

## I. Organization Background Information

### **Name of Organization:**

ASPIRA Inc. de Puerto Rico

### **Mission Statement:**

**Please limit to 1000 characters. Please be aware that your content may be truncated if you are pasting from another source.**

To educate for the transformation of Puerto Rico through the holistic development of the person and his/her environment.

## Overview of Organization:

**Please limit to 2500 characters. Please be aware that your content may be truncated if you are pasting from another source.**

ASPIRA Inc. of Puerto Rico is a 501(c) (3) not for profit community-based organization founded in 1969. ASPIRA main office is located in the municipality of Carolina, with additional service facilities in the municipalities of Aguada, Cabo Rojo, Mayagüez, Moca and Ponce. Every year we provide services to over 3,400 youth and adults from underserved communities and families (i.e. first generation college students, low-income students, out of school and at-risk secondary school students, heterosexual population at risk of getting infected with HIV or an STD, and Veterans). ASPIRA operates programs that promotes college access for first-generation people, alternative education for at risk youth, STEM and Health Careers access (Johnson & Johnson Bridge to Employment), and healthy lifestyles (HIV prevention). In addition, since 2017, ASPIRA has been implementing The Agri-Educational Project El Pitirre. The purpose of this initiative is to support the Island food security. We area contributing to the diversification of crops and increasing the amount of local produce. Through El Pitirre, ASPIRA is providing youth with hands-on training in agriculture including urban agriculture and community gardens. Some organizational outcomes to highlight include: 99% of our program participants remain in school (retention), 98% of seniors graduates from high school and 93% of them enrolls in postsecondary education. ASPIRA is governed by a Board of Directors composed of eight members including one student representative. The Executive Director, Dr. Cora H. Arce Rivera has over 30 years of experience in program implementation and management, and has research and academic experience. ASPIRA manages revenues of \$3,931,410 that come from federal, state, and private sources. A sound fiscal management system is in place, which consists of strong internal controls and a robust fund accounting system that uses Sage/Abila MIP software. ASPIRA complies with U.S.A. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), OMB Uniform Guidance 2 CFR Part 200, U.S. Internal Revenue Code, P.R. Internal Revenue Code, and other federal and state regulations. ASPIRA has 70 full-time Employees and 63 part-time employees. Right now ASPIRA is the only non-profit community organization in Puerto Rico as grantee of the U.S. Department of Education Regular Upward Bound, Veterans Upward Bound and Talent Search, under the TRIO Programs.

## Website:

<http://www.aspirapr.org/>

II. Proposal Contacts - Please enter information for the Primary and Secondary Proposal Contacts

Primary Contact

## First Name

Cora H

**Last Name**

Arce-Rivera

**Title**

Executive Director

**Email Address**

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**Phone**

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**Street Address**

PO Box 29132

**City**

San Juan

**State**

Puerto Rico

**Zip**

00929-0132

Secondary Contact

**First Name**

José A.

**Last Name**

Vargas

**Title**

Institutional Development Director

**Email Address**

jvargas@aspirapr.org

**Phone**

787-641-1985

**Street Address**

PO Box 29132

**City**

San Juan

**State**

Puerto Rico

**Zip**

00929-0132

III. Proposal Information

**Proposal Title:**

ASPIRA El Pitirre Agri-Educational Project

**Support Request (check all that apply):**

Investment/Grant

**Requested Dollar Amount:**

\$86,010

**Please list other Significant Partners in the Proposal:**

US Department of Agriculture; Center for Disaster Philanthropy; Agricultural Extension Service of the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez (UPRM); The Popular Foundation

**Proposal Description:**

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ASPIRA is currently developing the ASPIRA El Pitirre Agri-Educational Project (El Pitirre). This initiative is committed to support the Puerto Rico economic development by contributing to the agriculture industry. After hurricanes Irma and Maria, there is a need to increase the food security and strengthen the Island's economic and social resilience. El Pitirre purposes are:

- To increase the amount of locally grown food and teaching students about the farming industry (growing of plants and animal husbandry).
- To serve as a mean for ASPIRA financial sustainability in order to keep transforming society through providing high quality holistic education directed to support disadvantaged people in the island.

ASPIRA is strengthening the capacity of the agricultural industry and increasing food security by cultivating and harvesting fruits, vegetables, and tubers. In addition, we will provide new hands-on agricultural training opportunities to overcome the constraints that hinder the industry's growth and to foster greater self-sufficiency and resilience that will emphasize both the labor shortages in the industry among younger workers and outdated farming practices. The project is providing hands-on work experiences, training for entrepreneurship development, self-management skills and soft skills to promote Puerto Rico's economic growth and people well-being. We already started a successful pilot agriculture elective class for the the ASPIRA Alternative School students in Mayaguez. Students completed the semester with approval grade, they evidenced high satisfaction with the 12 sessions of practice that will increase their employability in the agriculture sector. This experience also allowed the students to create awareness of the problem on food security.

We are requesting financial assistance for the agricultural operational expenses. Investment Connection assistance will contribute to pay the following staff salaries: Agronomist (\$45,000/yr. base salary) and two farm workers (\$7.25/hr. X 2,080 hours) on a full-time basis to develop and implement the farm plan. Total budget requirement includes \$10,010 in fringe benefits for a total \$86,010.

**Issues Addressed (check all that apply):**

Community Services and Facilities, Stabilization and Sustainability, Workforce Development / Economic Development

If your project affects multiple states or counties, please use the CTRL key to multi-select.

## **Geographic Impact**

County-wide

## **U.S. States & Territories:**

Puerto Rico

## **Population Served:**

**Please limit to 500 characters. Please be aware that your content may be truncated if you are pasting from another source.**

Public schools students who participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program characterized by low academic achievement, potential to make postsecondary studies; high levels of poverty and unemployment. 2) Young school dropouts ages 16 to 21 years old characterized by: most of them dropped out of traditional school in ninth grade (47.3%); annual family incomes below \$14,999. 3) heterosexual men and women who are at high risk of HIV / AIDS / STD; 4) veterans who live below the poverty levels.

## **Population Income by Area Median Income (AMI) and other identifiers (percentage of Free and Reduced Lunch for youth or designated "Disaster Area" or designated "Distressed or Underserved" served by proposal:**

Cabo Rojo as well as the nearby municipalities has almost 50% of population living under the poverty rates. The Municipality of Cabo Rojo has been classified as a distressed area under the standards of EDA. Regional population is 231,721 inhabitants. Labor force participation rate is 35.9% and the unemployment rate is 15.5%. Poverty levels is 48.6% with an per capita income of \$8,852 (U.S. Census; [www.factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t](http://www.factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t))

## **Anticipated Outcomes/Impact:**

**Please limit to 2000 characters. Please be aware that your content may be truncated if you are pasting from another source.**

1. The amount of sowed land will increase from one acre to 10 acres.
2. Eight new crops will be added including avocados, lemons, passion fruits, pitahayas, plaitains, yucca, pommegranate, pumpkin.
3. 30 low-income students will participate in the hands-on educational experience in agriculture.

**Describe evaluation methods used to measure success:**

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1. Measure the amount of land sowed to determine the acreage increase.
2. Revise the farm inventory to determine the amount and variety of produces.
3. Revise of school records to determine the amount of students who participated and successfully completed the hands-on educational experience in agriculture (enrollment records, attendance lists, academic progress reports).

**Project time frame - Is your request for an existing or new program?**

Existing Program

IV. Submit Supporting Documentation - Please attach your most recent audited or reviewed financials in PDF format to this proposal application. Your proposal application will be considered incomplete until the appropriate financial documentation is provided. By submitting a proposal application you agree to share with the Federal Reserve information regarding connections that were made with funders regarding the proposal or other work your organization conducts that was identified by a funder that used the Investment Connection platform. After you submit a proposal application, we will follow up with you to see if Investment Connection was helpful with your informational and business needs.

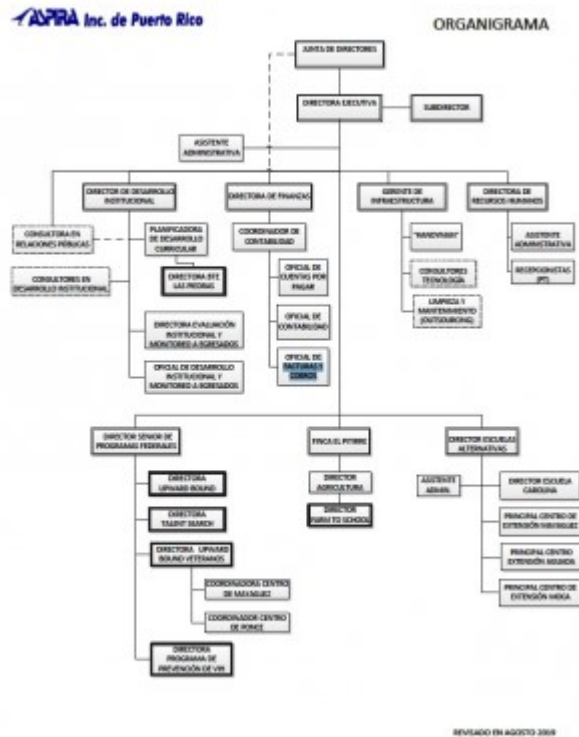
**Upload your most recent audited or reviewed financials**

**(for internal uses only)**

AUDITED FS ASPIRA 2018.pdf

V. Other Supporting Documentation - You may submit a photo (jpeg) and/or a video (mp3 or mp4) that helps describe your proposal. (information available to funders)

Upload a picture or video that helps describe your proposal or organization  
(information available to funders)



Upload additional picture or video  
(information available to funders)



## El Pitirre Agri-Educational Project



Add any additional links to supporting documentation  
(information available to funders)



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