



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR:**

System Planning with a Focus on Equity and Inclusion for the Texas Balance of State Continuum of Care

Version Number 1

**ISSUE DATE:**

Thursday, December 3, 2020

**PROPOSALS DUE:**

Sunday, December 13, 2020<sup>1</sup>

11:59:59 P.M. CST

**SUBMIT TO:**

Submit proposals to [hr@thn.org](mailto:hr@thn.org) with the subject "Response to RFP for System Planning with a Focus on Equity and Inclusion".

**RFP POINT OF CONTACT:**

Jim Ward, Assistant Director of Planning

[jim@thn.org](mailto:jim@thn.org)

Proposers may contact only the Point of Contact regarding this procurement. Submit any inquiries or requests regarding this procurement in writing. Other employees do not have the authority to respond.

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<sup>1</sup> Proposers may request additional time to submit a proposal to this RFP, by submitting a written request to [hr@thn.org](mailto:hr@thn.org) with the subject, "Extension to Response to RFP for System Planning with a Focus on Equity and Inclusion".

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APPENDIX

The Appendix listed below is required for submission with the Proposal, if applicable:

Appendix A: Small, Minority, and/or Labor Surplus Area Firm Declaration Form

## I. INTRODUCTION – INVITATION & BACKGROUND

Texas Homeless Network (THN) serves as the Collaborative Applicant and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agency for the Texas Balance of State Continuum of Care (TX BoS CoC), which covers 215 counties of Texas' 254 counties. The TX BoS CoC was formed to carry out the responsibilities required under the CoC Program Interim Rule (24 CFR, Part 578). The TX BoS CoC is composed of a broad group of stakeholders dedicated to ending and preventing homelessness across Texas. The overarching CoC responsibility is to ensure community-wide implementation of efforts to end homelessness, including ensuring programmatic and systemic effectiveness of the local continuum of care program.

THN seeks to enhance system planning for the TX BoS CoC with a focus on equity and inclusion (EI), and justice. The activities requested in this RFP would focus primarily on addressing racial and ethnic disparities in experiences and outcomes for people in homeless situations who participate in homeless services in the TX BoS CoC.

Two target audiences for the activities are: 1) CoC staff at THN; and 2) THN Board members, CoC Board members, CoC Committee members, Coordinated Entry participating agencies, and project staff in CoC communities.

THN believes that the Homeless Crisis Response System has failed Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and other marginalized groups. Correcting this will require a specific focus and frequent evaluation of strategies. We believe that this work must begin internally, before we can model the change that needs to happen in the larger Homeless Crisis Response System. The goals of the system planning activities in this Request for Proposals, are to promote strategies that incorporate a focus on race equity and inclusion as well as a means for evaluation of those efforts:

- To promote a shared responsibility for race equity and inclusion in different aspects of the planning process, such as (but not limited to) Coordinated Entry and Stakeholder engagement;
- To increase the CoC's ability to address disparities that exist in the Coordinated Entry process;
- To coordinate with a more diverse group of stakeholders, including people with lived experience;
- To improve the monitoring and evaluation process;
- To promote more inclusive policy development; and
- To address and acknowledge racial and ethnic disparities in housing and services in the Texas Balance of State Continuum of Care.

These system planning activities align with HUD's recommendations in the "[CoC Analysis Tool](#)," to go beyond examining CoC data to improve the quality and effectiveness of the Homeless Crisis Response System.

THN is seeking an EI consultant to guide and partner with THN management and staff and the CoC Board through the process of developing and implementing an equity and inclusion plan that is

both inward facing and outward facing. The consultant will lend professional expertise, provide specialized facilitation, and develop an education and technical assistance plan to move THN and the TX BoS CoC forward in integrating equity and inclusion in the work of the organization and the CoC.

Proposers may propose on the entire scope of work or any piece(s) individually. Overall, THN wants a customized plan specific to THN's needs, relevant tools and best practices, recommended education, and assistance to design strategies that support and engage staff and CoC members in various equity and inclusion initiatives.

All work performed under the contract must be completed by February 28, 2022.

THN has budgeted \$45,000 for the system planning activities.

## II. PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK

### A. Short Term – Phase 1: Activities & Deliverables

1. Conduct an analysis and develop a baseline assessment report of THN's current organizational needs, practices and level of racial disparity awareness in the organization, and organizational competency in order to fully appreciate the contribution of all staff and identify priorities to further strengthen capacity to address racial disparities in all aspects of the Homeless Crisis Response System.

This assessment must include:

- a) Interviews, focus groups or surveys of staff and stakeholders;
  - b) An evaluation of the organization's decision-making process and communication practices; and
  - c) Recommendations for how to move forward, such as an action plan and/or a curriculum and/or a toolkit to use in Phase Two of this project.
  - d) An evaluation of THN on the following [metrics](#)
2. Conduct an analysis and develop a baseline assessment report of the Texas Balance of State Continuum of Care's level of racial equity awareness and competency, and current practices intended to address racial disparities. This analysis must identify education and technical assistance priorities to address in Phase 2 of the scope of work.

This assessment must center the voices of people with lived experience and include:

- a) Input from THN and TX BoS CoC leaders and people with lived experience of homelessness, current or former, regarding strengths and opportunity areas for THN staff, the CoC Board, CoC

Committees, Coordinated Entry participating agencies' staff, and homeless services providers/project staff across the TX BoS CoC;

- b) Recommendations for how to move forward, such as an action plan and/or a curriculum and/or a toolkit to use in Phase Two of this project;
- c) Focus groups, surveys, interviews, or any other means of soliciting feedback that will allow for multiple perspectives to be heard; and
- d) Analysis of HMIS and other data sources, to identify and address disparate impact in services and outcomes.

- 3. Facilitate no less than three (3) structured, topic-based discussions internal to THN with the goal of creating common language and a shared understanding of critical concepts, such as race-equity and the role of THN in promoting anti-racist work.
- 4. Facilitate no less than three (3) structured educational sessions on EI best practices in housing & homeless services (with a particular focus on nonprofit and government agencies).
- 5. In coordination with staff, develop a common language including a public statement of principle regarding EI for THN, that enhances the organization's ability to execute its mission, operations, and strategic direction as a statewide non-profit agency.
- 6. Provide insight and assistance on developing an ongoing internal EI workgroup at THN that will consist of different levels of staff and serve as an internal oversight body to ensure that EI work moves forward and goals are achieved.
- 7. Develop recommendations on initial strategies for THN to invest in, to achieve deliverables outlined in this scope of work, including, but not limited to, prioritized recommendations for the first two years (where and how to start THN's equity journey).

B. Longer Term – Phase 2: Activities & Deliverables

- 1. Support development of an organization-wide commitment and infrastructure to support and sustain THN's system planning goals with a focus on equity and inclusion.
- 2. Develop an education and technical assistance strategy to increase staff members' and external stakeholders' EI competencies, skills, and capacity that reflect THN's EI public statement and system planning goals. The consultant will support implementation of the education and technical assistance strategies developed.
- 3. Develop and facilitate education and technical assistance targeted to different stakeholders in the Homeless Crisis Response System. The targeted stakeholders must include:
  - a) Coordinated Entry Planning Entities;
  - b) Coordinated Entry Assessors;
  - c) Housing and shelter providers;

- d) Supportive Services Providers
  - e) Local Governments; and
  - f) Other stakeholders identified in Phase One.
4. Provide individualized support to help strengthen an organization’s ability to create an anti-racist environment, expand funding to underserved communities and leaders, assist nonprofits in attracting and retaining employees of color, and provide support to all employees to understand the value of equity and inclusion in the work to end homelessness.
  5. A strategy and associated roadmap (an overarching EI Plan) that is aligned with the Continuum of Care’s Strategic Plan and values, and will ensure that, barriers to inclusion continue to decrease, while awareness, knowledge and skills continue to increase. This strategy/roadmap should include methods of long-term monitoring and evaluation that consider several areas, including, but not limited to, internal staffing practices, policies and procedures, community partnership and engagement, and ongoing staff education. The consultant will support implementation of the strategies developed.

**C. TIMELINE**

**D. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

THN will make every effort to adhere to the following anticipated schedule:

| No. | Event   | Date  |
|-----|---|---|
| 1.  | Issue of RFP  | Thursday, December 3, 2020                                      |
| 2.  | Deadline for submission of proposals to <a href="mailto:hr@thn.org">hr@thn.org</a> with the subject, “Response to RFP for System Planning for Equity and Inclusion” | Sunday, December 13, 2020, at 11:59:59 P.M. CST <sup>2</sup>    |
| 3.  | Evaluation Committee will review applications   | Monday, December 14, 2020, through Wednesday, December 16, 2020 |
| 4.  | Evaluation Committee will conduct interviews, if necessary  | Thursday, December 17, 2020, through Friday, December 18, 2020  |
| 5.  | Issue of Notice of Intent to Award  | January 8, 2021   |
| 6.  | Complete contract negotiations; The contract will include a clause addressing the ability of THN to   | January 11-15, 2021   |

<sup>2</sup> Proposers may request additional time to submit a proposal to this RFP, by submitting a written request to [hr@thn.org](mailto:hr@thn.org) with the subject, “Extension to Response to RFP for System Planning with a Focus on Equity and Inclusion”.

|    |                                    |                   |
|----|------------------------------------|-------------------|
|    | extend the contract.               |                   |
| 7. | Commencement of Contract           | February 1, 2021  |
|    | Deadline for completion of project | February 28, 2022 |

### III. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

These instructions outline the guidelines governing the format and content of the proposal. Only the information that is essential to an understanding and evaluation of the proposal should be submitted. No limitation on the content of the proposal is intended in these instructions, and inclusion of any pertinent data or information is permitted within the page requirements. THN will deduct up to five (5) points for submissions that do not follow formatting requirements in this section. THN will not consider submissions submitted after the due date outlined in Section II. D.

#### A. PROPOSAL FORMAT

1. THN will not accept handwritten proposals.
2. Proposers must computer generate or type their proposals using 12-point font with 1.5 line spacing and 1 inch margins.
3. Page numbers must be included on each page of the proposal.
4. The proposal must have a table of contents that corresponds to the sections and appendices.
5. Submit all documents as one (1) PDF.
6. The proposal must be in English.
7. The proposals must be executed by a duly authorized officer or agent of Proposer.

#### B. NON-CONFORMING SUBMISSIONS

A submission may, at the sole discretion of THN, be construed as a non-conforming proposal, ineligible for consideration, or incomplete if it does not comply with the requirements of this RFP.

#### C. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Submit the following items by the deadline:

1. TABLE OF CONTENTS
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY -- The Executive Summary provides the context in which the Evaluation Committee assesses the proposer's qualifications and proposal. The Executive Summary shall not exceed one (1) page. The Executive Summary must concisely identify the organizations and individuals who are a part of the proposal. This section must summarize the methods the Proposer would employ to complete the project's scope of work by Sunday, February 28, 2022.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION -- The Organizational Information section provides the basic information about the Proposer and Proposal Partners, if any. This section must not exceed five (5) pages and must include the following:
  - a) Identify the Proposer and include the business's complete name, address (including headquarters and all local offices), telephone numbers, and the name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person THN should contact regarding the proposal.
  - b) Identify other individuals or businesses, or "Proposal Partners", that will play a role in completing the scope of work. For these individuals and businesses, provide their complete name, address (including headquarters and all local offices) and telephone numbers, as well as the name, mailing address, and telephone number of the persons THN should contact regarding the proposal.
  - c) Describe the organization, including names of principals, number of employees, longevity, client base, areas of specialization, and expertise for the Proposer and Proposal Partners, if applicable.
  - d) Identify the jurisdiction in which the business is organized and the date of such organization for the Proposer and Proposal Partners, if applicable.
  - e) A complete disclosure if the Proposer or Proposal Partners have defaulted in their performance on a contract during the past five years which has led the other party to terminate the agreement, and if so, the identity of the parties involved and the circumstances of the default or the termination for the Proposer and Proposal Partners, if applicable.
  - f) A list of any lawsuits filed against the Proposer, Proposal Partners, their subsidiaries, parent, other corporate affiliates, or subcontractors in the past five years and the outcome of those lawsuits. This list is separate from and does not count toward the maximum allowable number of pages.
  - g) Identify the key personnel at the Proposer and Proposal Partners who would work on this project, including their names, qualifications, and experience. Attach resumes of key project staff. Resumes will not be counted toward the narrative page limit.
  
4. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE -- The Proposal Narrative must not exceed ten (10) pages and must include the following:
  - a) A description of experience of the Proposer and Proposal Partners, if applicable, in working with Balance of State Continua of Care or other regional or statewide non-profit organizations;
  - b) A description of experience of the Proposer and Proposal Partners, if applicable, in conducting EI analyses, planning, education and technical assistance, particularly for a Balance of State Continuum of Care;



- c) A description of the experience of the Proposer and Proposal Partners, if applicable, in data analysis; and
  - d) A description of the methods and tools the Proposer and Proposal Partners, if applicable, would use to implement the scope of work identified in Section II. If the proposer is submitting a proposal that includes a training curriculum, include information about whether that curriculum has been used in the past and any feedback on it you have received.
  - e) Please include a timeline for Phases 1 and 2 ending no later than Sunday, February 28, 2022.
5. BUDGET -- The Budget specifies your funding request and details how and when you would use the funding. Please submit an itemized budget, with the quantity and description for each requested cost. Costs not clearly documented in the proposed budget may not be reimbursed.
  6. LETTERS OF REFERENCE -- Submit two (2) letters of reference from CoCs or similar regional or statewide non-profit or membership organizations for whom the Proposer has performed similar services within the past five years. The letters should be on formal letterhead and include the name and address of the organization, the name, email and telephone number of a contact person, and a description of the services performed.
  7. SAMPLE -- Submit two (2) examples of work completed by the respondent for similar regional or statewide non-profit organizations that address race equity, or Equity and Inclusion dialogue, facilitation and data analysis.
  8. APPENDIX A: SMALL, MINORITY, AND/OR LABOR SURPLUS AREA FIRM DECLARATION FORM, IF APPLICABLE -- In accordance with 2 CFR 200.321, THN will take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible. Therefore, THN shall give preference to small businesses, minority businesses, and/or firms from labor surplus areas, women's business enterprise, and/or firms in labor surplus areas.

#### **IV. EVALUATION**

- A. PROPOSAL EVALUATION** -- An Evaluation Committee (EC) will review and evaluate the proposals and make a recommendation for an award. The EC will evaluate proposals in accordance with scoring criteria published in this RFP.

The proposal(s) with the highest score(s) will not automatically be awarded a contract. The EC will provide THN’s President/CEO with recommendations and in making the final selection, the THN President/CEO will consider the EC recommendations and the agency’s overall needs. The final selection and contract award(s) will be within the sole judgment and discretion of THN.

- B. EVALUATION CRITERIA** -- The EC will utilize the Evaluation Criteria listed below in the evaluation of the Proposer’s written proposals and/or interview, accordingly. The expectation is that those proposals in the competitive range may be considered for contract award. The proposal should give clear, concise information in sufficient detail to allow an evaluation based on the criteria below. A Proposer must be acceptable in all criteria for a contract to be awarded to that Proposer whose proposal provides the best value to THN.

1. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION -- The Evaluation Committee will use the following scale to score the Organizational Information:

| Point Value | Criteria   |
|-------------|--|
| 2 points    | The Proposer and Proposal Partners have not defaulted in their performance on a contract, and no lawsuits have been filed against the Proposer or Proposal Partner in the past five years.   |
| 1 point     | The Proposer and Proposal Partners have not defaulted in their performance on a contract, and lawsuits have been filed against the Proposer or Proposal Partner in the past five years, OR the proposer and proposal partners have defaulted in their performance on a contract and no lawsuits have been filed against the Proposer or Proposal Partner in the past five years. |
| 0 points    | The Proposer and Proposal Partners have defaulted in their performance on a contract, and lawsuits have been filed against the Proposer or Proposal Partner in the last five years.  |

2. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE -- The Evaluation Committee will use the following scale to score the Proposal Narrative:

| Point Value | Criteria   |
|-------------|--|
| 2 points    | The Proposal fully meets the objectives of the scope of work. No compromise is required. |

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 1 points | The Proposal partially meets the objectives of the scope of work. Compromise is required.           |
| 0 points | The Proposal does not meet the objectives of the scope of work. Significant compromise is required. |

3. LETTERS OF REFERENCE -- The Evaluation Committee will use the following scale to score the Letters of Reference

| Point Value | Criteria   |
|-------------|--|
| 2 points    | Both reference letters are from Continuums of Care or similar regional or statewide non-profit or membership organizations, and contain all of the requested information, and are from comparable organizations.                           |
| 1 points    | One of the reference letters is from a CoC or similar regional or statewide non-profit or membership organizations, and contains all of the requested information.   |
| 0 points    | The respondent did not submit two letters of reference or neither of the letters of reference are from a CoC or similar regional or statewide non-profit or membership organizations, or did not contain all of the requested information. |

4. BUDGET -- The Evaluation Committee will use the following scale to score the budget:

| Point Value | Criteria   |
|-------------|--|
| 2 points    | The budget is fair <u>and</u> reasonable if it meets all of the objectives outlined in the proposal <u>and</u> is on/under budget        |
| 1 point     | The budget is fair <u>or</u> reasonable if it meets all of the objectives outlined in the proposal <u>or</u> is on/under budget          |
| 0 points    | The budget is neither fair nor reasonable, it does not meet all of the objectives outlined in the proposal <u>nor</u> is on/under budget |

5. SAMPLE -- The Evaluation Committee will use the following scale to score the work sample:

| Point Value | Criteria  |
|-------------|---|
| 2 points    | Both samples were for a regional or statewide non-profit and were for comparable work |
| 1 point     | One sample was for a regional or statewide non-profit and was for comparable work     |

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| 0 points | Neither sample was for a regional or statewide non-profit or was for comparable work |
|----------|--|

6. APPENDIX A -- Appendix A and all supporting documentation must be submitted in order to receive these points:
- a) The Evaluation Committee will award 4 points if the Proposer or Proposal Partner, if applicable, is a Small Business.
  - b) The Evaluation Committee will award 4 points if the Proposer or Proposal Partner, if applicable, is a Minority-Owned Business.
  - c) The Evaluation Committee will award 4 points if the Proposer or Proposal Partner, if applicable, is located in a Labor Surplus Area.
  - d) The Evaluation Committee will award 4 points if the Proposer or Proposal Partner, if applicable, is a women's business enterprise



## Small, Minority, and/or Labor Surplus Area Firms Disclosure Form

### About

THN must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure the organization uses minority businesses, including woman owned businesses, small business, and firms from labor surplus areas when possible.

### Instructions

Complete these forms, as applicable, and submit them with your proposal. Incomplete or unsigned forms will be invalid.

Name of Firm:

Date of Incorporation:

State of Incorporation:

Owner's Name:

Business Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email Address:

Type of Business:

Owner Signature:

## Minority Business Enterprise Eligibility Criteria

The Texas Administrative Code Section 2306.6734 defines “minority-owned business” and “minority group” as:

- 1) “Minority-owned business” means a business entity at least 51 percent of which is owned by members of a minority group or, in the case of a corporation, at least 51 percent of the shares of which are owned by members of a minority group, and that is managed and controlled by members of a minority group in its daily operations.
- 2) “Minority group” includes:
  - a) Women;
  - b) African Americans;
  - c) American Indians;
  - d) Asian Americans; and
  - e) Mexican Americans and other Americans of Hispanic origin.

We qualify as a “Minority-owned business” as per the above definition and declaration:

- Yes
- No

This/these minority group(s) own/operate at least 51 percent of this business entity:

Women

- Yes
- No

African Americans

- Yes
- No

American Indians

- Yes
- No

Asian Americans

- Yes
- No

Mexican Americans or other Americans of Hispanic origin

- Yes
- No

## Small Business Enterprise Eligibility Criteria

According to the Texas Administrative Code, Section 2006.001 Definitions, "Small business" means a legal entity, including a corporation, partnership, or sole proprietorship, that:

- (A) Is formed for the purpose of making a profit;
- (B) Is independently owned and operated; and
- (C) Has fewer than 100 employees or less than \$6 million in annual gross receipts.

We qualify as a small business enterprise as per the above definition and declaration:

- Yes
- No

Our business structure is:

- Sole proprietor
- Partnership
- Limited Liability Company
- Corporation
- Other:

This form must be returned with a copy of the partnership agreement, articles of the organizations, or articles of incorporation.

## Labor Area Surplus Firm Eligibility Criteria

A [Labor Surplus Area \(LSA\)](#) is a civil jurisdiction that has a civilian average annual unemployment rate during the previous two calendar years of 20 percent or more above the average annual civilian unemployment rate for all states during the same 24-month reference period.

THN will verify the LSA using the most recently Labor Surplus List provided by the Department of Labor: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/lsa>.

We qualify as a firm in a Labor Surplus Area as per the above definition and declaration:

- Yes
- No

We are from the following Labor Surplus Area: \_\_\_\_\_