

# Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness United Way of Pioneer Valley (fiscal sponsor)

## Request for Proposals

### I. Introduction

The Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness (“Network”) is seeking to contract with qualified consultant(s), either an individual or a firm (hereinafter referred to as the “Consultant(s)”) to develop data integration, analysis and reporting capabilities to advance its mission to prevent and end homelessness in Western Massachusetts in alignment with the *Opening Doors: A Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. This project will end no later than June 27, 2015.

This project will assist the Network in aligning its work in support of Leadership, Collaboration and Civic Engagement with these same components of the *Opening Doors: A Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. *The regional plan, covering Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire Counties, will also outline the mechanisms and templates for reporting on the progress of the plan, and compiling a report quantifying progress toward implementing the plan goals.*

### II. Background

The Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness creates collaborative solutions to end homelessness through a housing-first approach that prioritizes prevention, rapid re-housing, and housing stabilization. Founded in 2009 with support from the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness, the Network’s \$1.1 million, 18-month state pilot project provided prevention and re-housing services to more than 2,000 families and 200 chronically homeless individuals. Since the end of public funding in 2011, the Network has relied on local foundation support and the contributions of its Network partners to provide the critical coordination and collaboration needed to maximize resources and outcomes across the region.

In 2014, the Network obtained state funding through an earmark to create, implement and report on the Network’s action plan to prevent and end homelessness, in alignment with *Opening Doors: A Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent*

*and End Homelessness*. This federal data-driven plan relies on evidence-based practices to accomplish four goals:

1. Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness in 5 years
2. Prevent and end homelessness among veterans in 5 years
3. Prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children in 10 years
4. Set a path to ending all types of homelessness.

The Network is governed by a Leadership Council, with ongoing oversight and management through a Leadership Council Steering Committee. The Network's fiscal sponsor is the United Way of Pioneer Valley, which has hired a professional consultant to serve as the Network's Director. The consultant(s) will work closely with the Network Director and Steering Committee.

### III. Scope of Work

The consultant(s) will design the data gathering process and select the data system in order to integrate Network data and develop reporting capabilities. This capacity will enable the Network to assess the impact and monitor Network progress in future years. In alignment with the *Opening Doors Plan*, the WMNEH 2015 to 2018 Action Plan will be specifically focused on Theme #1 to Increase Leadership, Collaboration and Civic Engagement and advance strategies for the Network to meet these goals. **The consulting project will commence in October 2014 and be completed by June 27, 2015.** The Consultant(s) will report directly and on a regular basis to the Network consultant Director of Regional Coordination who will oversee the project with the support of the Network Steering Committee.

Specific areas of technical assistance will include:

#### **Phase 1 (October 27, 2014 to February 28, 2015)**

- Conduct a landscape analysis to gather information about current activities, align those activities with the goals and objectives of *Opening Doors*, and assess gaps;
- Assess and select the data, reporting and visualization tools to communicate effectively with varied stakeholders while promoting civic engagement;
- Use data and information from relevant programs, Continua of Care and meaningful ancillary activities to create baseline measures from which to track our progress and assess our impact;
- Create a logic model and draft plan of *Opening Doors in Western Massachusetts*.

#### **Phase 2 (January 1, 2015 to April 30, 2015)**

- Devise reporting mechanisms and report templates for ongoing assessment of

outcomes and impact (*i.e.*, quarterly and annual reporting of outcomes and annual assessment of impact);

- Support Network director in facilitation of Network committees and work groups to align tasks with core components of plan and assist these groups in shifting to outcome-oriented work
- Support the Network in efforts to integrate CoC activities in an ongoing and meaningful way.

**Phase 3 (April 1, 2015 to June 30, 2015)**

- Provide formal recommendations to the Network regarding opportunities for innovation;
- Provide an action plan for sustaining the infrastructure needed to implement *Opening Doors in Western Massachusetts*.

**IV. Key Dates**

- a. RFP released: September 30, 2014
- b. Proposals Due: Monday, October 13, 11:59 pm.
- c. Anticipated Date of Announcement of Selection: October 20, 2014
- d. Start date: October 27, 2014
- e. Final report due June 27, 2015

**V. Reporting and Payment Schedule**

Service invoices including detailed expense report must be submitted monthly. Reimbursement will take one (1) month.

**VI. Instructions and Conditions**

a. Limitations

By publishing this Request for Proposals (RFP), the Network does not commit itself:

1. To award a contract.
2. To pay any cost incurred by any applicant in the preparation of the proposal submitted.
3. To procure a contract for services or supplies.

The Network reserves the right, solely in its best interest:

1. To accept or reject any or all proposals received.

2. To negotiate the scope of the services for an accepted proposal.

b. Proposal Format and Submission Requirements

Proposals must be received by the Network no later than October 13, 2014 at 11:59 pm. It is the responsibility of the applicant to email the proposal to Sylvia DeHaas-Phillips, sdehaas@uwpv.org.

The proposal must consist of the following components and forms:

Section #1. A project plan, including a description of the methodology for accomplishing the work described.

Section #2. An itemized total cost of service, detailing the consultant fee, hourly rate for any potential change orders, and direct and indirect costs associated with the project by each phase of the project

Section #3. The consultant's(s') qualifications, experience and capabilities. If a firm or a single consultant submitting the proposal, please identify who will work on the project, what they will do, their experience in conducting this type of work, etc. Breakdown the hours and cost of each consultant engaged in the project.

Section #4. Résumés and dated work histories for all individuals who are proposed to work on this planning project. If a single consultant is subcontracting the work, please be clear on their work history, what part of the contract they will perform, their experience in conducting this type of the work, etc.

Section #5. The proposed schedule of deliverables for each phase of this project, including a proposed reporting schedule of status updates.

Section #6. Provide a list of (at least three) references for the consultant(s) that was stated in Tab #2, including name, telephone number and email address of the contact person that can best provide references for your work. The submission of a proposal authorizes the Network to contact references and conduct other due diligence as it deems in the best interest of the Network. Also, provide a writing sample

and if possible a research project plan that the consultant has conducted in the past.

**c. Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will be evaluated solely on the criteria set forth in sections VII and VIII of this RFP which will assess the following:

1. Consultant's(s') understanding of the project and work to be performed
2. Cost effectiveness relative to project deliverables
3. Relevant experience and qualifications of the consultant(s)
4. The Consultant's(s') demonstrated ability to perform the assigned tasks within the identified time frame
5. Past performance with similar projects
6. The Consultant's demonstrated experience working with diverse constituencies

**d. Signature**

1. The proposal shall be signed by an official authorized to bind the offer.
2. The proposal shall also provide the following information:  
Name, title, address and telephone number and individual(s) with authority to negotiate and contractually bind the consultant(s), along with the name, telephone number and fax number of the person who may be contacted during the period of proposal evaluation.

**e. Contract Award**

1. The Network may award a contract based on proposals received without discussion of such proposals.
2. Accordingly, each proposal should be submitted on the most favorable terms from an experience and technical standpoint. However, the Network reserves the right to request additional data, oral discussion or presentation in support of written response to RFP in order to award a contract to the most qualified candidate(s).

**f. Fee**

The fee for this contract will be negotiated in accordance with the Selection Procedure listed in Section VIII of this document.

**VII. Minimum Evaluative Criteria**

In order for a proposal to be considered responsive and responsible and to be considered for further consideration, the proposal must meet the following Minimum Evaluation Criteria:

1. The proposal must be complete, must be submitted on or prior to the submission deadline, and must contain, at a minimum, all of the required elements of a proposal package as delineated in the requirements of this RFP. Failure to meet any submission requirement shall result in rejection of the proposal package.
2. The consultant(s) must have experience in the appropriate fields of discipline required for successful implementation of the proposal. Five years of experience is the standard for the consultant(s) managing the contract, and three years is the standard for other professionals assigned to the project.

Proposals that meet the minimum criteria will be further evaluated and rated on the basis of the following Comparative Evaluation Criteria. The Network reserves the right to ask any applicant to provide additional supporting documentation in order to verify responses. Proposals will be evaluated by the evaluation committee, with the assessment of certain non-committee members as required.

**VIII. Selection Procedure**

- a. Proposals will be reviewed by a Committee of experienced evaluators of the Network's Steering Committee. The Committee will short-list the applicants based on the proposals.
- b. The Committee may interview the short-list of applicants.
- c. The Committee will rank the short-listed applicants.
- d. The Committee will make a recommendation to the Network Leadership Council Steering Committee, which will select the preferred applicant.
- e. The Committee will negotiate a reasonable fee for said services with the highest-ranked applicant.

**COMPARATIVE EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Proposals will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the following Comparative Criteria. The Network reserves the right to ask any Proposer to provide additional supporting documentation in order to verify responses.

**1. EXPERIENCE WITH PLANNING AND DATA ANALYSIS REGARDING HOMELESSNESS**

*HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS:* Five years' experience with planning and data analysis regarding homelessness, with an emphasis on data-driven, results-oriented research and planning, and a proven record of results.

*ADVANTAGEOUS:* Three years' experience with planning and data analysis regarding homelessness, with an emphasis on data-driven, results-oriented planning, and a proven record of results.

*NOT ADVANTAGEOUS:* One year experience with planning and data analysis regarding homelessness.

*UNACCEPTABLE:* No experience with planning and data analysis regarding homelessness.

**2. DATA SOFTWARE PROFICIENCY**

*HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS:* Demonstrated data software mastery, including data import, system design, queries, analysis, and quantitative, qualitative and graphic reporting

*ADVANTAGEOUS:* Demonstrated data software experience, including data import, system design, queries, analysis, and quantitative, qualitative and graphic reporting

*NOT ADVANTAGEOUS:* Limited data software experience, including data import, system design, queries, analysis, and quantitative, qualitative and graphic reporting

*UNACCEPTABLE:* No data software experience, including data import, system design, queries, analysis, and quantitative, qualitative and graphic reporting

**3. PROJECT COST EFFECTIVENESS**

*HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS:* Most cost effective to achieve project deliverables

*ADVANTAGEOUS:* 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> most cost effective to achieve project deliverables

*NOT ADVANTAGEOUS:* Below the top three most cost effective

*UNACCEPTABLE:* Least cost effective

#### **4. PROJECT FEASIBILITY**

*HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS:* The Proposer has documented a clear, comprehensive method for performing the tasks identified in the Scope of Work and a proven record of success.

*ADVANTAGEOUS:* The Proposer has documented an acceptable method for performing the tasks identified in the Scope of Work but aspects of the method/plan are not clear and/or realistic.

*NOT ADVANTAGEOUS:* The Proposer has submitted a plan that lacks sufficient detail and/or is unrealistic.

*UNACCEPTABLE:* Non-responsive.

#### **5. EXPERIENCE WITH DIVERSE CONSTITUENCIES**

*HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS:* The Proposer demonstrates the ability to work collaboratively with diverse constituencies, including service providers, municipal government, and legislators.

*ADVANTAGEOUS:* References effective interpersonal and communication skills with diverse constituencies but does not provide specifics.

*NOT ADVANTAGEOUS:* Does not demonstrate high skill level in communication and interpersonal skills.

*UNACCEPTABLE:* Lacks appropriate personal resources to communicate and relate with diverse constituencies.