting their literature review with research. I think the package on its own is complete and whole and stands on its own. Rob – How do we feel about that type of research? We don't know what happened beyond interviews. We just know that information was gathered and informs the program. It seems like we've had a higher standard than that. Katie – It seems like it's serving as a focus group to help determine how to address the problem. The next step would be to strengthen the program by adding a robust literature review.		

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	Karin – If you are going to use the data from landlords to create the program, it seems important to take the data back to the landlords to assess changes. Carlos – I don't know that there is a need to have a literature review around that one specific piece. I don't think this merits not putting it on Tier 3. There are a few small things that we could use to tighten it, but it's not necessary. The Upstream criteria ask for "most" of the elements. Most of the elements are there. Teddie – I would love to see this be put on the Portfolio, but I would like it to be strong enough to be replicable. Carlos – She won't have data for three years. Remove the word homelessness from the opening line in the literature review. Karin – That's the disconnect – the piece around homelessness. Kristin – This program, to me, sounds like it is trying to increase the number of homeless people renting or relocating to a more affordable area. I want to know how that is changing. B.J. – We don't measure long-term outcomes. We don't hold the organization to be forced to measure those long term outcomes. Kristin – How do you measure if students find housing or relocate? B.J. – This is structured to increase knowledge and skill. There are tools in place to measure that. Katie – My concern is around if this is a place to put funding. If I were going to fund this, I would want to have confidence that financial literacy will lead toward a solution in terms of housing. Is this enough to make a dent in the problem that it's seeking to address. I want to know that, if coupled with something else, clients are well on their way to finding and maintaining housing. The literature review could be strengthened to help connect the dots. Evidence that the program will work should be added to literature review. Kristin – I want to see how they plan on actually measuring some of the outcomes. What are the steps along the way to get them to their outcomes? The outcomes don't seem measurable to me. It would be useful to		

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	add measurement tools to the logic model. Kellie – So it might just be adding success benchmarks. For example, 100% of students will complete an application. Eileen – We decided to put together a Tier 3 application because we can measure what we are able to do in a short 7 week program. Carlos – The evaluation is a great place for a Tier 3 to start. Once they have information and are moving into Tier 2 they can refine the outcomes they are measuring. Alison – Do you think you made the link between the literature and the program? Eileen – Yes, we made a big change when we shifted to a behavioral economics model. Carlos moved that the writer attends to the literature review piece and reapply for Tier 3. Teddie seconded the motion. All were in favor. The Committee agrees to table the discussion on finding literature that shows what percentage of change can be expected and how they are measured. B.J. – I also suggest that when we do look at the literature review we look at low income as well as homeless. Eileen – Could you clarify what we need to do? If increasing knowledge is enough for a Tier 3, then it's fine. Carlos – We are looking for the evidence in the literature that these are the right things to teach your clients to be successful. I feel comfortable with all of the other elements. Katie – Based on what we have right now we can't make a decision about the percentages. Karin – Imagine as a funder, I call Joni and ask if there are any programs that will make an impact on homelessness. We see this program is improving financial literacy; we need the link to make the connection that this will improve homelessness.		

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	Eileen – The research on financial literacy is broad and shallow. Carlos - You need to make the link between self-efficacy and maintaining a home/rental. You are presenting the best guess available.		
Application to the Portfolio: Tackling Tough Skills, Goodwill Industries of the Redwood Empire – Action Item	**Tackling Tough Skills, Goodwill Industries of the Redwood Empire** **Reviewers: Katie (present), Matt (absent)** Recusals : None The committee discussed the Tackling Tough Skills application submitted by Goodwill Industries: • Items in question: Manual and Evaluation Plan • Reviewers: Katie (recommended TA), Matt (approved) Kellie read Matt's comments: Here are some of the strengths I saw in the application: • The logic model clearly articulates the program's inputs, outputs, outcomes and goal. • The literature review contains a thorough and relatively recent review of studies that address the acquisition of "soft skills." The Tackling the Tough skills curriculum is centered on soft skills, including critical thinking skills, teambuilding exercises adaptability to change, anger management, etc. The USAID report also focuses on soft skills, including levels of confidence and workforce readiness. I do have some concerns regarding the population that is included in the USAID report and the extent to which findings extrapolated can be applied to that of Sonoma County. • The evaluation specifically assesses the use of the Tackling the Tough Skills curriculum. The evaluation notes several significant favorable results when using this curriculum. • The manual appears to be comprehensive and includes relevant documentation such as confidentiality agreements, client intake, and standards of conduct. Katie introduced Peggy and thanked her for her work and presence. She shared her thoughts on why she recommended the application for TA: • I think my criteria are more technical. This is a renewal application. Tackling Tough Skills is a packaged program, it's in use, and it has evaluations. I'm trying to connect the dots because workforce development is not my area of expertise. Do all the pieces sink up? This one fell a little short for me in that most of the materials were centered around transitional age youth. I'm not sure if these tactics will be as effective with adults. • There were two literature reviews that were centered on workforce development. They made enough of a case that these strategies would be applicable.	Motion to recommend Tackling Tough Skills for Technical Assistance: Yes: All No: 0 Abstain: 0	Upstream staff will provide TA to Tackling Tough Skills

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	- I was unsure what the program actually does. The outputs looked like a list of course topics. The assumptions gave the sources of the literature review. - The manual didn't have some of the chapters that I was looking for such as activities, staff and an evaluation plan. - There were two evaluations, one was too dated. One of the evaluations was on the measurement tool. One evaluation referred to "the class." I was unsure what the treatment was – a class, case management, etc. I think all of these things could be addressed with an update. Peggy responded that there are a teen and adult version for this program. The program designer trained them. She contacted the university that designed the program and they are unable to provide any additional evaluations. Peggy cited changes in successful job placements over the past several years. B.J. – I remember this problem before. The evaluation clearly matches the logic model questions. We had this same concern last time and Peggy reached out to the designer and resubmitted these same evaluations. I don't understand why that was acceptable last time, but isn't this time. Katie – I think this raises larger questions around our process. So what is the point of reviewing this then? I think it could be made clearer. It's difficult to piece together how this is used by Sonoma County Goodwill. It suggests case management as well as curricula. But I don't see case management listed as an output. B.J. – I think the problem is that you incorporated case management into the logic model. I think it would be better to remove case management from the logic model. To include case management, you would need to add that to the lit review and evaluation. Katie – Not being an expert at this program, it would be useful to have something that reminds reviewers of past decisions made and past concerns. Knowing that we, as a group, have approved the shorter evaluation as a supplemental document to demonstrate success with adults, would be good to know. Kellie –Under the current criteria does this evaluation suffice? Katie – I would like clarification around who this addendum is evaluated on – adults? I would also like to see the logic model revised. Leah moved to recommend TA to include a note about the evaluation and revise the logic model. Dan seconded the motion.		

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	Rob – We are taking action on something that is not listed on the agenda as problematic. Katie removed her objection to the manual. It is missing activities, staff and evaluation plan. There is a list of curricula but not how to implement the curricula. Motion passed. Alison posed two question for future discussion: • Is the purpose of Tier 3 to encourage people to formalize standards for a clear process? So there might be holes in things like a literature review because we are breaking new ground. How do we accommodate that work? • Was case management an adaptation? Lessons learned? Did they add it to the program because it was really successful? Karin – What do we mean by evidence-based and evidence informed for Tier 3? Rob – In the past it has gotten very uncomfortable when we got into a conversation with the applicant. We have been intentional about that boundary and I'm ok if we revisit it, but think we should discuss.		
Public Comment	None.	None	None
Next Meeting/ Final Comments	The next meeting will be held on March 15, 2017.	None	None
Adjourn	Adjourned at 3:00 pm.	None	None