

## Cover Sheet – Social Service Activity

AGENCY NAME: The Literacy Project, Inc.  
AGENCY ADDRESS: 15 Bank Row, Suite C, Greenfield MA 01301  
AGENCY PHONE NO: 413-774-3934 CONTACT PERSON: Judith Roberts, Exec. Dir.  
CONTACT PERSON EMAIL: jroberts@literacyproject.org  
CDBG FUNDING REQUEST: \$14,000

1. Project Name: *Passport to Success: Adult Education for Economic Self-Sufficiency*
2. Project Description (1-2 sentences)  
*The Literacy Project (TLP) provides free adult literacy classes combined with college and job readiness skill building and advising, enabling adults and out-of-school youth age 16 and over who have no high school credential and/or outdated skills to pursue education as a route to economic self-sufficiency.*
3. Project Location (Street address)  
*724 Main St.—The Literacy Project’s Amherst site (at Jewish Community of Amherst in East Amherst Village)*
4. Budget Request *\$14,000*
5. Type of Activity (check one):
  - Family and individual stabilization
  - Youth development
  - Economic self-sufficiency (adult education)
  - Food and nutrition
  - Health services
  - Emergency & preventive services: rental assistance, fuel assistance, and shelter services.
  - Other – please explain
6. National Objective:  
Total number of beneficiaries (individuals served): *50 / at least 51% Amherst residents*  
Total Low/Mod beneficiaries (individuals served): *50 / at least 51% Amherst residents*

**Please submit responses to the following questions:**

**A. National Objective Description**

- Describe in detail how your project will meet a national objective and how it will be documented to ensure that participants meet low/moderate income requirements.
- Limited clientele projects must document compliance by one of the following methods:
  - For projects that do not provide “income payment” forms of assistance, beneficiaries may “self-declare” their eligibility, generally by completing and signing a form declaring household sizes and income ranges.
  - For projects that offer income payments or subsidies, income must be documented.
  - For projects where the user profile will be low- and moderate-income, a description of the profile must be presented so that the conclusion, without a doubt, will be to benefit low- and moderate- income persons.

*Passport to Success: Adult Education for Economic Self-Sufficiency provides academic classes and college/job readiness skill building to help predominantly low-income community members (including immigrants/refugees and those who lack a high-school credential and/or up-to-date job skills) pursue economic self-sufficiency. We document income eligibility by gathering self-declared information on annual household income and family size using the attached form.*

**B. Demonstrate Consistency with Community Development Strategy**

- Describe how the proposed project is consistent with the Community Development Strategy.
- To meet this threshold a proposed project must relate to a community development need or needs identified by the community in the Strategy, and must have been identified in the Strategy as a means to address the need.

*The proposed project directly addresses 2016 Community Services Priority 2 by providing adult education services that help develop economic self-sufficiency by combining academic classes for attaining a high-school credential with on-site college and job readiness skill building and advising. TLP is the only social service in Amherst providing this model of free, comprehensive adult education services that enable adults to attain combined education and job skills.*

*Sustainability Priority 18 indicates the need to “give special attention to diversity when addressing issues such as ... social services ...” TLP/Amherst’s enrolled student population reflects this diversity: in FY15, 20% were Hispanic, 15% were Black / African American, and 38% were Asian; 55% had a first language other than English, including Tibetan, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Khmer, and others; 51% had a country of birth other than the U.S.*

**C. Agency Information**

- Provide an overview of your organization, including length of time in existence, experience in successfully conducting activities for which funding is being sought, and skills and current services that reflect capacity for success.

*The Literacy Project’s mission is to provide adult basic education programs and opportunities that support participants to engage meaningfully and equitably in the economic, social, cultural and civic life of their communities.*

*TLP has provided adult education services in western Mass. since 1984 and in Amherst since*

1995. Since 2005, college and job readiness services have provided intensive guidance to hundreds of students, helping them to overcome barriers to continuing their schooling and attain college and job readiness skills.

TLP has successfully completed similar projects within contracted timeframes with a variety of funding, including several multi-year Mass. DESE grants, block grant funding for all other TLP classrooms, other state and federal funding, private foundation grants and community donations.

Services include:

- Academic classes at the basic literacy, pre-HiSET (High-School Equivalency Test) and HiSET levels and computer literacy classes with staff Teachers aided by trained Volunteers
- College and job readiness with the Education and Career Advisor (comprising individualized advising, a Career Pathways Class, other group instruction, workshops and field trips)
- Individualized problem-solving counseling with staff to overcome obstacles to pursuing education/job readiness goals and connect with other social services

- Explain your short-term goals and long-term goals.

**Short-term goals—Beneficiaries will make continual progress towards:**

- Readiness for taking the HiSET, as demonstrated through ongoing assessment
- Achievement of pre-defined education/career planning activities that are significant steps toward post-secondary education/training and job readiness, customized to each individual's documented education and job goals

**Long-term goals—Beneficiaries will achieve pre-defined major outcomes (college and job activities are customized to each individual's goals):**

- Obtain high-school equivalency
- Enroll in/complete a college transitions program
- Enroll in a college class or college degree/certificate program
- Enroll in occupational/job training
- Obtaining work-related certification
- Obtain a job
- Get a raise, promotion or more satisfying/appropriate employment
- Start a business

#### **D. Project Budget Information**

- Provide a detailed budget for the proposed program to include program delivery and direct program costs, and include all sources of revenue and all expenses.

*Please see attached.*

- Cite Sources of Other Project Funds.

*Other sources of funds are provided annually by MA DESE - \$73,104 (TLP is in year 4 of a 5-year grant cycle and we assume continued funding); Franklin Hampshire Career Center - \$10,671 (year 2 of a 3-year grant cycle); Hampshire County United Way - \$4,167 (year 3 of a 3-year grant cycle, and we anticipate renewed funding).*

- If applicable, describe and document the availability and source of matching or other funds needed to complete the project. In-kind services are accepted only as directly related to the project.

*In-kind services* are provided by classroom volunteers—in FY15, TLP/Amherst benefited from 28 volunteers who donated a total of 1549 hours with an in-kind value of \$43,093.

- Document the experience of the provider, costs of comparable services and the process used to review the accuracy of the budget.

*TLP has a history of successful completion of similar projects in its other classrooms within proposed budgets and timeframes. The total cost of serving the proposed program's 50 beneficiaries will be \$2,145 per beneficiary per year. There are no comparable services providing this adult education model. Budget process is based on detailed projections of salary by employee and analysis of past year's expenses and non-personnel items. Resulting expense budgets are compared to anticipated revenues to ensure a balanced budget.*

- Explain the qualifications of person who prepared the budget.

*The budget was prepared by TLP's executive director, Judith Roberts, who provides overall management, fiscal oversight and supervisory support to all TLP/Amherst staff including Sheila Murphy, Amherst site director. Ms. Roberts previously served as coordinator of workplace education at Center for New Americans, Northampton, and transitions director at CARE Center, Holyoke. She also has extensive business management background as president and general manager of two small businesses and sales and marketing manager for other area businesses.*

## Answers for Parts E—I must not exceed three (3) pages

### **E. Project Description**

- Please provide a summary of the proposed project. The summary should include a detailed scope of the total project, including the non-CDBG funded components.
  - 12 hours of academic classes a week for basic literacy students
  - 9 hours a week of academic classes for pre-HiSET and HiSET students
  - Weekly 3-hour Career Pathways class for pre-HiSET and HiSET students on career exploration, post-secondary/employment planning, and general job readiness skills. Academics are contextualized to the health care, manufacturing, hospitality, and STEM fields and provide chances to connect with local employers. Computer literacy skills are integrated throughout, with time for activities such as online college/job applications.
  - 1 hour a week of one-to-one Teacher time as-needed to help ensure educational success
  - 15 hours a week of Education and Career Advisor time —CDBG-funded portion, adding advising hours to the existing program Individualized counseling as needed to address barriers to success (e.g., need for food)
- Demonstrate that the activity has been prioritized by the community at the local level. *The proposed project directly addresses 2016 Community Services Priority 2 by providing adult education services that help develop economic self-sufficiency.*
- Include information on the number of individuals or families to be served and who they are, i.e. disabled, low-income, homeless, etc.

*TLP/Amherst expects to serve 50 low-moderate income beneficiaries, at least 51% Amherst residents, including immigrants/refugees who have English fluency but lack a high-school credential and adults who did not complete high school and need to update job skills.*

### **F. Project Need**

- What is the need for the proposed project/program?  
*Jobs that enable economic self-sufficiency today require at least some college/post-secondary training, and 2009–2013 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates for Amherst Center CDP indicate a clear need among those age 25 and over: 14% have a high school credential or less; Of those living below poverty level in the past 12 months, 74.1% had a high school credential or less, with poverty rates dropping significantly as education level increases.*
- Define the need or problem to be addressed by the proposed project. Explain why the project is important.

*Adult education students face a mix of challenges. This project is important in providing learner-centered, integrated services to support the whole person and thus improve likelihood of success.*

### **G. Community Involvement and Support**

- Demonstrate the involvement and opportunities available for the community and/or potential beneficiaries in the identification, planning and development of the proposed project.  
*Beneficiary educational levels and career goals continually inform instruction and advising. TLP maintains contact with community agencies to solicit potential beneficiaries and refer students as needed to ensure a web of services that avoids duplication.*
- Define the process to be used to maintain involvement of the project beneficiaries in the implementation of the project.

*Instructional/advising methods responsive to individual interests, needs, and learning styles; Support by trained classroom volunteers; Annual student surveys; Student advisory boards*

## **H. Project Feasibility**

- Why is the proposed project/program feasible?

*TLP's has a long, successful implementation of this comprehensive adult basic education model. Most recently, in FY15 the agency served 211 enrolled students and 203 through Education and Career Advising: 21 passed the HiSET; 13 enrolled in college/ occupational training; 34 got a job/raise/promotion or more satisfying/appropriate employment.*

- Demonstrate that the project is capable of proceeding at the time of award, can be effectively managed, and can be physically and financially accomplished within the grant period.

*Existing staffing and TLP's multi-year DESE grant that covers most (but not all) TLP/Amherst costs will ensure physical and financial accomplishment within the grant period. The Education and Career Advisor is available for the added CDBG-funded hours.*

- Describe what evidence exists to show that the community at large or project beneficiaries will use the project. Include documentation of **demand** for the activity through summary descriptions of surveys, inquiries, waiting lists or past participation.

*Participation and community referrals show demand. In FY15: 77% of TLP students were continuing from the prior year (multi-year retention is typical); Of the 55 beneficiaries TLP/Amherst served, 10 were continuing students and 30 were new, 6 received Education/ Career Advising only, 14 heard about TLP by word of mouth, and 16 heard from a community organization (CNA, library, Career Center, others). There is currently a waiting list for the HiSET/preHiSET Career Pathways Classes, and lack of funding means a continued waiting list of beneficiaries who need advising to transition to college, job training programs, and job.*

- Identify and describe the solicitation process used or applicable to the project.

*Solicitation is largely by referral, mainly by word of mouth and community agencies.*

- Identify the roles and responsibilities of all personnel involved in the project as well as internal controls.

***TLP AMHERST: Amherst/Northampton Site Director (SD) and Career Pathways Coordinator Sheila Murphy (reports to Executive Director)—Outreach, assessment, supervision, site reporting; Pre-HiSET/HiSET/Career Pathways Instructor and Education and Career Advisor Geoffrey Lansdell (reports to SD) —Instruction, individualized counseling/ referrals, college-job readiness advising, progress monitoring/documentation, volunteer supervision; Basic Literacy Class Instructor Eileen Barry (reports to SD)—Instruction, individualized counseling/referrals, progress monitoring and documentation, volunteer supervision;***

***ADMINISTRATIVE: Executive Director(ED)/Program Director Judith Roberts (reports to Board of Directors) —Fiscal and program oversight, supervision of site directors and coordinator; Technology Coordinator Sara MacKay (reports to ED) —Computer maintenance and training; Volunteer and Community Planning Coordinator Margaret Anderson (reports to ED) —Volunteer recruitment/training/support; Publicity and fundraising coordination;***

***Administrative Coordinator Susan Beech (reports to ED) —Administrative assistance***

***INTERNAL CONTROLS—The firm of Bruce D. Norling, CPA, P.C., providing the annual comprehensive fiscal audit (the FY15 audit had no findings); TLP Board of Directors Treasurer Brian Bloomfield, Head of School at Charlemont Academy.***

- Citing past accomplishments, document that the agency has the necessary past expertise to conduct the activity and has successfully completed past activities with CDBG or other programs in a timely manner.

*TLP has provided adult literacy services since 1984 and in Amherst since 1995, and education/career advising services since 2005. TLP has successfully completed similar projects within contracted timeframes with funding that includes several multi-year Mass. DESE grants, CDBG funding, other state and federal funding, private foundation grants and community donations.*

- Describe and identify the project milestones and timeline including unfinished project contracting and other project steps. State the duration of time needed for each milestone, and identify when each milestone will be completed.

*Between July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017: Approximately 25 students will pass the HiSET or achieve another major outcome (approximately 5 each in Q1 and Q4, 7 in Q2, and 8 in Q3); On average, each student served will complete 2 activities that indicate progress toward a major outcome.*

## **I. Project Impact**

- What will be the impact of the proposed project/program?

*50 low- and moderate-income beneficiaries, at least 26 Amherst residents, will make gains in academic skills and general college and job readiness skills. With CDBG funding, all project beneficiaries will progress on a career pathway.*

- Describe the impact the activity will have on the specifically identified needs. What measurable improvements will result from the activity and will benefit the intended beneficiaries? How much of the need will be addressed?
  - Describe the changes in the target population that indicate the program's success. How will these changes be measured?
  - How will the impact of this service on individual clients be tracked over time?

*We expect: 25 beneficiaries will achieve a major outcome (pass the HiSET, enroll in college/vocational/job training, obtain a job/raise/promotion/work-related certification); All 50 will complete at least 2 activities toward a major outcome (e.g., develop goals/action plan, do added HiSET preparation, increase college/job readiness such as by doing a job search).*

- Define the direct and indirect outcomes that will result from the project.

*Direct outcomes are the major outcomes/activities discussed above. Increasing literacy has a broad range of indirect outcomes, as beneficiaries can support their families, be involved in their children's education, gain personal and family stability, and be more involved in the community.*

- Identify quantitative and qualitative measures to determine that the outcomes are achieved.

**Quantitative:** *Scale-scored, pre-and post-program assessment of academic skills (using DESE measurements and Curriculum Frameworks, MAPT, HiSET pretests/ passage rates); Accuplacer college readiness tool; Outcomes achievement for college and job readiness skills; Attendance*

**Qualitative:** *Staff observation and maintenance of meeting notes and other student/staff communications; Daily and monthly written student self-assessments of progress.*

- Will this service enable clients to become self-sufficient?

*This service helps clients build the foundation of academics and skills needed to move on to and succeed in the post-secondary education and employment that lead to self-sufficiency.*

- How is this service linked to other human/social service programs in the community?

*TLP/Amherst maintains ongoing contact with: the Career Center; Community colleges; Amherst Human Services Network colleagues; the Council of Social Agencies of Hampshire County.*

## PROJECT BUDGET FORM

Massachusetts CDBG Program FY15- Amherst - Human Service Funding Application

The Literacy Project Passport to Success-- Adult Education for Economic Self-Sufficiency

Program Name:

Program Period:

**12 MONTHS**

July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016

PERSONNEL Position:	Hourly Rate	Hours Per Week	# Weeks	Total Program Cost	CDBG Cost	DESE & United Way
GED Instructor/Advisor	\$ 20.50	20	39	15,990	-	15,990
Program Director	\$ 23.00	6	39	5,382	-	5,382
Site Director	\$ 21.00	15	39	12,285	-	12,285
Ed and Career Advisor	\$ 20.50	15	39	11,993	7,995	3,998
Technology Coordinator	\$ 23.00	9	39	8,073	-	3,910
<b>TOTAL SALARY</b>				<b>53,723</b>	<b>7,995</b>	<b>41,565</b>
Benefits at 17 %				9,133	1,357	7,066
Taxes at 13 %				6,447	1,039	4,988
<b>TOTAL PERSONNEL</b>				<b>69,302</b>	<b>10,393</b>	<b>53,618</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS</b>						
Rent, utilities				12,600	2,500	10,100
Telephone				1,100	500	600
Insurance						
Postage				200		200
Supplies and materials				500		500
Travel/mileage				500		500
Consultants/Subs				1,030		1,030
Accounting						
Reproduction/printing				700		700
Advertising				250		250
Community events						
other: Student Transportation				500		500
other: Equipment/computers				3,000		3,000
other: GED test fees				650		650
other: Educational materials				2,000	607	1,393
other: Educational field trips				500		500
other: Student food				900		900
other: Operating expenses				13,500		13,500
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE</b>				<b>37,930</b>	<b>3,607</b>	<b>34,323</b>
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS</b>				<b>107,232</b>	<b>14,000</b>	<b>87,941</b>



December 10, 2015

CDBG Committee  
Attn: Nathaniel Malloy  
Town Hall – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
4 Boltwood Ave.  
Amherst, MA 01002

To the CDBG Review Committee;

We have been volunteers at the Literacy Project in Amherst for a combined total of over twelve years. We assist the teachers in the two Amherst classrooms, working directly with students. We strongly recommend the Literacy Project (TLP) to you for CDBG funding.

This request is for funding of the program piece that focuses on job readiness skills. It is referred to as The Literacy Project Passport to Success – HiSet to Jobs Program. (Hi-Set is the high school equivalency test currently used in Massachusetts). Students come to learn content in four areas: Social Studies, Science, Language Arts, and Mathematics. They also learn how to take tests effectively.

The Passport to Success Program supports students in their preparation for or continuation in the work world. We help them prepare resumes, assist in completing forms of various kinds (e.g. job applications), learn time management skills, and understand basic financial topics (e.g. balancing a checkbook).

There is a real need in our community for this educational tool which moves out students to economic self-sufficiency. Of our students who have jobs, most are under-employed. For those who don't have jobs, the need for a high school equivalency certificate represents access to the job market.

All students who come to the Literacy Program are highly motivated. It has been our privilege to see students gain confidence and realize how much they can achieve. It is gratifying to watch as someone can aspire to a job for which she or he was previously unqualified.

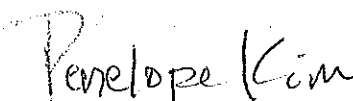
The learning environment at the Amherst Literacy Project is supportive and individualized. The students (of all ages and backgrounds) support and encourage each other.

Education is highly valued in Amherst. The Literacy Project provides education for adults giving them tools to achieve economic self-sufficiency. It is a program in Amherst that merits community support.

Sincerely,



Michael Chernoff  
97 Gray Street, Amherst  
413-256-0500



Penelope Kim  
187 Leverett Rd., Shutesbury  
413-259-1326

January 20, 2015

My name is Soon Briseno. I came from South Korea. For the last six years, I stayed at home doing nothing. I was very, very bored. One day, I visited the Jones Library and they introduced me to The Literacy Project (TLP). I started at TLP in November 2014. I met wonderful teachers and classmates. Before, I didn't have any friends in Amherst. Now, I have a plan for my future because of TLP. After my English literacy is a little better, I'll try to volunteer anywhere someone needs my help.

I think if I want to continue to keep up to reach my goal, I need TLP's help a lot. Before I started at TLP, I was very shy to speak English in front of people. I always knew I need to open up and be more confident, but I couldn't do that. I love TLP because it is fun to be at class every morning. I feel my skills are improving every day.

(NOTE: Soon just became a Certified Nursing Assistant with help from her Literacy Project teacher.)

My name is Yangjor. I am from Nepal. I have lived in the U.S. about three years. I like to come to The Literacy Project because I want to learn more reading, writing and U.S. culture. So, for me, I am so grateful for The Literacy Project. What I learn at The Literacy Project is so helpful for me. At work, it is easier for me to have conversations with my boss and customers. With my family, my conversation and reading levels are improved. When I come to class, sometimes I drive a car and sometimes I take the bus. It is important to be in Amherst because it is easy for students to come on the bus.

I'm Julia who was traveling from Hong Kong to Amherst last September. Amherst is a beautiful town with surrounding schools with higher education.

I wanted to go back to school to learn when I saw the college students all around me in the town. Then I decided to find somewhere to improve my English reading and writing skills. I found TLP from Ms. Lynn at the library.

I have studied at TLP for 3 months. I can't wait to attend TLP class every morning because the teachers and volunteers make me feel so important. First, I learned my first English novel which made me feel connected because I found a way to communicate with my son. I also learned math, social studies and science. They are all making me so interested. I have more confidence to talk to people and makes me feel at ease at work.

It is wonderful that I can study at TLP in Amherst. It is also great for Amherst to have TLP program. I hope everyone supports the TLP at Amherst because there are sweet teachers and helpful volunteers who work very hard to help students to become successful people.

My name is Carmina Fontes. I came from Portugal 28 years ago. I have lived in Amherst for 28 years. I came because my son lives in Amherst. He has children and he wanted me to help his children. When my grandchildren went to school, I got a job at UMass. I came to The Literacy Project because I want to learn more. TLP is important because the project helps people. It is great for the program to continue. It is a good program and educates people. Thank you.

Hello! My name is Terry. I attend The Literacy Project because I want to refresh my skills on what I learned in high school so I can move on to college and find a good paying job. The subjects I have learned are math skills, geography, vocabulary, science and current events. That has been very helpful in pursuing my goals to continue my education. I feel this is a great program. The staff is wonderful, dedicated, friendly, warm, welcoming and receptive to ideas the students have.

Hi. My name is Tika. I am from Nepal. I have problems reading and writing in English. I want to learn science and English to talk to the doctor. Sometimes I go to my kids' school, ARHS, and I need to talk with teachers. It is hard to understand them and to read paperwork. When I go to work at UMass, sometimes I have problems so I need to write and read. I want to learn and understand. When I came to TLP in December, I study and learn and I am happy.

## Description of Agency: The Literacy Project

*"What this program has done for me you couldn't imagine. It has given me my tomorrows."* – A Literacy Project graduate

The Literacy Project has offered free classes to adults in reading, writing, math, high school equivalency and college readiness since 1984.

Adult students of all ages come to The Literacy Project because they need a second chance at success, a second chance to complete the education they missed out on when they were young.

Most of our students already know how to read – but they may not read *well enough* to apply for a job, help their children with homework, or cast their vote in a town election. Many come to us to improve their math, writing and computer skills; in today's world, knowing how to read is just the beginning of being truly literate.

In five locations in the Pioneer Valley (Greenfield, Amherst, Northampton, Orange and Ware), students work at their own pace in small, comfortable classes, with guidance from staff instructors and support from volunteer tutors. Students of all ages, from 16-76, study with The Literacy Project to reach their goals, whether it's passing the high school equivalency exam, preparing for college and careers, or simply discovering the joy of reading.

As an independent non-profit, The Literacy Project depends on the community to help keep the doors of opportunity open to *all* students, and we are extremely grateful for your support.

To learn more about the work of The Literacy Project, visit our website at [www.literacyproject.org](http://www.literacyproject.org).



B

FY 16 Literacy Project Board Approved Budget	
Revenue Source	FY 16 Budget
DESE 345	543,393
DESE Career Pathways	82,435
DESE Direct FY15 extension	8,610
DESE CP FY 15 extension	1,690
Northampton CDBG	8,000
Bete Foundation	2,675
United Way Hampshire	12,500
United Way Franklin	9,805
Ware Town	5,000
Ware CDBG FY15-16	41,830
Ware CDBG FY16-17	42,858
BMLH	5,940
Mass Humanities	9,750
Urban	3,318
People's Bank	4,000
Other sources	52,000
Donations	72,000
Confirmed donations	50,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>955,804</b>
Net	1,040
Expense Class	FY 16 Budget
Salaries	564,588
Fringe&Tax	169,376
<b>Personnel Total</b>	<b>733,964</b>
Substitutes	4,000
Prof Services	61,990
Accnting Audit	8,350
Payroll Service	1,900
Staff travel-train	8,700
Student Expense	6,000
GED Test Fees	4,000
Ed Supplies	6,270
Ed Tech	7,500
Telephone	14,500
Copy/print	2,300
Postage	2,000
Office Expense	5,500
Interest Exp	900
Dues & Subscript	1,600
Equip Rpr -Rent	4,000
Rent	61,380
Facility Ops	1,750
Utility Expense	11,500
Corp Fees	3,500
Depreciation	2,160
Special Events	1,000
Board Expense	
<b>Non-personnel Total</b>	<b>220,800</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>954,764</b>