



St. Louis Equity in Entrepreneurship Collective

Request for Proposal: Initiative Evaluator

Prepared May 15, 2018

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
St. Louis Equity in Entrepreneurship Collective
Saint Louis - Missouri

QUESTION SUBMISSION DEADLINE: May 22, 2018 (via email)
BIDDERS' CONFERENCE CALL: May 24, 2018; 10:00am-11:00am CST
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: June 1, 2018, 5:00pm CST

Questions may be submitted prior to the Bidders Conference Call; however, no answers will be provided and/or circulated prior to that date. Please do not call to submit questions. Answers to questions submitted via email and during the Bidders' call will be distributed to all submitters.

Questions may be submitted via email no later than May 22, 2018 to:

RFP Contact Name: Natalie Self
Email Address: nself@biostl.org
Website www.biostl.org/inclusion

1. Overview

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The St. Louis Equity in Entrepreneurship Collective ("The Collective"), a group of entrepreneurial support organizations (ESOs) who are committed to increasing the number of women and people of color in St. Louis' early-stage, tech-based entrepreneurship ecosystem, is soliciting competitive proposals to evaluate and document the effectiveness of the group's structure and progress. All applications should be submitted to Natalie Self, BioSTL; nself@biostl.org by Friday, June 1 at 5pm CST.

BACKGROUND

Women and people of color remain highly underrepresented in St. Louis's growing entrepreneurial ecosystem. In 2013, *St. Louis Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative Report*¹ found that resources for startups in the St. Louis region "do not regularly and intensively target minority, female, veteran and immigrant entrepreneurs." Additionally, the paper "Support Organizations and Remediating the Gender Gap in Entrepreneurial Ecosystems: A Case Study of

¹ Sponsored by St. Louis County Economic Council, authored by Jumpstart of Cleveland, OH; <https://www.scribd.com/document/148439173/St-Louis-Regional-Entrepreneurship-Initiative-Report-Seeks-to-Reach-Immigrants-Minorities>, with funding from the U. S. Economic Development Association

St. Louis”² released in November of 2015 highlighted challenges and recommendations for increasing women in entrepreneurship in the region. It stated a need to address integrating women into the mainstream ecosystem through coordination and collaboration rather than simply creating separate programs.

In 2016, BioSTL, on behalf of numerous partners in the St. Louis early-stage, tech-based entrepreneurship ecosystem won an Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation Inclusion Challenge Award to establish the St. Louis Equity in Early-Stage Tech-Based Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Collective (hereafter the Collective). The Collective is a group of St. Louis-focused entrepreneur support organizations (ESOs), investors and early-stage business owners who have committed to changing the way they work in order to increase race and gender equity in early-stage, tech-based entrepreneurship ecosystem of St. Louis. The Collective loosely follows the best practices of the collective impact model which emphasizes the importance of collective rather than individual efforts in order to change current systems. These organizations have committed to intentionally aligning their practices, collecting and analyzing regional data, participating in anti-bias training, and launch new activities based on needs assessments with a goal of increasing the number of women and people of color in entrepreneurship in the St. Louis region. This effort, with its focus on equity in an organizational ecosystem level, is unique across the country.

The application to the Kauffman Foundation cited a 2014 Parkhurst and Preskill article from the Stanford Social Innovation Review, “Learning in Action: Evaluating Collective Impact.”³ The article emphasized the importance of critical, external process evaluations that measure the effectiveness of groups like the Collective. An evaluator is needed to complete a process evaluation to monitor factors such as the quality of relationships between partners and effective practices that enhance the group’s impact, outcome and output evaluations around the new solutions piloted through the work of the Collective. As the Collective develops through the end of the Kauffman award timeline, the evaluator’s role will change towards identifying and documenting replicable best practices.

Since receiving the award in December of 2016, the work of the Collective launched with a regional summit in November 2017 attended by 150 individuals from 75 organizations. The Summit was the first-ever regional conversation about building systems of race and gender equity into St. Louis’ early-stage, tech-based entrepreneurship ecosystem, including the identification of areas of focus to increasing equity pathways. Since then, working groups have

² Research completed by Karren Watkins, Banu Ozkazanc-Pan, Susan Clark Muntean, and Yasuyuki Motoyama of the Kauffman Foundation; <https://www.kauffman.org/blogs/currents/2015/11/innovating-the-innovation-community-strategies-to-include-women-entrepreneurs>

³ https://ssir.org/articles/entry/learning_in_action_evaluating_collective_impact

met and determined 8 solutions to be co-built before the end of the year, including organizational tool kits, an investor summit, a facilities summit, a hack-a-thon for way-finding tools, training for all ecosystem members and data sharing effort. Additional information about the Collective, including a report from the Summit can be found at biostl.org/inclusion.

2. Service / Work Requirements

TASKS

Task 1: Gain an informed understanding of the Collective's work to date.

Timeline: Complete by July 15, 2018

Outcome: Evaluator will have a complete understanding of the Collective's current structure, accomplishments to date, current and past difficulties, etc.

Task 2: Develop and update an evaluation dashboard to track activities of the Collective, and demonstrate outputs and outcomes from the work of the Collective.

Timeline: Complete draft dashboard by July 15, 2018. Update quarterly.

Outcome: Evaluator will work with members of the Collective to build a list of output, outcome and process measures to track the activities and impact of the Collective. Once developed, the evaluator will update the dashboard quarterly.

Task 3: Document the evolution of the Collective's work from June 2016 to December 2018, including learnings gained through the application process, initiative formation, initiative launch, identification of initiative priorities, initial work product drafting, piloting new solutions, and concluding the Kauffman grant period.

Timeline: Complete by November 30, 2018

Outcome: Evaluator will complete one on one interviews with members of the Collective and related stakeholders, compare the evolution of the Collective against national best practice collective impact models, and document the learning to be publicly distributed.

Task 4: Evaluating the effectiveness of pilot solutions developed by the Collective including data sharing efforts, race and gender equity training, investor engagement activities, facilities engagement activities, organizational tool kit development, regional conversation facilitation, and more to be determined at the Collective develops.

Timeline: Complete by November 30, 2018

Outcome: Evaluator will complete evaluations of each pilot solution implemented by the Collective and document the learnings to be publicly distributed.

Task 5: Develop a tool kit of instructions, facilitation guides, evaluation and action plans, etc. that can be used to replicate the most effective and impactful work of the Collective work in other cities.

Timeline: Complete by December 31, 2018

Outcome: Evaluator will complete a toolkit to aid the replication of the Collective's efforts to be publicly distributed.

SUMMARY OF DELIVERABLES

All deliverables should be submitted by the end of the period of performance.

1. Drafted Collective dashboard with updates (Task 2)
2. Written report of learnings from process evaluation (Task 3)
3. Evaluation reports for each piloted solution (Task 4)
4. Toolkit that outlines process for replicating the Collective's efforts in other regions (Task 5).

STAFF

The point of contact for this contract will be Natalie Self, backbone staff for the Collective.

Current membership of the Collective includes: ArchGrants, BioSTL (backbone staff), Center for Emerging Technologies, Cortex, IT Entrepreneurship Network (ITEN), Missouri Small Business Development Center, Prosper Women Entrepreneurs, St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, St. Louis Makes, St. Louis Regional Chamber, T-Rex, and Venture Café and representatives of nearly 20 additional organizations in St. Louis.

CONTRACT DETAILS

Period of Performance: The contract shall start June 15, 2018 and will extend through December 31, 2018. Contract renewal or extension is an option based on the shifting nature and timeline of the Collective's work.

Payment, Incentives, Penalties: Payment schedule will be worked out upon awarding of contract. While work will may continue up to December 31, 2018, all funds must be invoiced by November 1, 2018. A subcontracting agreement will be executed before beginning the work.

3. Submission Guidelines

Please submit the following via email no later than Friday, June 1 at 5pm CST to Natalie Self, BioSTL; nself@biostl.org. An approach that describes how you will carry out the tasks outlined above.

A full list of the format requirements are listed below, and the most important parts of the proposals are:

1. An overview of your recent and relevant projects.
2. Your approach to this outlined scope of work
3. An estimate of the fees charged and an estimate of expenses that would be incurred.
4. Resumes of all consultants who would work on the project.
5. Names, phone numbers, and email addresses of individuals at three nonprofit organizations who you have provided service to in the last year and whom we can contact as references.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORMAT

The following is a list of information that the Bidder should include in their proposal submission:

Summary of Bidder Background

- Bidder's Name(s)
- Bidder's Address
- Bidder's Contact Information (and preferred method of communication)
- Legal Form of Bidder (e.g. sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, nonprofit)
- Documentation of W/MBE certification or similar status, if applicable
- Description of Bidder's company in terms of size, range and types of services offered and clientele.
- Bidder's principal officers (e.g. President, Chairman, Vice President(s), Secretary, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, General Managers) and length of time each officer has performed in his/her/their field of expertise.

- Evidence of established track record for providing services and/or deliverables that are the subject of this proposal.
- Organizational chart showing key personnel that would provide services to The Collective.

Financial Information

- State whether the Bidder or its parent company (if any) has ever filed for bankruptcy or any form of Reorganization under the Bankruptcy Code.
- State whether the Bidder or its parent company (if any) has ever received any sanctions or is currently under investigation by any regulatory or governmental body.
- Provide a Certificate of Good Standing from your state of incorporation.

Proposed Outcome

- Summary of timeline and work to be completed.

Services and/or Equipment

- List any and all equipment or services required for this proposed project and the number of each.
- Detailed estimated cost for each piece of equipment or service.
- List any equipment or services required of a subcontractor, along with a brief explanation.

Cost Proposal Summary and Breakdown

- A detailed list of the major expenses related to the proposed project.
- Summary and explanation of any subcontractor costs.
- Contact and background information on proposed subcontractors.
- Brief summary of the total cost of the proposal.
- Describe general terms of payment.

References

- Provide 3 references - Bidder agrees that The Collective may contact all submitted references to obtain any and all information regarding Bidder's performance.

Awardee will be required to provide additional information:

- Certificate of Insurance
- Bidder's Federal Employee Identification Number (FEIN)
- Completed Form W9

An informational conference call will be held on Thursday, May 24 from 10:00am-11:00am CST. Please RSVP to Natalie Self at nself@biost.org to receive the call-in information. If you have questions, please email them to Natalie Self at nself@biostl.org. Interviews will be held during the week of June 4, 2018.

4. Proposal Selection Information

PROJECT PROPOSAL EXPECTATIONS

The St. Louis Equity in Entrepreneurship Collective shall award the contract to the proposal that best accommodates the various project requirements. The Collective reserves the right to award any contract prior to the proposal deadline stated within the "Scheduled Timeline" or prior to the receipt of all proposals, award the contract to more than one Bidder, and refuse any proposal or contract without obligation to either The Collective or to any Bidder offering or submitting a proposal.

PROPOSAL SELECTION CRITERIA

Only those proposals received by the stated deadline will be considered. All proposals, submitted by the deadline, will be reviewed and evaluated based upon information provided in the submitted proposal. In addition, the following criteria will be given considerable weight in the proposal selection process:

- Proposals received by the stipulated deadline must be in the correct format and address project scope and specifications.
- Bidder's commitment to using racial and gender equity lenses in their work.
- Bidder's understanding of the best practices related to process, outcome, output, impact and systems-level evaluation
- Bidder's history providing the same or similar services and the experience of subcontractors or other partners that may be included in the delivery of services to fulfill the scope of work
- Bidder's ability to provide and deliver qualified personnel having the knowledge and skills required to effectively and efficiently execute proposed services
- Racial and gender composition of the Bidder's senior leadership and/or owners
- Overall cost effectiveness of the proposal and ability to meet stated deadlines

The Collective shall reserve the right to cancel, suspend, and/or discontinue any proposal at any time they deem necessary or fit without obligation or notice to the proposing bidder/contractor.