



## Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Design of a Collective Leadership Program

### Purpose

The Colorado Health Foundation (Foundation) seeks proposals from groups interested in partnering with the Foundation to design a Collective Leadership Program. This program will prepare individuals to be collaborative systems-change leaders, whose networks and skills help them be effective at transforming issues related to health equity in Colorado. The program participants would include a broad spectrum of individuals – including those with learned experience, and those with lived experience. The Foundation is seeking a partner who can develop several different options around how such a program might be structured. Our preference is to contract with a single lead entity (who may work alone, or with one or more subcontractors) to create a suite of several different design options for this program. The contract award will cover an eighth-month period (from February through September 2020). This project has a non-negotiable start by the beginning of February.

The total budget for this work shall not exceed \$150,000, including all fees and expenses. Serving as the design partner for the Collective Leadership Program does not guarantee participation in the subsequent implementation process. Any future participation will be determined by the Foundation at the end of the design process.

### Overview

The Foundation envisions a Colorado where everyone has all they need to live healthy lives, recognizing that each person has different needs. To achieve this level of health equity, there are many complex, adaptive challenges we need to tackle in collective ways. These issues stem from the interaction of many interrelated trends – demographic, economic, social, political, and technological – playing out at various levels.

Driving change in this complex environment requires the contributions of a diverse group of leaders, operating from a variety of perspectives and positions. The Foundation roots its work in the belief that it is essential that those who are most impacted by issues around health equity should be actively involved in the identification of challenges, as well as the development and implementation of programmatic and systemic solutions. In some instances, individuals work at organizations, and other cases they play roles that come directly from within their community. The Foundation is currently building a portfolio of work that includes a focus on building capacity among individuals, organizations, and communities, and supporting people to drive change through expanded power, new skills, and new networks.

Below are the ways we think about some common terms that are used throughout this RFQ.

- **Capacity building:** The act of providing technical assistance to help

nonprofits increase specific capabilities to deliver stronger programs, take risks, build connections, innovate, and iterate.

- **Health equity:** Exists when there are no unnecessary, avoidable, unfair, unjust, or systemically-caused differences in health status.
- **Leadership development:** The process of cultivating diverse, adaptive leaders who prioritize health, exercise influence and work across boundaries to strengthen community connections and action.
- **Power:** The capacity to impact change.

### Collective Leadership Program – What we're seeking to build

A key component of the Foundation's overall capacity building strategy focuses on building and supporting leadership among Coloradoans who have historically had less power and privilege. The intent is to expand their power individually and collectively so they have the ability to more directly influence health equity in their communities and across the state. To support this, the Foundation seeks to develop a new leadership program based on principles of collective leadership, and which focuses on harnessing and making space for the collective wisdom of multiple divergent perspectives. The program will be designed to fill a need in Colorado by serving a broad spectrum of participants – with both lived and learned experience – to be collaborative systems-change leaders. The program will build their skills, their networks, and their ability to use their power to shift existing power dynamics, in service of transforming issues of health equity in their communities and throughout Colorado. We will be drawing from our existing networks of relationships to recruit participants as well as through new relationships.

We envision the program design will provide participants a unique and specialized experience to evolve their skills and grow networks in service of helping their communities or organizations solve health equity problems. We are looking for a program design that is responsive to the needs and preferences of potential participants, the community, and reflects the intent of the Foundation's three guiding cornerstones, which are:

- We serve Coloradans who have low income and have historically had less power or privilege.
- We are informed by the community and those we exist to serve.
- We do everything with the intent of creating health equity.

To achieve these aims, the Foundation imagines that this program may include, but not be limited to, the following kinds of ideas:

- Understanding health equity issues through a systems lens, including diagnosing systemic problems and identifying leverage points for potential action (Systems Change);
- Designing and iterating interventions that can meaningfully affect health equity in Colorado, including using tools like policy, systems change, and programmatic interventions (Design);
- Working collaboratively with diverse stakeholders, including knowing how to incorporate multiple perspectives, identify and manage implicit biases, and engage different types of expertise (e.g., professional and lived expertise) to help

people learn to find systemic solutions and be boundary spanners (Collaboration);

- Help individuals to identify as part of a larger network of health equity leaders poised to work together to solve complex, systemic problems and give them the skills to strategically engage with the network (Networks).
- Being intentional about building and sharing power, recognizing how power dynamics affect individuals, groups, communities and systems (Power); and
- Using data and evidence, including lived experience, to understand the drivers of health inequities and explore potential solutions (Evidence).

The Foundation anticipates the program design will center around *action learning*, whereby participants engage in working on real problems as they learn, practice, and develop new skills. The program design should likely include a combination of individual knowledge-building opportunities, in-depth problem-solving processes, and action learning practices.

### Goal of this project

The Foundation is seeking a partner to design several options laying out what the Collective Leadership Program might look like. This should cover recommendations for specific aspects of how the program could be designed, including: recruitment, structure, content, duration, outcomes, and approaches to supporting a network of participants after participation in the program ends. Our preference is to contract with a single lead entity (who may work alone, or with one or more subcontractors) to create the design options for this program. The Foundation will then test and explore these different options with Foundation staff, stakeholders, and potential participants.

This project **does not** include implementation of the programs – only discovery and design. Potential for participation in the subsequent implementation process will be determined based on the outcome of the proposed design(s) and the needs of the Foundation.

### Considerations for program design

Below are questions that the Foundation has been thinking about, and which we want partner(s) to consider as they create the design options for the Collective Leadership Program. These questions reflect our initial thinking about what will be important to consider in order to ensure the program is impactful, aligned with the Foundation's cornerstones, and responsive to the community's needs.

- Given what the Foundation is trying to accomplish, what type(s) of collective leadership development model(s) provide a compelling approach (e.g., cohort, pipeline, grassroots, etc.)? What is the evidence that a particular type of program will have the impact sought by the Foundation?
- How will the program designs account for the various ways leadership development overlaps with other types of community-level work?
- Given who the Foundation seeks to reach through the program, what are different ways we could consider approaching recruitment, structure, and design? In what ways should we be challenging our own thinking about how this might look?

- What activities, skills, and resources would these model(s) focus on? How are these identified, incorporated, and deployed to benefit participants?
- How can the program content be designed to include individual knowledge-building opportunities, in-depth problem-solving processes, and emerging aspects of action learning?
- How is the program design inclusive of a program participants' unique backgrounds and situations that brought them to the leadership program?
- How will community members draw on their lived and learned expertise as they engage in the problem-solving component of the program?
- How can the program be designed to capture existing dynamics around power and privilege, and foster trust among participants?
- How can the Foundation support a network of health equity leaders once the program ends? What will it take to support the ideas and solutions generated during the program?
- What role could program participants play to inform the value and impact of the program?
- How can the program ensure that it is grounded in the Foundation's [cornerstones](#)?
- About what do we need to be mindful so that the program itself does not unintentionally create or add to existing inequities?
- What are the necessary resources (i.e., financial and time) to support the different options for the design of the program?

Partners are encouraged to propose approaches to this project that aligns with the Foundation's vision for this work, and which would allow them to address the key questions posed above. In order to be successful in creating design options for Collective Leadership Program, the Foundation expects the partner to leverage the work that the Foundation has done to date (e.g., analysis of the Foundation's previous Fellows Program, scan of Colorado leadership development programs), work closely with Foundation staff planning the leadership work, interview/engage external stakeholders as appropriate, and draw on their own expertise about the design of leadership programs. Throughout the term of the project, there will be multiple check-in meetings with Foundation staff to gather input, consider options, test ideas, and pay attention to emerging trends.

### Deliverable

The key deliverable for this project are a set of different options for the program design of the Collective Leadership Program. The designs must include detailed information on recruitment, structure, content, duration, and outcomes for the program, and the resources required to support that design.

Foundation staff will work with the selected partner to solidify details regarding the final deliverable upon the contract award. We are open to ideas from the partner about the form and design of the final plan in addition to any other suggested deliverables (e.g., presentations) the partner feels would be helpful to the Foundation's decision-making.

### Timeline

The timeline for the project will consist of an eight-month window:

- **February 2020:** Solidify the scope of work, including finalizing the questions to be addressed and the approach.
- **March – May 2020:** Review existing data/work, interview Foundation staff, gather additional information as needed, and implement any other aspects of the approach.
- **June – August 2020:** Draft possible program models and fully vet with Foundation staff and other stakeholders.
- **September 2020:** Finalize program design and deliverables.

### Reporting Structure

The program design partner will report to the Senior Program Officer, Chris Bui, who oversees the Foundation's leadership development work. However, the program design partner will need to collaborate closely with other Foundation staff, including the Portfolio Director (Jehan Benton-Clark), the Learning and Evaluation team (Nick Stuber), other internal staff (policy, communications), the Capacity Building Implementation Team, and other external partners.

### Budget and Contract

The budget for this discovery and design work shall not exceed **\$150,000**. The Foundation will likely award one contract for this project (with potential for up to two contracts to different partners). Cost effectiveness will be considered in reviewing applications, and partners are expected to revise the budget appropriately if the needs of the program design are less than anticipated.

### Responding to the Request for Qualifications

The Foundation believes that those who have historically had less power or privilege should be centered in the work we do. Hence, we strongly encourage applications from those who identify with or are members of underrepresented communities.

Given the nature of this program design, we are seeking a partner with some specific areas of expertise. Interested firms, groups, or individuals must demonstrate expertise in the following areas:

- a) Experience creating a program design that allows a participant to follow multiple pathways based on their unique and varying needs while having the opportunity to choose from a variety of options best suited for those needs
- b) Expertise engaging with diverse groups and individuals (i.e., those living on low-income or who may have historically had less power or privilege, such as people of color)
- c) Willingness to deeply engage in an exploration of how this design project should be structured to embody equity, and how the program design process itself can be in service of creating more equitable outcomes in communities
- d) Expert understanding of leadership development models, practices, and providers within the capacity building sector (preferably with existing knowledge of Colorado)

- e) Content expertise and experience regarding approaches to leadership development in the social sector and leadership programs focused on diverse individuals (e.g., those who have historically had less power or privilege, such as people of color and those living on low-income)
- f) Comfort with/ability to thrive on a project involving a great deal of ambiguity, (e.g., shifting activities, timelines, goals, inputs, and partners)
- g) Ability to synthesize and communicate complex information in understandable and actionable ways

If you are interested in applying, please submit a **proposal by Wednesday, November 27, 2019, by 5pm (MST)**. The proposal **must be** clearly structured to address the following questions:

- 1) **Why is this a compelling opportunity?** Tell us a little bit about why you want to respond to this RFQ. What sparked your interest? What makes this kind of work something you want to spend your time on? (one-page maximum)
- 2) **Why do you think your team would be a good partner for this project?** Tell us a little bit about who would be coming to the table – who will be collaborating to complete this work? Why is this the team you want to involve, and why are they a good fit for this particular project? What experience would this team bring to the table that would help make them successful on this project? We will assume that the people/organizations you propose will be available for the project if your proposal is selected. (no more than five pages)
- 3) **How would your team approach this work?** Provide us with a brief narrative (no more than six pages) that shares ideas of how you would approach this project. The goal is not to provide a project plan, but to help us understand how you would think about approaching this work and what you'd take into consideration. Be clear about how you'd center equity in this work. (If your organization works outside of Colorado, please be explicit in your plan for understanding Colorado's context.)
- 4) **Budget:** Please provide some general ideas about how you would use your time and resources for this project. You do not need to provide a detailed or line-item budget, but please tell us about the types of fees and expenses you anticipate being a part of the project. Please indicate the hourly rate of the types of individuals you would staff on this project, and the total hours you would anticipate spending on the project. This is designed to be an estimate only, and subject to change based on contracting to complete specific work agreed upon with the Foundation. (Cost effectiveness will be considered in proposal review.)
- 5) **Legal Status:** Your organization's legal status (a 501 C3 or a for-profit organization).
- 6) **References:** Please provide three references who are very knowledgeable about work you have done which would be relevant to this project (please include a description of working relationship and contact information).
- 7) **Primary Contact:** Include the name, title, phone number and e-mail address for the primary point of contact for communication regarding this proposal.

The Foundation and its partners will keep confidential any materials submitted and will not use these in any way other than for this process. Please limit application length to no more

than ten pages excluding budget, references, and any resumes.

## How to Apply

This RFQ includes the following phases.

**Q&A Call: Thursday, November 7, 2019, 2pm-3pm (MST)** – this call is optional and does not preclude you from consideration. It’s an opportunity to ask the Foundation questions about the RFQ and its work. Please call **+1 (571) 317-3129** [access code: 566-935-549] to participate in the conversation. If you are unable to attend the call, but interested in applying, please contact Chris Bui (see below).

<b>Proposal Deadline:</b>	<b>Wednesday, November 27, 2019, by 5pm (MST)</b>
<b>Interview of selected applicants (estimated):</b>	<b>January 6-10, 2020</b>
<b>Award Announcement:</b>	<b>By January 17, 2020</b>

Please send, a proposal and supporting documentation electronically in Microsoft Word or PDF format to Chris Bui at [cbui@coloradohealth.org](mailto:cbui@coloradohealth.org) & Nick Stuber at [nstuber@coloradohealth.org](mailto:nstuber@coloradohealth.org). Please send any questions about the RFQ or process to both Chris and Nick.

## Terms and Conditions

### *Application Rejection*

The Colorado Health Foundation reserves the right to reject any or all applications and to waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received and to accept any portion of an application or all items proposed if deemed in the best interest of the Foundation.

### *Modification or Withdrawal of Applications*

Applications may be modified or withdrawn prior to the established deadline.

### *Expenses*

The Colorado Health Foundation is not liable for the costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFQ.

### *Review*

The review will identify the applications that most effectively meet the requirements of this RFQ. The work will be offered to the contractor whose application conforming to the RFQ will be most advantageous to the Colorado Health Foundation, price and other factors considered.