

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

Request for Proposals for Network Mapping Project

I. Introduction

The Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness (“Network”) seeks to contract with a qualified consultant to facilitate a 6 month process to determine the best regional structure(s) for advancing the goal of ending homelessness in Western Massachusetts.

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 Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness, the Network’s 18-month state pilot project provided prevention and re-housing services to more than 2,000 families and 200 chronically homeless individuals. When public funding ended in 2011, the Network 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 its first earmark to create the *Western MA Opening Doors Plan*, modeled after the *US Opening Doors Plan: A Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. In June, 2015, the Network released the *Western MA Opening Doors Plan to End Homelessness*. The Network obtained funding the following year (Fiscal Year 2016) to continue implementation of the Plan. While the Legislature awarded the Network level funding for Fiscal Year 2017, this funding is currently pending, subject to the Governor’s determination of budget cuts. This Request for Proposals, awarding of the contract, payments and evaluation are contingent on Fiscal Year 2017 funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’s Department of Housing and Community Development.

As the Network’s structure has evolved alongside other state and federal initiatives, the Network’s Leadership Council has decided that it would be useful to take stock of the Network’s current structure and roles to determine the most effective

structure(s) moving forward to best realize the region's shared goals under the *Western Massachusetts Opening Doors Plan to End Homelessness*.

III. Scope of Work

The consultant will facilitate a process to determine the best regional structure(s) for advancing the goal of ending homelessness in Western Massachusetts. Through a series of 3-4 meetings over approximately 6 months the consultant will engage with Network partners across the region to seek answers to the following questions:

- How best should the Network and partner organizations (e.g., Hampden and Three County Continua of Care, Western Massachusetts Interagency Council and Local Consortiums) proceed to maximize impact and collaboration on a regional level?
- What is the vision for the next 10 years and how would the proposed structures advance that vision?
- How can we best streamline committees and meeting times to prevent duplication or time demands that exceed staff capacity?
- What is the appropriate decision making body and representation for the Network Steering Committee?
- Who are the necessary people and/or organizations to participate in this process to ensure decision making that brings with it the necessary investment to accomplish our goals?

Responsibilities would include:

- Facilitating 3-4 meetings over a 6 month period
- Mapping the region's current structures and roles
- Eliciting input on recommendations for structural changes and Network Steering Committee representation
- Issuing recommendations based on distillation of participant input
- Facilitating decision making for the Network Leadership Council around those recommendations

IV. Key Dates

- a. RFP released: December 5, 2016
- b. Proposals Due: December 21, 2016, 3:00 pm
- c. Anticipated Date of Announcement of Selection: January 10, 2017 (subject to state award of Network funds)

d. Grant Period: January 20 to June 30, 2017

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 December 21, 2016 at 3:00 pm**. It is the responsibility of the applicant to email the proposal to Jennifer Kinsman at the United Way of Pioneer Valley (jkinsman@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 or indirect costs associated with the project.

Section #3. The consultant's (s') qualifications, experience and capabilities. If a firm or single consultant is 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. Resumes and dated work histories for all individuals who are proposed to work on this mapping project. If a single consultant is subcontracting work, please be clear on their work history, what part of the contract they will perform, their experience in conducting this type of 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), including name, telephone number and email address of the contact person that 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.

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 firm, 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.

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.

Proposals that meet the minimum criteria will be further evaluated and rated on the basis of the following Comparative 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.

VIII. Selection Procedure

- a. Proposals will be reviewed by a Committee of experienced evaluators of the Network's Leadership Council. The Committee will review proposals using the comparative evaluation criteria set forth below.
- b. The Committee will short-list the applicants based on the proposals.
- c. The Committee may interview the short-list of applicants.
- d. The Committee will rank the short-listed applicants.
- e. The Committee will make a recommendation to the Network Steering Committee.
- f. 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.

1. PROJECT PLAN

HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS: The consultant has provided a detailed and realistic plan for mapping the current effort to end homelessness in Western MA and engage with Network partners in a process that builds trust in the outcomes and recommendations for the Network structure moving forward.

ADVANTAGEOUS: The consultant has provided a realistic plan to map the current effort to end homelessness in Western MA and reach recommendations for moving forward.

NOT ADVANTAGEOUS: The consultant's plan program start up is not realistic or likely to be effective.

UNACCEPTABLE: Non-Responsive.

2. EXPERIENCE WITH HOMELESSNESS WORK

HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS: The consultant demonstrates at least 5 years of experience in planning work around homelessness and an extensive familiarity with the current federal, state and regional entities addressing the issue.

ADVANTAGEOUS: The consultant demonstrates at least 2 years of experience in planning work around homelessness and some familiarity with the current federal, state and regional entities addressing the issue.

NOT ADVANTAGEOUS: The consultant does not demonstrate experience in planning work around homelessness or familiarity with the current federal, state and regional entities addressing the issue.

UNACCEPTABLE: Non-responsive.

3. EXPERIENCE WITH DIVERSE CONSTITUENCIES

HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS: The consultant demonstrates the ability to work collaboratively with diverse constituencies, including service providers, state agency representatives, business and education leaders, community members and elected officials.

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

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

UNACCEPTABLE: Non-Responsive.

4. PROJECT COST EFFECTIVENESS

HIGHLY ADVANTEGEOUS: Most cost effective to achieve project deliverables

ADVANTAGEOUS: 2ND to 3rd most cost effective to achieve project deliverables

NOT ADVANTEGEOUS: Below the top three most cost effective

UNACCEPTABLE: Non-Responsive.