

# Community Innovation Grant INTERIM Report

sent to [grants@bushfoundation.org](mailto:grants@bushfoundation.org) on 11.26.15

<b>Organization:</b>	Oglala Sioux (Lakota) Housing			
<b>Project Title:</b>	To develop an appropriate legal entity under the Oglala Sioux Tribe to oversee water, sewer and solid waste operations and infrastructure improvement			
<b>Primary Contact:</b>	Tom Allen			
<b>Amount:</b>	\$170,247	<b>Grant Term:</b>	8/1/2014 - 9/30/2016	<b>Grant ID:</b> 30056
<b>Report Date:</b>	11/30/2015	<b>Submitted By:</b>	Leslie Mesteth/tom allen	

*As part of the Foundation's efforts to inspire and support community innovation across the region, and in response to grantee and community interest in learning from each other, we would like to share what you are learning publicly. We will be posting a few of your answers to the questions below on our website. You may mark answers as confidential, however, experiencing and learning from successes and failures is an important part of the innovation process and something that we hope you will consider sharing both with us and the broader community.*

**Instructions:** Please put an X in the left box of any answer you want kept confidential; the right box will expand to accept your answer. What specific aspects, components or activities of your work this year were instrumental to making progress? Why was each important? (Up to three answers, 200 words maximum each)

1.	Stakeholder meetings are instrumental to us achieving our goals. The tribal organizations that we are trying to get buy in from have directors who are interested in the activities that are specific to our grant objectives so they have a stake in its success. Keeping our stakeholders informed is the best way to keep them engaged and up-to-date on topics that have a potential impact on their programs. We want to involve our stakeholders in the decision-making process and communicate with them regularly through meetings and other outlets, it will be easier to get their approval for new ideas and their support if problems do arise. We have used stakeholder meetings as an effective resource and will do so throughout the duration of the grant. We have had three meetings to date and with each meeting we built a sense of trust amongst the stakeholders as well as a sense of direction. We have also sat in on some of their meetings to help us identify the need within their respective programs so that we can incorporate this into the overall scope of work.
2.	Research is another a critical component that we are utilizing. Research is important when considering services for our stakeholders for two reasons. First, we can show what types of public works entities have been shown to be effective. Second, for something to actually be effective, it has to be used and shown to work effectively. We can use the research to demonstrate public works entities that have been used effectively. It helps if everyone believes it can work because this will help the staff with the day to day activities. Processes that are deemed effective are more likely to succeed. Through research we have been able to study materials and organizational structures from other public works entities already in existence. This will help us establish facts and possibly establish an overall entity that works and incorporates some of these processes that are already in place, thus improving the overall outcomes of the public works entity. We also want to

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	use the research to formulate appropriate strategies and identify deficiencies. To date we have researched five other tribal public works entities and a couple of urban municipal public works departments. Surprisingly, there are not many developed tribal public works entities.
3.	Focus groups are another outlet that we will incorporate into our planning sessions. We want to gather qualitative data from groups of people within our service area. Their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes toward our idea is critical. If our focus groups are well executed it will help us create an accepting environment for our purpose. We have contracted with an organization that has successfully administered focus groups and they are planning to hold a series of focus groups on behalf of our project.

What key lessons did you learn about doing your work during this year? Were any the result of something you might characterize as failure? (Up to two answers, 200 words maximum each)

x	1.	We have learned that in order for our project to have some continuity we have to have buy in and a stable foundation to build on. Because OST has two-year terms of office for our elected officials, the incoming officials consistently devalue and disregard previous administrations' planning efforts. Some of those efforts are designed to increase the capacity of the nation in terms of economic development, building administrative capacity or financial enrichment. As each incoming official takes office, they normally have their own agenda and ideas for development. Because of a "new" project being initiated, the "old" project is dismantled or ignored. The costs associated with previous planning efforts are lost and new costs are incurred. Steering Committees are established, travel is paid out, planning is the focus, more funds are spent, and time ultimately runs out. The result of the two year process becomes labeled as a "zero sum." So what we need to do is have a good solid plan in place that cannot be dismantled or ignored. This is why we need to approach our situation in a manner that garners support from all parties involved.
x	2.	The economic, social, and housing needs and daily living requirements on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation far exceed the available resources for tribal leadership to meet these needs. The issues facing tribal leadership include: organizational fragmentation, inconsistency and a limit on accurate and reliable data for planning purposes. The government is reviewing strategies for effectively meeting the needs of the constituents and streamlining data collection procedures. This effort will focus on improving housing, overall health status, transportation and infrastructure of the reservation. The strategies for increasing tribal leadership efficiency is through partnerships with federal, state and local agencies. Our lesson is to step up to the plate and to be a part of these processes. To make changes we have to display a willingness to help the tribal administration and other interest groups. This will help us overcome the naysayers that approach us and try to patronize us. We get invited to the table and are able to share our ideas and so far there has been a willingness to accept us in this role.

*The diagram on the last page of this report describes the work Community Innovation Grants support. We've provided it to help you complete the table below and the following questions.*

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**Instructions:** Please place an X in as many boxes as apply.

Our project work has focused on...	We did this prior to this grant reporting period	We did this during this grant reporting period	We plan to do this in the future, during this grant	We plan to do this in the future, after this grant	We do not plan on doing this
Identifying a community need	X	X			
Engaging stakeholders to increase collective understanding of the issue	X	X	X	X	
Generating possible solutions to the issue or problem	X	X	X	X	
Testing or beginning to implement possible solutions to the issue or problem			X	X	

*The diagram on the last page of this report also describes the elements we look for in Community Innovation Grants. We've provided it to help you answer the next question.*

**Instructions:** For the remaining questions, please keep your answer to 200 words maximum; put an X in the box to the left of the question if you want the answer kept confidential; the box below the question will expand to accept your answer.

Which of the three elements of the community innovation process—inclusive, collaborative or resourceful—if any, has been most important, relevant or valuable to making progress in your work? Why?

To date we have used the inclusive element to get a sense of direction and to get stakeholders engaged. The three meetings we have had with our stakeholders have been very informative and helped us identify the need so that we can collectively create a system that will help alleviate the problem. This process also helped us identify that the inadequate infrastructure affects not just the tribal programs involved but on a larger scale the entire tribal population. All interested parties that have been directly involved agree and support our concept and have been instrumental in sharing their visions of this “entity” and what their expectations are. We have been open about the entire process and now that we have an increased understanding of this issue we want to know incorporate some focus groups to include those directly affected by the problem. This is the next phase of the project that we will aggressively pursue. We understand that all three elements are instrumental throughout the entire process and have basically touch on all of them at some point in time.

Are there key elements in your community process other than inclusivity, collaboration or resourcefulness that have contributed to your progress toward innovation? If so, please describe.

There are a couple key elements that will help us progress. First, we have brought on former Bush recipients as consultants to help us stay innovative. This

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has allowed us to be a part of something bigger. The Bush Foundation has a great network of innovative people and we are trying to tap in the resources they have to offer. Of the three consultants two of them have a Bush connection. Our Legal Consultant, who happens to be a Bush Fellow, is knowledgeable in tribal government so his input is valuable. Thunder Valley CDC which is doing our focus groups is a Bush grantee also. We have informally established a Bush team and collectively we will pursue our objectives. Having an outside perspective is very helpful. Our Bush partners also have suggestions and ideas that they can bring to the table. The tribe getting a Promise Zone designation during the grant cycle also is another key element that will have an impact on the outcomes of our project. Most of the stakeholders have been involved in these interagency meetings that the tribe has been having and these efforts have linked the tribe with the federal programs and there seems to be a willingness to work together to address the issues on the reservation.

How has your process led to more clarity about the need that you defined in your grant application or about potential innovations to address that need?

Our process has solidified what we had initially presumed. The tribe is in need of the type of entity that we have defined and all stakeholders agree that they could benefit from this type of department. The problem lies within the organizational structure of the tribe. They need to departmentalize their entire system so that they can run more effectively and efficiently. On the reservation the dynamics of the tribal government it is rather cumbersome and it is hard to make changes. We have been trying to build working relationships with the tribal officials that can support us as we pursue the necessary changes. We remain optimistic. We see that the tribal programs do not have the resources to fulfill their obligations so the infrastructure continues to deteriorate. We have also identified other potential innovations as we continue to research and work with the Tribe. One project we are pursuing is a tribal planning office. Another endeavor would be to set up a Tribal centralized data management system that can be used by all the programs that need access to these types of data especially maps and other descriptions of infrastructure.

If you could go back to the start of your grant period and give yourself one piece of advice or learning, what would it be? Why would this have been important to know?

My perception was skewed. When I approached this grant I read through the objectives and said yes this is attainable. Never did I think that making changes, which are for the betterment of the tribe, would be deemed a threat. I admit I was a little naïve. I didn't realize that not all people welcome change, but it opened my mind to the fact that problems exist because of this fear. When one is trying to making changes within a tribal government, it can become so political. Every two years there are newly elected officials that may or may not support what you are doing. They have their own ideology. There are different types of risk associated with change. We need to be able to identify the risk and approach them with an open mind. We have to have the ability to compromise. It is a volatile environment so we have to adjust, stay on track and lay a solid foundation so we can carry out our objectives. I wish we had a little more time. If I could do one thing different I would have started laying this ground work from day one of the grant.

What else would you like to share with us? (Optional)

Prior to working on this grant I had not heard about the Bush Foundation. I was born and raised on the reservation but moved away for 18 years. I came back to the reservation to see how I could help and since I have been back this is the second grant that I have been administering on behalf of the tribe. I have been to a few of the Bush events and have read a lot about the Bush Foundation. The network that the Bush Foundation has established is one of the best workgroups that I have encountered. Other participants have been so willing to help and are so resourceful. We go back to our jobs after attending a Bush event and I feel invigorated and rejuvenated. It helps take the monotony out the workplace and gives me the opportunity to learn and share and then I am able to bring back valuable information that I try to incorporate into my workplace.

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### **Financial Report (Confidential)**

Please attach an income and expense statement for this grant period to date that includes a side-by-side comparison with your original grant budget. Feel free to include a narrative of your expenses and income, if helpful.

See following page.

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## Oglala Sioux Lakota Housing

Summary Budget Comparison - Unposted Transactions Included In Report

### 41 - BUSH INNOVATION FUND

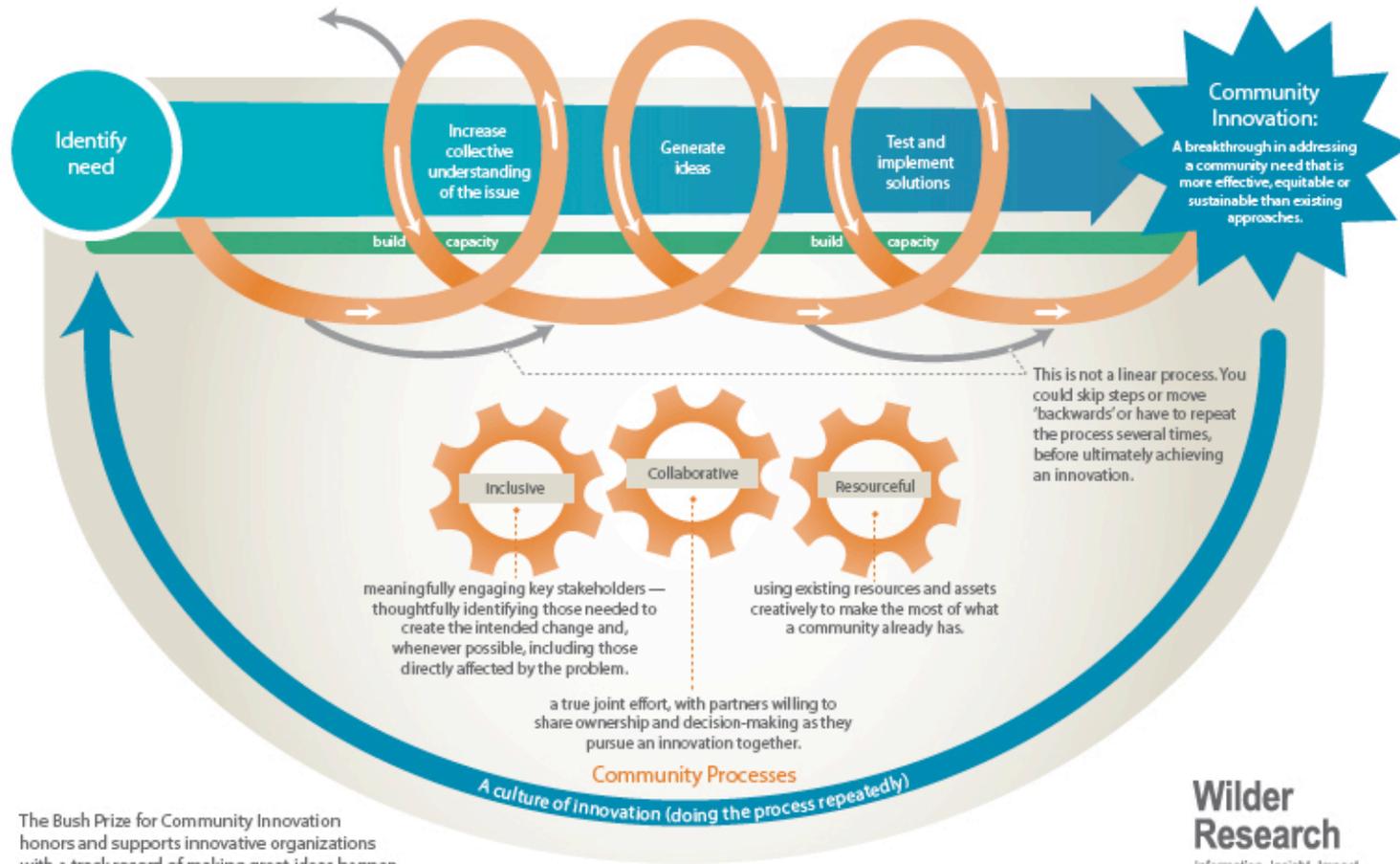
From 1/1/2014 Through 11/24/2015

Account Code	Account Title	YTD Actual	YTD Budget - Original	Remaining Budget
189	BUSH INNOVATION			
5100	SALARIES	27,344.20	69,981.00	42,636.80
5200	FRINGE	2,091.82	0.00	(2,091.82)
5300	TRAVEL	7,810.84	9,150.00	1,339.16
5417	CONSULTING	4,550.00	71,139.00	66,589.00
5421	FISCAL & ADMIN FEE	15,477.00	15,477.00	0.00
6201	OFFICE SUPPLIES	0.00	4,500.00	4,500.00
Total 189	BUSH INNOVATION	(57,273.86)	(170,247.00)	112,973.14
	Total 41 - BUSH INNOVATION FUND	(57,273.86)	(170,247.00)	112,973.14
Report Difference		(57,273.86)	(170,247.00)	112,973.14

Please submit this completed

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## The Community Innovation Process



The Bush Prize for Community Innovation honors and supports innovative organizations with a track record of making great ideas happen.

Community Innovation Grants support communities to use problem-solving processes that lead to more effective, equitable and sustainable solutions.

**Wilder Research**

Information. Insight. Impact.

This theory of change was co-developed by Bush Foundation and Wilder Research.