**JUNIPER NETWORKS FOUNDATION FUND GRANT APPLICATION COVER SHEET**

**Deadline: May 24**

**ORGANIZATION INFORMATION**

**Date: 05/24/2013**

**Referred by (Juniper Employee name): S**[**hashvat Thakor**](https://plus.google.com/u/0/104786396494263275312?prsrc=4)**, Vijit Nair**

**Organization Name: Asha for Education**

**Address 1: P.O. Box 322**

**Address 2:**

**City/State/Zip or Postal Code: New York, NY 10040-0322**

**Country:** U.S

**Website:** [**http://www.ashanet.org/**](http://www.ashanet.org/)

**Primary contact: Aayushi srivastava**

**E-mail:lucky9.sri@gmail.com Phone:312-532-9971 Fax:**

**Year Organization was founded:1991**

***IF APPLICABLE TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS***

**USA Fiscal Agent’s Name:**

**Address:**

**City/State/Zip or Postal Code, Country:**

**Fiscal agent contact:**

**E-mail: Phone: Fax:**

**REQUEST SNAPSHOT**

**Name of Program: Door Step School’s Grow with Books**

**Amount requested:** **$** 29442 \_\_ **USD**

**Total number served by program last fiscal year: 55495**

**Total number expected to be served by program this fiscal year:** About the same

**FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT**

**Total organization budget for current fiscal year:** **$** 3000000 \_\_ **USD**

**Total program budget for current fiscal year:** **$** 283,846 \_\_ **USD**

**Has the organization received JNFF funding in the past three years?**  No

**If yes, what year(s) have you received funding and for what amount?**

**Returning Grantees: I have completed and submitted a Final Report (required) for my most recent JNFF funding.** N/A

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**The proposal narrative should answer Questions 1 – 11 and should be no longer than three pages. Number 11 describes required attachments.**

1. **Provide the mission and a brief description of your organization.**

Asha for Education (AfE) is a volunteer driven organization on a mission to catalyze socio-economic change in India by funding initiatives for sustainable education of underprivileged children.

AfE is a secular organization dedicated to change in India by focusing on basic education. AfE believes that education is a critical requisite for socio-economic changes in India. AfE volunteers actively participate in a variety of education related projects all over India

* Provide education to underprivileged children.
* Encourage the formation of local groups around the world to reach out to larger sections of the population.
* Raise the required human and other resources to achieve the group’s objectives.
* Provide opportunities to individuals living outside of India who wish to participate in AfE’s activities in India.
* Address related issues such as health care, environment and socio-economic and women’s issues that affect human life.

AfE has 67 chapters worldwide: 48 in the US, 12 in India, 6 in Europe and 1 in Canada.

1. **Provide an overview of current programs and accomplishments.**

AfE works with a variety of project partners and community groups in many educational and development related endeavors. Till date, AfE has supported more than 400 different projects across 24 Indian states. The projects vary from children's homes, schools, non-formal education centers, training teachers, public school improvement, and special education for women and children with disability, to supporting key social workers to continue their service to society. These projects also ensure that nutrition and health care needs of the children are met.

Since its inception, almost $25,000,000 has been disbursed to these projects. More important than these numbers is the personal leadership that the volunteers take in carrying out AfE's activities. AfE has more than 1000 active volunteers and several thousand supporters around the world. Involvement with AfE has produced awareness about developmental issues in India and has inspired a whole range of volunteers to get involved in other social causes. Some of AfE’s accomplishments are:

* In 2002 AfE received the Community Service Leadership Recognition Award from SiliconIndia on March 29th, 2002 in Santa Clara, California.
* In 2006 AfE made it to the Lists of 10 Slam Dunk Charities and 10 Charities Worth Watching in Charity Navigator evaluator.
* In 2008 AfE’s Support A Child (SAC) program found mention in MarketWatch.com as one of the two Secular charities (among the 10 highest-ranked and most popular child sponsorship charities) on Charitynavigator.org.

1. **Describe the program for which you are requesting funding.**

An alarming number of children amongst the urban poor still remain without an opportunity to receive formal education. Door Step School (DSS) is an NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) working in the field of Literacy and Primary Education since 1988. DSS’s mission is to bridge this divide, using innovative programs that will bring education to these children and help them make the transition to literacy and a brighter future. When DSS started mobile libraries in certain communities, it was observed that the community library was used by children who could read well. Children, who could not read, did not come forward to take books. There was a significant difference in the number of boys and girls borrowing books. The girls were borrowing considerably less. School based study classes documented the much talked about lack of reading skills of children studying in public schools. These children had almost no access to books other than their text books. They didn’t have the opportunity to hone their reading skills. Project “Grow with Books” was introduced in 1999 in government schools as a part of the School Intervention Program of DSS. Details of DSS’s programs and the “Grow with Books” program are documented in Attachment F.

1. **Describe in 2-3 sentences how JNFF’s funding would be used.**

JNFF’s funding will be used to run Project “Grow with Books” in about 15 public schools. This will benefit around 4500 children as they will be exposed to a wide range of books which otherwise is impossible for these underprivileged children. The vocabulary enhancing sessions will also help them in their academics.

1. **Describe the demographic population that will be served by the program.** Please provide specifics, e.g. number to be served; percentage of low-income or impoverished; ages of youth; the geographic location; etc.

The beneficiaries will be:

* Children of grades 1 to 4 in public schools through “Reading Classes”.
* Children of grades 2 to 7 in public schools through “Home Lending Library”.
* Almost all the children enrolled in public schools are underprivileged. They are mostly from urban slums or from the migrant labor community.

Project “Grow with Books” is conducted in public schools in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad, in the state of Maharashtra, India.

1. **What community needs would the program meet? What are the issues you are attempting to address?**

Beneficiaries of this program are urban underprivileged children. Coming from an underprivileged background the children are never exposed to books other than their textbooks. The variety of books offered by the program, gives them a wider vision. The vocabulary enhancing games and other activities conducted in the sessions helps to increase their reading skills and in their academics. The competitions conducted under this program build up the children’s confidence in their ability to come up and speak. The program’s special focus on 1st grade has helped the children attain the expected reading levels, lessening their chances of lagging behind in the future. As parents of the children targeted by this program are mostly not aware of the importance or need of education, DSS is doing more of a parenting role in the life of these children.

1. **Answer ONE of the following:** 
   1. If you are requesting funding for a NEW program, are there other agencies in the service area that are also working in this area and, if so, how will your program collaborate/coordinate with other providers in the area?
   2. If this is a core service or existing program of the organization, how does it fit into your overall organizational goals/plan?

DSS promotes AfE’s mission of providing education to underprivileged children of migrant construction workers, and slum and platform dwellers. DSS was started to address the problems of enrolment, stagnation and wastage in the formal education system. Working with the public schools, the “Grow with Books” program has helped address some of these problems. The program fits into the core goals of DSS and impacts over 50000 children every year in 122 public schools in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad area.

1. **Anticipated outcomes for Programs/Services**
   1. List the key anticipated outcome(s) or community impact of the project for which funds are being requested.

* During the academic year DSS conducts two reading ability tests for children which show the progress made by the children. On an average each grade shows an improvement of 10%.
* 85% of the 1st grade children achieve their expected level provided they have an attendance of 80% or more.
* Children from all the grades read at least one book per session and read around 12-15 books in the lending library.
  1. Describe indicators or measures that will be used to track progress toward the outcome(s).
* **The reading ability test** is conducted twice a year, at the start and end of the academic year. Comparison of these two tests represents the progress made by the children in the year. The test comprises of sections covering alphabets, simple words and simple sentences. The child’s level is assessed based on section read.
* **The reading competition** is conducted for children who can read well. Paragraphs are selected as per the grade. The children are asked to read the paragraph. The winner selection criteria are loud voice, proper pronunciation and reading with punctuation.
* **The story telling competition** invites voluntary participation. The requirement for selection of story is that either it is from a book read or told by a Book Fairy. The winner selection criteria are loud voice and proper pronunciation.

**Please share one story which showcases how this program has impacted an individual it serves.**

**The “Grow With Books”** program works on over 50000 children every year. The reading ability test is conducted for every student in grades 2 to 4, at the beginning and the end of the year. The results for the last academic year are listed:

* The reading skills of 2nd grade improved by 25%.
* The reading skills of 3rd grade improved by 8%.
* The reading skills of 4th grade improved by 9%.

Special focus was given to 1st grade students through the “First Steps Forward” project, with the intent of having the children be able to read grade appropriate words. The project was launched in 2011-2012, in a limited number of schools as a pilot program. Encouraged by the results, the program was extended to all 122 public schools in 2012-2013. Tabulated results are documented in Attachment F. To assess the impact of attendance on learning abilities, the reading ability test data of children with at least 80% attendance was analyzed. **86% of these children have achieved the expected levels of learning!** A reading competition was also conducted, as these children could now read well, something that was not possible before. DSS conducts a gathering of the alumni from its programs, and has met students who have gone on to do undergraduate studies. Given more time, DSS is sure to find some students pursuing graduate degree programs. These are children, who otherwise were most likely to drop out of school in the early years.

1. **Please describe the volunteer opportunities your organization can make available to Juniper employees.**

AFE is a completely volunteer driven organization. Juniper employees can become an active volunteer wherein they would regularly attend chapter meetings, take on various responsibilities like co-coordinating projects and event organization. They can be [event-day volunteer](http://www.ashanet.org/siliconvalley/events.html)s wherein they volunteer time during fund-raisers. The employees can join one of the highlights of AfE’s fundraising efforts - Team Asha – a professional marathon training and biking program that trains novice runners and bikers to complete half, full marathons and biking events. In lieu of their accomplishments each trainee commits to raising a certain amount funds for AfE projects of their choice. Due to their proximity the volunteers in India are involved in identifying the gaps in the educational needs of the constituents in India. Juniper employees in India can participate in these efforts to research projects, implement innovative ideas to steward the projects and ensure the sustainable growth of the projects.

1. **Attachments (**submit financials in USD)**:** 
   1. Clarify the amount of your grant request by including a project line-item budget. **PLEASE NOTE:** Grants will not be made to support general operating costs - the grant request must be aligned with specific program costs.

Please find attachment “AttachmentA-Budget”

* 1. Include a current year organization budget indicating revenues and expenses.

*AfE does not prepare an official budget for the entire org as each chapter plans its own fundraising and project disbursements. Please use the audited Financials for year 2011 as guideline for 2013. Financials for 2012 were recently submitted and should be available later in the year.*

Please find “AttachmentB-Financials”

* 1. U.S. organizations include a copy of your 501 (c)(3) letter.

Please find “AttachmentC-501c3\_2011”

* 1. International organizations will be asked to complete additional documents as required by the U.S. Government to prove they are the equivalent of a U.S.-based public charity.
  2. Please include two photos which capture the essence of your work. Photos should be in jpeg format.

Please find “AttachmentE-Photo1” and “AttachmentE-Photo2”

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