

VT Community Health Equity Partnership

Community Project Funding to Address Health Inequities:

Funding Application

Deadline: Midnight on September 9, 2022

Funding is intended to assist **NEK Prosper! Caledonia + Southern Essex Accountable Health Community to address health inequity(s) experienced in the St. Johnsbury District which were exacerbated during COVID-19, and which are described in a **Data Driven Problem Statement** as: *Due to stigma, marginalization and systemic inequalities, not everyone in Caledonia and Southern Essex Counties has fair and just opportunity to prosper (be financially secure, mentally healthy, physically healthy, well-housed and well-nourished), nor safe, accessible and inclusive opportunities to participate in planning and decision-making about the health and well-being of themselves, their families and their communities. This is true particularly for those experiencing stigma, marginalization and avoidable systemic inequalities associated with socioeconomic status; race, ethnicity and culture; sexual orientation and gender identity; visible and invisible disabilities; trauma, mental health and substance misuse disorders, and justice-involvement.***

NEK Prosper! is interested in supporting projects which help us achieve a Vision of prosperity for *all* and our Aspiration to build our collective and community capacity to dismantle systemic inequality and marginalization, foster community leadership and community-driven solutions and ensure fair and just opportunity to health and prosperity.

1. Type of Applicant:

Non-profit Organization Group/Association^ Individual* Other (please describe):

2. Name of Applicant (organization, group, individual): Adaptive Sports Partners of the North Country

^If you operate under the umbrella of a larger organization (for example, [the Hub](#) operates under Umbrella), please provide the name of the organization:

***If an individual, please provide the name of your fiscal sponsor organization:**

3. Applicant's (organization or fiscal sponsor as applicable) Street Address (Street/Road, City, State, Zip Code): 297 Main Street, Franconia, NH 03580

4. Primary Contact Person Name (for project): Kelly Starr

5. Primary Contact Person (for project) Email Address: kelly@adaptivesportspartners.org

6. **Primary Contact Person** (for project) **Preferred Phone Number: 802-307-2940**
7. **Tax Identification Number** (organization or fiscal sponsor as applicable): 27-1338965
8. **Amount Requested** (no less than \$2,500 or more than \$50,000): \$47,100
9. **Schedule of Work:**
 - Start Date: 10/1/2022
 - End Date (no later than May 31, 2023): May 31, 2023
10. **Project Name** – Provide a one-line name for your project: Adaptive Sports Partners – NEK Expansion
11. **Project Purpose Summary** – Provide a short three to four sentence summary of the purpose of your project:

Adaptive Sports Partners is a non-profit organization, established in 2009, with a mission to empower individuals with disabilities by building community, confidence, and skills through sport, recreation, and adventure. Over the last year, in addition to all the programs Adaptive Sports Partners runs in the North Country of New Hampshire, they also expanded to the NEK by providing adaptive skiing at Burke Mountain, adaptive mountain biking at Kingdom Trails, adaptive swim lessons at Powers Park, NVU-Lyndon, and St. Johnsbury Academy, bowling at Gold Crown lanes, and gravel biking at the Lamoille County Rail Trail. It has become evident to us the communities within Caledonia and Lamoille counties need adaptive sport opportunities for people with disabilities. The funding from this project will support even more adaptive sport, recreation, and adventure programs for people with disabilities in the NEK region of Vermont as an expansion program from a well-organized, stable, adaptive sports organization.

12. **What Vermont town(s) will be directly served by your project?**

Our project will serve all towns in Caledonia, and Essex counties.

13. **Describe the Project** - the work you'll do, the overall timeline and how you'll use the requested funds (will also need to attach a Project Budget – see example on Page 3) (funded portion must be complete by May 31, 2023) (no more than 1,500 characters):

Adaptive Sports Partners has a goal of empowering individuals with disabilities by building community, skills, and confidence through sport, recreation, and adventure for athletes in the NEK. Since Adaptive Sports Partners is established in the NEK already, our goal is to grow our presence and programs. October through December we will be implementing and growing adaptive hiking, biking, and swimming, while also preparing for our winter season. December through March our focus will be on adaptive skiing and snowboarding, snowshoeing, Nordic skiing, and adaptive swim lessons. Come spring we continue with adaptive swim lessons, biking, and mountain biking. In the summer we will offer swim lessons, kayaking, hiking, biking, and mountain biking. This project will allow Adaptive Sports Partners to establish a strong presence in the NEK and empower all individuals with disabilities in our communities. Our community is filled with beauty; trails,

mountains, and waterways that everyone should have access to. People with disabilities in the NEK do not have many opportunities to improve their health and wellness and Adaptive Sports Partners is excited to change that. The CDC has shown the benefits of physical activity for people with disabilities. Not only will our community benefit with their physical health but also their mental health and wellness.

Adaptive Sports Partners recruits and trains volunteers to help in providing all programs. Adaptive Sports Partners has an extremely strong volunteer base, and it is continually growing. Our volunteers are well trained and passionate about the activities Adaptive Sports Partners does and is excited to bring that passion to our athletes. By recruiting volunteers from our community we are creating an inclusive space where everyone recreates together.

The funds from this grant will support the hiring of a Program Manager, with that position's focus of growing NEK adaptive sports program. Adaptive Sports Partners has the funds to supplement a Program Manager in the NEK, for the first year, and funds budgeted to continue to support this position for many years to come. This grant will provide us greater financial security as we expand. The funds will also support updated marketing materials, advertising our programs and presence in the NEK. The funds will also support equipment purchases, to serve a greater population. Adaptive Sports Partners has a great equipment fleet and will only need one additional piece to serve all athletes in the NEK, a Dynamique Bi Ski. As a volunteer-based organization, we pride ourselves in recruiting and training volunteers to provide high quality adaptive sports and recreation programs. We have partnerships with Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA), American Canoe Association (ACA), and BCIP (Adaptive Mountain Bike Certification). These partnerships allow us to bring in trainers and host workshops for our volunteers and staff.

14. Describe the Focus Population (who will benefit?) (no more than 500 characters):

This project will benefit all people with disabilities. All ages and disabilities utilize our program including people with physical, developmental, and emotional/behavioral disabilities.

15. Describe how this project was identified or designed by the intended beneficiaries (no more than 500 characters):

Adaptive Sports Partners has been providing sport, recreation, and adventure programs to this population since 2009. The focus of Adaptive Sports Partners has been primarily in the North Country of New Hampshire. However, over the last year, we started to create partnerships and expand into the NEK. It became evident to us that there was a real need for people with disabilities in this region. Once programs were implemented, we received more and more requests for lessons and programs. That was when the organization decided that a permanent presence in the NEK is our main strategic focus. The NEK expansion spreads our expertise, equipment, knowledge, and programs to Caledonia and Essex counties.

16. Describe the Project Goals and Desired Results (what will success look like?) (no more than 500 characters):

The project has a few goals and ways to determine success. The first goal is to expand on Adaptive Sports Partners' presence in the NEK by offering adaptive sports programs 5 days a week in all seasons. The second goal is to grow the number of NEK athletes with disabilities from 150 athletes to 400 athletes by having a full time Program Manager focused on adaptive programs in the NEK. The third goal is to recruit and train over 100 volunteers for the program specifically in the NEK region. Lastly, we want to ensure that everyone with a disability can recreate regardless of ability to pay. It is Adaptive Sports Partners' model to never turn anyone away because of ability to pay. Our robust scholarship program allows us to make this a success and will continue with our NEK expansion.

17. Identifying milestones provides a way to monitor the progress of your project and make course corrections, if needed. When and how will you identify milestones for this project? (no more than 1,500 characters):

Our milestone focus will be before each season, midway through the season, and at the end of the season. First, we will establish a program schedule, offering activities 5 days a week and conducting outreach to athletes with disabilities as well as recruiting and training volunteers. We will evaluate our programs and ensure we are offering various activities at various times. Volunteer training will also be a priority prior to the start of the seasons. Midway through the season we can assess how athletes are enjoying themselves, determine the highs and the lows, and evaluate any needs. We can also evaluate how prepared volunteers are and if they are feeling confident and joyful about the work they are doing. At the end of the season, we will conduct evaluation of programs from partners, athletes, and volunteers. For all these milestones and assessments, Adaptive Sports Partners will determine if any equipment or adaptations need to be ordered or created. These milestones and evaluation systems are already our best practice and what we currently do for our established programs.

Another system that is already implemented in our organization are progress notes. Progress notes are written by the instructor for each athlete, after each session. These progress reports allow the organization to see growth within each athlete in different activities. Independence, skills, and community are all areas that can be tracked through our progress note system. Progress notes can also be written for volunteers. Our system also houses trainings and certifications that volunteers complete in order to track volunteer success.

18. Describe your team (the project champions and any community partners you are working with / intend to work with to achieve these results). If not yet working with these partners, please describe your plan to outreach and engage these partners (no more than 1,500 characters):

The word "partners" is built into our name because we value those relationships immensely. Our programs would not be as successful as they are without our partners. Adaptive Sports Partners has official partnerships with Kingdom Trails, Burke Mountain, Northern Vermont University, St. Johnsbury Academy, Peacham School, Newark School, St. Johnsbury School District, Champlain Lanes, The Outing Club, and Lyndon Institute. As we grow, we plan to grow our partnerships in the area as well. Our partnerships with schools in the area will expand as we serve more students with disabilities and provide our programs to the schools. Adaptive Sports Partners is extremely skilled at creating and maintaining positive relationships with our partners.

19. Please explain how the intended work may positively impact the data driven problem statement and/or help NEK Prosper! achieve our Vision and Aspiration described above (no more than 1,500 characters):

This project, Adaptive Sports Partners NEK Expansion, will help achieve the NEK Prosper! Vision and Aspiration. Due to stigma, marginalization and systemic inequalities, people with disabilities are a historically marginalized group of people who have not had the opportunity to prosper with their physical and mental health. This project creates accessible recreation for people with disabilities in our communities and their families. This project would not only serve people with visible disabilities but also those with invisible disabilities, trauma, and mental health challenges. Adaptive Sports Partners has a similar vision as NEK Prosper! In that we are looking to create prosperity for all, especially those with disabilities. Similarly, NEK Prosper! has an aspiration to build community and dismantle systemic inequality. Caledonia and Essex Counties are continuously growing their outdoor recreation opportunities however, one large group of the population is being left out of this growth, people with disabilities. This project will change that inequality. As a volunteer-based organization, we foster community leadership within our organization by having volunteers from the community trained and excited to be a part of creating access for all.

NEK Prosper! is interested in supporting projects which help us achieve a Vision of prosperity for *all* and our Aspiration to build our collective and community capacity to dismantle systemic inequality and marginalization, foster community leadership and community-driven solutions and ensure fair and just opportunity to health and prosperity.

20. (Optional) Feel free to provide additional information you think may be useful to the reviewers in evaluating this application. What else should we know about the project that we didn't ask?

We work with many families in the NEK region since beginning our expansion and the need for adaptive sports to exist here is just so great. I would be happy to provide first-hand accounts of the benefits our athletes in our communities have experienced and why families and athletes want more. Thank you for this opportunity!

VT Community Health Equity Partnership Community Project Funding to Address Health Inequities: Project Budget Example

Organization/Group/Grantee Name: Example Group			
Title of Project: Resident-Led Healing Circles and Symposium			
Expense Category*	Description	Request	Please note any other secured funding or in-kind donation toward expenses for Project
Staffing	NEK Program Manager - 40 hours/week @\$20/hour for 32 weeks = \$23,040	\$ 25,600	We have an approved budget to support this position for many years, so this program lasts in the area. We also have a budgeted amount of \$25,000 for this year to contribute to the NEK Program Manager Salary on top of these funds.
Adaptive Equipment	Enabling Technologies Dynamique Bi-Ski	\$ 10,000	This ski would be strictly at Burke Mountain.
Marketing Materials	Marketing materials (stickers, rack cards, pamphlets) highlighting our programs in the NEK.	\$ 1,500	
Volunteer Training	These funds will allow us to train and certify volunteer instructors and create more robust adaptive sports programs. Included in this are PSIA (Professional Ski Instructors Association Certifications), BCIP (Mountain Biking Instructor Certification), and ACA (American Canoe Association)	\$ 10,000	
Total Request		\$ 47,100	

*If a category is not applicable, please leave it blank