

F5 Tech for Good Program 2022

200,000 characters max

1. What is the name of your nonprofit organization? **Elijah's Promise**
2. Provide a general background on the work your organization does
Since 1989, Elijah's Promise has been committed to serving a hot, wholesome meal to every guest who arrives at our doors 365 days a year, no matter the weather, crisis, or economic conditions. We provide guests with two free meals daily and social services to connect guests with local, state, and federal assistance programs, a culinary training institute, employment and apprenticeship training opportunities, social enterprise, and urban agriculture. Lastly, Elijah's Promise on Wheels is a recent and exciting endeavor to deliver hot, free meals via our food truck to more members of our community in more places in greater Middlesex County by partnering with local community centers and meeting community members in the spaces they already inhabit.
3. What is your nonprofit organization's website? <https://elijahspromise.org/>
4. What country does your organization serve? **United States**
5. How many years has your organization been in operation as a legally registered non-profit? **32**
6. How many full-time staff does your organization have?
 - All volunteers
 - 1-10
 - **11-20**
 - 21-50
 - 51-75
 - Over 75
7. What is your organization's annual operating budget in United States Dollar (USD)?
 - Under \$100,000 USD
 - \$100,000-\$299,000 USD
 - \$300,000- \$500,000 USD
 - \$500,000-\$1M USD
 - **\$1M-\$5M USD**
 - \$5M-\$10M USD
 - Over \$10M USD
8. What communities are you serving? Examples to include are breakdowns of age, race, gender, socioeconomic status.

According to 2021 Census population estimates in our local community in the City of New Brunswick, NJ, 60.7% of residents identify as White (27.3% of whom identify as White Alone, Non-Hispanic), 15.3% identify as Black/African American, and 45.7% of the overall

population identifies as Hispanic/Latinx. 36.1% of New Brunswick residents aged 18-64 are living in poverty. About 1 out of every 3 residents identifies as being born in a foreign country.

In April 2021, Elijah's Promise conducted a survey of our guests to get a real-time snapshot of demographics and to determine what their greatest areas of need were. Of 84 guests surveyed, 44% identified as Hispanic/Latino, 32.1% identified as Black/African American, and 16.7% identified as White. 54 guests identified as male, 29 identified as female, and one guest declined to disclose. 100% of the people that we serve at the Community Soup Kitchen are from underserved communities (as it relates to access to adequate nutrition) due to the nature of our work in providing emergency food resources.

An important note is that we serve any and all who come to our doors, no questions asked. Our community is always able to come for two meals a day without fear of question or reproach. We conduct our programs with the understanding that hardships are part of the human experience and that everyone deserves the dignity of food when they are hungry and unable to provide for themselves for whatever the reason may be.

9. How many individuals does your organization serve annually?
- ☐ Under 100
 - ☐ 101-300
 - ☐ 301-500
 - ☐ 501-999
 - ☐ 1,000-4,999
 - ☐ 5,000-9,999
 - ☐ **Over 10,000**
10. What is your organization's focused or strategic approach to serving Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and/or underserved communities? Examples to include are culturally responsive partnerships, recruitment efforts, trust building, communication, community outreach, etc.

Elijah's Promise is a soup kitchen, first and foremost, and 100% of the people that we serve are experiencing food insecurity to some degree. As such, all would qualify as being underserved as it pertains to sustainable nutrition. As evidenced in our 2021 survey, more than 75% of the guests and clients we serve identify as BIPOC. We consistently adjust our programs and services to be best reflective of the community we serve, to ensure that we can build the rapport necessary to empower our guests in their journey towards self-sufficiency and attainment of their individual goals. We work to empower the community as a whole in a movement towards food sovereignty for all.

Our agency partners with local stakeholders from across sectors, including local public schools, social services agencies, affinity organizations, faith-based organizations, and other key partners from the public and private sectors. We use these relationships to

shape our recruitment efforts, which happens in a very organic way due to our reputation as a trusted messenger organization in our community. These connections also allow us to further impact the lives of the community we serve. Many who walk through our doors could benefit from other public assistance or programming such as SNAP, housing, obtaining identification, and more. By serving as a connector to other programs and a trusted hub of information, our site and services play a crucial role in outreach for other agencies in the immediate area.

We use technology to engage and advocate for clients that simply don't have access or ability to meet the rapidly growing standards. One of our most popular program activities is setting up Gmail accounts for clients that do not have emails and showing them how to access the free service, so they can communicate in what has become a mandatory way with outside parties.

Our social services team assists clients with accessing online healthcare portals, and helps with crucial online/computer tasks like preschool registration, which was recently taken to an 100% digital process by New Brunswick Public Schools.

For example, during the pandemic, many services became nearly 100% virtual. To access them effectively without the barrier of prolonged, 1-hour plus wait times via phone, an interested party absolutely must have the basic internet and technology skills to be able to log in to online systems. This was absolutely not the case with so many of our guests and clients, and we are still working hard to address this gap and encourage equity and parity in this space.

As another example, one of our key social services initiatives involves SNAP and WIC application outreach to the local community. Two of the biggest barriers to completing these applications for those that qualify are the complexity and accessibility of the online applications (Project Bread, Barriers to SNAP, 2021). Additionally, we will provide more accurate Spanish translations of online SNAP applications, as the application is not translated completely when accessed online in the state of New Jersey.

This grant opportunity from F5 will connect us with the resources we need to empower direct service staff to be more effective in both our community outreach and technology literacy outreach to address the significant digital divide that exists for our clients.

11. What technology gap are you currently experiencing that you are looking to solve for and why?

As with so many nonprofits, we experience ongoing lag when compared to the for-profit sector's technological capabilities. Many of our computers, our office technology, and virtual subscriptions to services are dated or limited, basic tier plans. We know we could do so much more for our programs and overall administration if we were able to upgrade to current models and higher tier plans that allowed for better data collection, management, and communication. The pandemic has also forced our employees into a remote work model, with direct service staff needing to stay on-site every day through the

last two years, along with more administrative staff who can perform their functions remotely. Even as we reopen our office more frequently during the week, we know that this new model of work is here to stay going forward. With that in mind, we must ensure that our technological infrastructure is nimble and extensive enough to accommodate a number of different job functions and locations.

Additionally, we are always looking to scale up our programs to serve our guests, students, and clients in increasingly more efficient and comprehensive ways. Improving our technology infrastructure and equipment will allow us the ability to build a solid foundation for growing our initiatives, including in the realm of resource development, to stay competitive for donations and grant opportunities. Support from F5 would allow us to provide better resources for frontline and educational staff, for platforms to connect remotely in an increasingly more virtual environment, and for photography and videography equipment to greatly expand our resource development.

12. [How will you use the F5 Tech for Good Grant? Please list specifics with a cost breakdown in USD](#)

We plan to use the F5 Tech for Good Grant to make technology purchases in the following categories and amounts:

- 2 Macbook Air Laptops in the amount of \$2400 (including the AppleCare plan) to increase the capacity of our mobile social services provision.
- 3 LG 32" Class FHD IPS FreeSync Monitors in the amount of \$540 and;
- 2 HP Pavilion Desktop - AMD Ryzen 5 5600G - Windows 11 towers to support the work of the Director of the Culinary School, and the Community Soup Kitchen Manager, as well as replacing a failing monitor from our social services department
- 2 Lenovo IdeaCentre 3 All-in-One Touchscreen Desktops - 11th Gen Intel Core i5-1135G7 - 1080p - Windows 11 in the amount of \$900 to empower our Promise Culinary program, and another for our social services programming to replace a dated computer.
- 3 Apple iPads in the amount of \$1377 for our Social Services staff/Promise Culinary School staff, to provide mobile outreach to clients and students.
- 3 iPad Cases in the amount of \$237 to be used with the purchased iPads, adding to mobility of usage.
- 2 Brio webcams in the amount of \$320 to improve our ability to deliver quality virtual programming.
- 2 Zoom account subscriptions in the amount of \$300 to improve communication in the virtual space, and ensure that we have a private setting to deliver services.
- 1 Canon SELPHY CP1300 Wireless Compact Photo Printer (Black) + Canon RP-108 Color Ink Paper Set (108 Sheets of 4 x 6 Paper) + NeeGo Printer Cable + NeeGo Print Protector (100 Pack) in the amount of \$220 to move more media marketing opportunities to our resource development team, that currently outsources this.
- 6 Eeros in the amount of \$250 to provide networking equipment to optimize existing intranet.

- 5 T-Mobile data plans in the amount of \$600 (yearly) to provide mobility and secure internet to social services.
- 6 EXMAX EXD-6824 2.4G Wireless Simultaneous Translation receivers in the amount of \$348 to improve accessibility and increase access to our programming.
- 1 Coursera for Teams subscription in the amount of \$348 to build in-house capacity for technology self service, like to maintain the website.
- 6 computer mice in the amount of \$120 to create increased mobility through wireless capabilities and replace existing older equipment.
- 5 Bluetooth keyboards in the amount of \$150 to create increased mobility through wireless capabilities and replace existing older equipment.
- 14 mousepads in the amount of \$26 to replace existing older equipment and to accompany new mice.
- 6 30W USB-C chargers in the amount of \$250 to act as backup computer chargers for remote workstations.
- 2 Belkin USB-C to Gigabit Ethernet Adapters in the amount of \$50 for better remote internet connectivity.
- 3 Anker 547 USB-C Hubs to provide additional ports on laptops to maximize charging ability and increase efficiency.
- Total: \$9,967

Additionally, we will provide the following in-kind contributions from Elijah's Promise:

- 40 hours of staff time to set up equipment/receive capacity training.
- 35 hours of staff time towards an evaluation before and after technology improvements to ensure stability/inform technology strategic roadmap planning for the next 5 years.

13. [How will you measure and evaluate the long-term effectiveness of the technology improvement?](#)

Elijah's Promise is currently working on developing our technology roadmap for where we would like to be by the end of FY2022 and beyond. We are creating a model to evaluate where we are currently, and where we would be with the projected improvements outlined in this proposal, which we can provide to F5 upon request.

Some of the categories we are evaluating include: internet speeds and usage policies, replacement plans for dated equipment, time spent on service calls, and basic computer "hygiene" to ensure updates are completed regularly. We will record this information in the initial assessment, create our finalized roadmap, and measure the actual achievements at the end of the process against the projected achievements from the roadmap.

Our overall project goal is to improve Elijah's Promise's technology infrastructure, increase workplace efficiency and empower our guests, clients, and students to overcome the digital divide. The project will be supervised by the Associate Director, Anthony Capece.

Our strategic objectives are to: 1) Upgrade existing equipment and build agency capacity by adding additional equipment, 2) Provide training opportunities to staff to maximize equipment and build internal capacity, and 3) Increase the capacity and efficiency of our direct service provision.

We expect to have the overall outcome of 25% increased capacity and productivity in direct service provision once we onboard the dedicated equipment that is pre-programmed for specific programmatic needs and mobility, as opposed to the shared, floating equipment that we have currently. We also project an overall outcome of improved cybersecurity for PHI and other sensitive information like SSNs and that we will be less reliant on outside consultants and service calls.

Our outputs will include: 1) Compiled lists of current equipment specs and total overall existing equipment, 2) Surveys of level of knowledge before and after training opportunities, 3) Measurements of the amount of time spent on service hours/service calls, and 4) Increased ability to conduct direct service as expressed in more clients served per hours worked.

Our data collection methods and frequency will be as follows: 1) We will create spreadsheet logs that will be used to input information at the beginning of the project upon receipt of funds and at the end of the project after a 12-month period, 2) We will conduct self-report surveying of topic areas at the beginning and end of each training opportunity completed, 3) We will evaluate the current productivity of our direct service provision and compare it to productivity levels at the end of the 12 month grant reporting period.

14. List the contact name and their title we can contact regarding your Tech for Good Grant application:

**Anthony Capece — Associate Director
211 Livingston Avenue — (732) 545-9002 x111**

15. List the contact email that we can contact regarding your Tech for Good Grant application:

anthony.capece@elijahspromise.org

16. Have you received a grant from F5 in the past?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ **No**
- ☐ Unsure

17. How did you hear about the F5 Tech for Good Grant?

- ☒ **Word of mouth**
- ☐ F5 Employee
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ F5 Global Good
- ☐ Other

18. If you were referred by an F5 employee, what is the name of the employee? No