

**Expansion Competition Absolute Priority 2 (General)**

**Waterford Institute Inc.**

**S411A230003**

**Expanding School Readiness Opportunities in the Rural South The Upstart Rural TASK Force: Taking All to Success in Kindergarten**

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**Applicant Name:** Waterford Institute Inc.

**Project Title:** Expanding School Readiness Opportunities in the Rural South The Upstart Rural TASK Force: Taking All to Success in Kindergarten.

**Type of Grant Requested:** (select one)  Early-Phase  Mid-Phase  Expansion

**Absolute Priorities the Project Addresses:** (select all that apply)

Absolute Priority 1-- Demonstrate a Rationale (Early), Moderate (Mid), Strong (Expansion)

Absolute Priority 2-- Field-Initiated Innovations—General

Absolute Priority 3-- Promoting STEM Education

Absolute Priority 4-- Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs

Absolute Priority 5-- Educator Recruitment and Retention

**Competitive Preference Priorities the Project Addresses:** (select all that apply)

Competitive Preference Priority 1— Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners

Competitive Preference Priority 2—Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning\* (FOR EARLY-PHASE AP5 APPLICANTS ONLY)

**Total number of students to be served by the project:** 7,000.

**Grade level(s) to be served by the project:** Pre-K-2.

**Definition of high-need students:** Rural pre-K in the rural US south.

**Brief description of project activities:** Capacity building framework to implement Upstart, an innovative literacy and math learning model.

**Summary of project objectives and expected outcomes:** Serve 7,000 rural students; conduct external, rigorous evaluation; disseminating project findings; develop school readiness in rural areas nationwide.

**Summary of how the project is innovative:** Cost-effective, scalable early childhood intervention.

**Other studies related to the proposed project:** Hobbs, L. J. et al. (2019, 2021); Shamir, H. et al. (2019); Evaluation and Training Institute. (2011-2020).

**Proposed implementation sites:** Rural communities and LEAs in AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, NM, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, and WV.

**Organizations partnering with this project:** Jackson State University; Alcorn State University; AASA (The School Superintendents Association); Partners for Rural Impact; Mississippi Early Learning Alliance