

East Shore Industries (ESI) Summary Report

Information about the Applicant

Located in Algoma, Wisconsin, ESI (East Shore Industries, Inc.), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is dedicated to the mission of assisting beneficiaries with disabilities in obtaining their personal independence and employment goals.

ESI opened its doors in 1973 to 10 beneficiaries. Since its opening, ESI has prided itself on offering programs and services that enhance the life of each beneficiary it serves. Some highlights through the years:

- Acquiring Algoma Mop in 1981. Algoma mop is a mop manufacturing company that employs individuals with disabilities and helps them overcome barriers to work.
- Being one of Wisconsin's first certified work centers to provide State agencies with disposable and launderable mop products, an initiative under former Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson.
- In 2019 ESI was awarded a Building Full Lives initiative Grant from the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (WI BPDD) to help create a 100% community-based program that supports greater independence, meaningful connections, and competitive integrated employment.

Today, ESI serves almost 100 beneficiaries with disabilities each year and offers unique programs and services designed to meet the specific needs of each beneficiary. From employment opportunities to day services, the programs and services at ESI focus on developing life skills and fostering independence, allowing beneficiaries the opportunity to contribute to his or her own well-being and to the community in which they live.

Statement of Need

As ESI looks to its future, it also looks to the recommendations given out by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), and the benchmark guide and setting rules for Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). Some of the rules include:

- People receiving HCBS services (those beneficiaries served at ESI) should be around and interact with people who do not receive services. The intent is to not be isolating.
- Beneficiaries ESI serves (while inside or outside of the setting) should be interacting daily with people from the broader community.
- Beneficiaries ESI serves should have opportunities to have individualized or small group activities in or outside the setting with people without disabilities rather than activities with only people with disabilities. The goal is to be all-inclusive and not segregated.

Project Goals and Expected Benefits

The purpose of the center would be to integrate the community with the almost 100 beneficiaries ESI serves through cooking and horticulture classes, and other educational events and guest speakers. The resource center would also be used as a home base for the almost 45 beneficiaries currently in the Job Readiness Program. It will be a place for community members and the beneficiaries in the program to get help in writing resumes and gain interview skills and will be used to bring in engaging speakers and educational programs focused on exploring community employment opportunities. Community groups could also host their meetings in the space, and the center would be open to community members and the beneficiaries in the program that need WiFi, computer, and printer access.

After researching resource centers at the local technical college and at another community rehabilitation center, we have seen the benefits of having technology such as an interactive digital board (IDB) and conferencing/audio equipment as part of this center. IDB's and conferencing / audio equipment are easily adapted to be an assistive technology that creates a more inclusive learning environment - especially for those dealing with certain disabilities:

- Visual impairment : Visual impairment can include blindness, dyslexia, or other visual impairment that impedes the ability to see or read. IDB's can be used in different ways to help clients with sight impairment for example: Zooming or enlarging text and images to make it larger or easier to see. IDB's also have built-in speakers in combination with text-to-speech (TIS) software that can help broadcast materials aloud
- Audio impairment: Audio impairment affects individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Conferencing / audio equipment can be used as assistive listening systems for example :
 - o Microphones and built-in speakers enhance the speaking volume
 - o Combination recording software enables the recording of presentations to review later if the resource center room is too noisy.
 - o Speech-to-text software and microphones can help transform a presenter's voice into readable text on the screen for clients
- Extremity impairment: Extremity function impairments include the limited motor performance of the upper and lower body. IDB's and conferencing / audio equipment can be connected to other hardware or devices that would allow individuals to input information such as special keyboards, touch panels, writing instruments, and pointing tools.
- Mobility impairment: Mobility impairment includes any limits to lower body motor performance. IDB's have several functionalities that may help limited mobility students including:
 - o Adjustable stand mounts: Adjustable stands can also be used with the IDB to lower or maneuver the screen to best fit the client's needs

Project Implementation Plan

In order to meet and reach the benchmarks and setting rules for HCBS, ESI is in the process of creating an all- inclusive and accessible community resource center within the building. This center will have a dedicated exterior access door to be used by the public and is currently in the building/remodeling phase.

Evaluation Plan

The ESI Board of Directors has agreed to approve this expenditure if ESI is unable to secure a grant.

When researching grants, Wispact states that the goal of Wispact Grant Funds is to improve the quality of life for people living with a disability and this grant would do exactly that. ESI will be able to:

1. Meet the benchmarks set forth by HCBS Settings rule.
 - a. Use of the facility and technology used while in the facility will be measured on a monthly basis by the director of programming for the first year and on a quarterly basis after that.
 - i. We will track how many times an ESI beneficiary and how many times a community member uses the IDB and audio/conferencing system

- ii. We will track the number of ESI beneficiaries and the number of community members in the center during the day.
 - iii. We will track the number of interactions between both groups.
 - iv. We will track the type of settings taking place in the center (ie: individual use, small group use/meetings, or large group/class sessions).
2. Fulfill a need in the community by creating a space that is all-inclusive - something that currently doesn't exist in the county.

Budget

Grant Amount Requested: \$13,424.82 / Technology Grant for Accessible Community Resource Room

TECHNOLOGY GRANT FOR ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY RESOURCE ROOM	QTY	COST
<i>Commercial Signage TV {IDB}</i>	1	
<i>Duel Arm Wall Mount</i>	1	
<i>Shure Stem Hub</i>	1	
<i>Stem Wall Speakerphone</i>	1	
<i>USB PTX Camera</i>	1	
<i>Lenovo ThinkCentre</i>	1	
<i>Wireless Keyboard & Mouse</i>	1	
<i>Netgear Managed Switch</i>	1	
<i>Cat 6 UTP Riser Cable Pull</i>	1	
Total Cost		\$13,424.22*

***Note:** Attached is a copy of the price quote.

In order to achieve the goals and objectives of creating a space where the beneficiaries served at ESI can come together with members of the community in an all-inclusive environment, the technology listed in this proposal is the complete package of all things needed for an IDB and audio/conference system.

Staff Recommendation

The grant application can be approved. The space will be constructed by ESI, but the grant will provide for the supplies and equipment that directly benefit persons with disabilities and align with the acceptable grant initiatives of the Wispact Foundation. The amount must be adjusted to \$10,000.00 as that is the cap for any Wispact grant.