

## RESPONSE TO PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

### Request for Proposals (RFP): Faith Community Outreach

---

The Pre-proposal Conference was held on Wednesday, July 21, 2010, 11am – 12noon at the Chinook Building, Rm. 124 and was Facilitated by Gretchen Bruce and Bill Block, CEHKC Staff

---

#### **Background**

Those who attended the pre-proposal conference for the Faith Community Outreach RFP had an opportunity to pose questions to Committee to End Homelessness (CEHKC) staff facilitating the RFP process. The questions received during the pre-proposal period of July 14, 2010 (RFP release date) and July 28, 2010 (last day to submit questions to CEHKC staff facilitating the RFP) and their responses follow.

#### **Questions Posed During the Request for Pre-Proposal Period**

- 1. Question: My congregation already supports a food bank and uses volunteers to provide coaching services to people who are homeless. Can we apply for funding to hire a case manager and/or building improvements to support this program?**

**Response:** No. This faith community outreach RFP is intended to inspire *new* initiatives among congregations / faith communities that do not currently have ending homelessness as a social justice priority by helping them understand the gravity of the problem and teaching them techniques that will allow them to take the next step(s) to action. The type of funded activities will typically have two components: 1) adding the issue of homelessness to faith communities' primary social justice priorities and 2) converting that commitment to action that changes the lives of individuals. The agency(s) selected for funding will be providing education and inspiring mobilization on the part of faith communities, but the funding itself is not intended to provide direct service to homeless individuals.

- 2. Question: Given that this RFP will not fund direct services, what are some examples of quantifiable outcomes that are appropriate under this RFP?**

**Response:** Eligible outcomes include (for example)

1. The number of congregations that adopt *Ending Homelessness* as part of their primary social justice agenda;
2. The number of congregations that engage in *new* efforts to recruit *new* volunteers in support of ending homelessness (though the new efforts and new volunteers may be in support of an existing program hosted by a partner-congregation or community-based agency) and the number of volunteer hours provided by these volunteers;
3. The number of congregations that engage in new efforts to provide support such as move-in kits (e.g., linens, pots & pans, cleaning supplies) to help formerly-homeless households move into their new home, and the dollar value of those kits.

These are just examples, and respondents are encourage to think creatively about how congregations new to the issue of homelessness can be specifically engaged in helping homeless people. Note that it will be important to quantify the results along with practical ways to measure these results. The RFP Evaluation Criteria includes up to ten points for the respondent’s data collection and evaluation plan, including a description of the evaluation tools it intends to use to determine if its program has achieved its target outcomes.

**3. Question: Section V.E.1, 2 & 3 of the RFP (Scope of Work, Program Requirements) states:**

- 1. The agency shall outreach and engage faith communities to act in addressing homelessness, particularly in areas where there are limited shelter, housing and services resources. The agency is encouraged to engage communities such as the evangelical community that have not previously been involved in mainstream homelessness efforts.**
- 2. The agency shall train faith communities about the process and conditions of providing support services including any best practice models and/or information resources.**
- 3. The agency shall develop linkages between faith based communities and existing homeless and affordable housing advocacy organizations in order to increase individual and congregation level involvement in homelessness specific education.**

**Requirement 3 seems to be in contradiction to the intent of the RFP to fund new initiatives in its call to link to existing programs, or seems to focus on the educating congregations but without the purpose of subsequent “call to action”.**

**Response:** The first two paragraphs are the key components of the Program Requirements. The third is offered as an option for how a congregation might also choose to become involved in the issue of homelessness. Taken as a whole, the three paragraphs might be better reordered (3, 1, 2) to clarify that the intent of the RFP is to first *Educate* faith communities on issues of homelessness, next *Engage* them towards action and finally provide *Training and Technical Assistance* to give them the tools they need to act in addressing homelessness. The desired outcomes that will measure ultimate success are the concrete new actions taken by faith communities to serve homeless populations.

**4. Question: What does the phrase “Technical Assistance” mean?**

**Response:** Technical assistance is a phrase often used within non-profit and government work to describe when one person or organization shares their expertise with another in order to increase the recipient’s knowledge, understanding or skill set on a given issue. Typically:

- The relationship exists in a work or education setting in which an expert with specific technical / content knowledge provides information to address an identified need.
- The goals are designed to utilize recognized ‘best practices’ by organizations or individuals seeking answers to specific questions.
- The relationships are program-focused, and may use an interactive, on-site/hands-on approach as well as telephone or email assistance.
- Delivery of services is short in duration (2 or fewer contacts, with more than one person from an organization), customized to meet the needs of the client, and offers prescriptive solutions to a specific issue.

5. **Question: Is it permissible to appropriate public funds to faith-based activities given that the Washington State Constitution provides that “No public money or property shall be appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise or instruction, or the support of any religious establishment...” Article I, Section 11.**

**Response:** It is permissible to allocate public funding to faith-based organizations, provided that the services funded are secular in nature. Safeguards, however, should be put in place in order to prevent the funding for those secular services from becoming entangled with the religious aspects of the faith-based organization.

6. **Question: Given that this is an RFP targeted to faith-based organizations, is it permissible to appropriate public funds to a faith-based organization that has an employment preference for hiring individuals from the same faith or otherwise has stated employment preferences?**

**Response:** These funds are subject to King County Code (KCC) requirements for non-discrimination in employment by contractors, subcontractors and vendors, found at KCC, Chapter 12.16. There is no waiver procedure for this section of the code as it relates to the appropriation of public funds for an employment preference based on religion or for, or against, any other protected class. Washington state law and King County policy includes the following protected classes: race, creed, color, national origin, sex, marital status, age (40+), disability, retaliation, sexual orientation/gender identity, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability.

7. **Question: Could funding be used to pay the salary of a church-related position; for example a part-time Church Relations Coordinator?**

**Response:** An organization that otherwise met eligibility requirements for allocation of public funds could propose a church relations coordinator whose role it is educate and motivate faith based entities to invest their own efforts and resources in addressing homelessness. Note, though, that this is a contract for education and inspiration, not for delivery of services.

8. **Question: How many agencies will this grant fund? Is it just one agency for \$80,000?**

**Response:** The number of agencies with whom we contract, and the amount per contract, will, of course, depend on the proposals selected. It is certainly a possibility that we may contract with just one agency, depending on the strength of that agency's proposal and proposed scope of work.

9. **Question: The RFP states that agencies funded under this RFP are subject to insurance requirements. What are these requirements?**

**Response:** Organizations will be required to provide evidence of General Liability (Commercial General Liability), Professional Liability, Workers' Compensation, Stop Gap Employer's Liability, and Automobile Liability coverage. In addition, the policy shall endorse King County, its officers, officials, employees, and agents as an additional insured.

Additional insurance requirements are described within the contract boilerplate located at the following website:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/DCHS/Business/Contracting/Requirements.aspx#ins>

**10. Question: The RFP states that agencies funded under this RFP are subject to audit requirements and “...shall comply with the requirements of generally accepted auditing standards.” What are these requirements?**

**Response:** Auditing Standards are found in the King County Department of Community and Human Services Contract Boilerplate **Section VII. Audits**, excerpted below:

**VII. AUDITS**

- A. The Agency shall provide the County with a copy of its applicable IRS Form 990 (Return of Organization Exempt from Tax), IRS Form 1065 (Partnership tax return), or equivalent when requested.
- B. The Agency shall comply with the specific requirements for financial audits or alternative as follows:

- 1. An Agency receiving \$500,000 or more in direct or indirect federal funding from all sources during its fiscal year, including other forms of federal financial assistance shall have a single audit or program-specific audit conducted for that year. Such audit shall be done in accordance with the provisions of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 as implemented through the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Nonprofit Organizations, as revised.
- 2. An Agency receiving \$300,000 or more from all fund sources during their fiscal year that is not otherwise subject to the requirements of OMB Circular A-133, shall have a financial statement audit conducted for that year. Such audit shall be performed by a certified public accountant and conducted in accordance with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants’ (AICPA) generally accepted auditing standards.
- 3. An Agency receiving \$50,000 or more but less than \$300,000 from all fund sources during its fiscal year shall be required to complete a limited scope financial statement/internal control Review as defined by the AICPA and according to AICPA standards, in lieu of a financial statement audit, provided the Agency meets all of the following criteria:
  - a. The Agency provides to the County a financial statement audit that was completed by an independent certified public accountant and conducted in accordance with AICPA generally accepted auditing standards, for that Agency’s most recently completed fiscal period;
  - b. That financial statement audit and any associated management letter show no reportable conditions or internal control issues; and
  - c. There has been no turnover in key staff since the beginning of the period for which the audit was completed.

Any limited scope financial statement/internal control Review authorized under this subsection shall be conducted in accordance with the AICPA’s Statements on Standards for Attestation Engagements and shall be performed by an independent certified public accountant.

If the Agency does not meet the qualifications in VII, B, 3, a through c, then the Agency shall provide a financial statement audit.

- 4. An Agency receiving less than \$50,000 from all fund sources during its fiscal year shall submit a compilation of financial statements that has been certified as accurate and complete by the Agency’s Board of Directors.

5. The County reserves the right to require a financial statement audit at its discretion based on changes in circumstances relating to the financial and programmatic conditions of the Agency.
- C. An Agency which is not subject to OMB Circular A-133 may, in extraordinary circumstances, request a waiver of audit requirements and, with the review and upon approval of the County, substitute for the above requirements other forms of financial reporting or fiscal representation certified by the Agency's Board of Directors.
- D. The Agency shall provide to the County a copy of the audit report, including any management letter or official correspondence submitted by the auditor, its response and corrective action plan for all findings and reportable conditions contained in its previous audit or any alternative documents required under Section VII. B, 3 and 4 of this Contract. These documents shall be submitted no later than six months subsequent to the end of the Agency's fiscal year.
- E. If additional federal and/or state audit or review requirements are imposed on the County during the term of this Contract, the Agency agrees this Contract may be amended to require that the Agency comply with any such additional audit requirements. Even if this Contract is not amended, the Agency agrees to comply with any such additional audit requirements.
- F. If the Agency receives a financial audit, including an A-133 audit, due to requirements other than stated herein, such audit shall be provided to the County within the time period identified in Section VII, D, even if not otherwise required under this Section.

**11. Question: The RFP states that agencies must submit proof of non-profit status. What constitutes non-profit status?**

**Response:** From the IRS website: <http://www.irs.gov/instructions/i1023/ar01.html#d0e119>

*Organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, or educational purposes, or to foster national or international amateur sports competition, or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals are eligible to file Form 1023 to obtain recognition of exemption from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.*

All IRS-approved non-profits, and the majority of churches, will have received a determination letter from the IRS granting their organization tax-exempt status from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and should attach a copy of this letter to their application. Some church or faith-related organizations may not have a 501(c)(3) determination letter, but may still be eligible for tax-exempt status.

See also the IRS' webpage: <http://www.irs.gov/publications/p557/ch03.html#d0e3612>

*Some organizations are not required to file Form 1023. These include:*

- o *Churches, interchurch organizations of local units of a church, conventions or associations of churches, or integrated auxiliaries of a church, such as a men's or women's organization, religious school, mission society, or youth group.*
- o *Any organization (other than a private foundation) normally having annual gross receipts of not more than \$5,000 (see Gross receipts test, later).*

*These organizations are exempt automatically if they meet the requirements of section 501(c)(3).*

If the respondent is applying to the RFP as an association of churches or auxiliary, attach a copy of the group's charter or other document affirming its function within the structure of the larger church or group of churches.