**Connections to Care RFP for Evaluation and Research Services**
**Frequently Asked Questions**
*Last updated August 11, 2015*

**Program Overview**

**Q: Is this project the Social Innovation Fund Connections to Care announced by the Mayor's Fund on July 30, 2015?**
Yes. For more information see the announcement at www.nyc.gov/fund and http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/social-innovation-fund.

**Q: We understand that the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity is assisting the Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC on this initiative. Are the evaluation and research firms identified on the Center's website (http://www.nyc.gov/html/ceo/html/data/data.shtml) eligible to submit a proposal for this evaluation?**
This RFP is open to all firms that meet the qualifications of potential proposers as outlined on Page 7 of the RFP.

**Q: Will the Mayor's Fund share their SIF proposal?**
The proposal is not yet public. All relevant information from the proposal is in the Evaluator RFP.

**Q: For budgeting purposes, please confirm that the Mayor's Fund will fund 12 Mental Health Providers.**
Connections to Care will support approximately 12 Community Based Organizations that will each partner with a Mental Health Provider in the application to the Mayor's Fund.

**Q: What is the anticipated number of clients served per CBO (subgrantee)?**
Guidance regarding numbers served will be provided in the Program RFP.

**Q: Is this a contract under a federal grant?**
Yes.

**Q: The RFP indicates that "the First Lady of New York City, Chirlane McCray, together with the Mayor's Fund and DOHMH launched an effort [in January 2015] to develop a Mental Health Roadmap to address the need for a comprehensive, unified approach to mental health services." Has this Roadmap been finalized? If so, is the Mayor's Fund willing to share a copy of it?**
The Roadmap has not yet been finalized.

**Q: The RFP notes that the Mayor's Fund and its partners plan to "will competitively select approximately twelve service providers (CBOs) to be C2C program providers. Each will apply to the Mayor's Fund with a named MHP and with a plan to build the service provider's mental health capacity." Has the Mayor's Fund drafted a solicitation for grantees yet? If so, are they willing to share a copy of it?**
We will share the solicitation draft with the evaluator selected for this contract.

**Q: Will the Mayor's Fund extend the deadline?**
No, the deadline is firm.

**Q: We have a question on the second key area on The Quasi-Experimental Impact Study, in which the participant MH outcomes as well as key programmatic outcomes are to be compared to 'a similar population identified as the counterfactual'. We think this choice of counterfactual/control would be easy, economical and appropriate if we can access relevant data that the City DOHMH has. So will the award include such a permission? Or, if those CBOs/MHPs to be awarded a contract will allow us access to their data that document their clients' service/treatment outcomes and related information in the recent past, say five years. For this latter approach the City may need to include such data access as a condition in their award. The third approach is to recruit non-participating CBOs/MHPs as controls. In this case should the proposal identify such budget items?**
The evaluator should budget for independent data collection. CEO will work with the selected vendor to identify the appropriate counterfactual and explore the feasibility of using additional data sources to conduct a comparative analysis.

**Q: To what extent will the city be willing to make available multiple administrative data sources, and support arrangements for data linkage across these sources (for example, Medicaid, SPARCS, and admin data from DOHMH, NYS-OMH, and DSH), to create a comprehensive picture of service use among program participants, as well as to create a database that can be used to identify a matched comparison group?**
See above.

**Q: Are we correct in assuming that to the extent we would using data consistent with service delivery (e.g., depression screening) CBOs and MHPs will have staff to record and transmit those data to the evaluator?**
Yes, programs will have staff for data collection and transmission.

**Q: The RFP indicates that the evaluation will consist of "three key areas of research – The Implementation Study, Quasi-Experimental Impact Study, and Cost Study." Do the Mayor's Fund and its partners foresee that data collection efforts for each of these three studies will be conducted in parallel, or would it prefer such efforts be staggered sequentially?**
Applicants should propose the work plan that would maximize learning from the project.

## Attachments

**Q: Page 8 of the RFP requires "at least three references from successfully completed evaluations." Please clarify the specific information related needed for references. For example, will you only need point of contact information, and contract number?**

Please provide the contact name, title, organizational affiliation, phone number, email address, and the name of the relevant projects for which they are providing a reference.

**Q: We had questions about the reports requested as attachments, since reports come in all different forms. For example, for one of our projects, the report took the form of a journal supplement with 14 articles. In such cases, would you need the product or would a link be sufficient (or a few articles in "hard copy" and links for the others)?**

Please submit each report as an attached document. If there are selections from a larger of body of work that sufficiently represent the overall project, then submit those lead documents as attachments with references to supplemental information that could be found online. The selection committee should be able to review the most relevant material based on what proposers provide.

**Q: If information in attached reports is not publicly available would it be acceptable to submit reports with some information redacted?**

It is acceptable to submit reports with private information redacted.

**Q: The Doing Business Data Form requests submission of highly sensitive, personally-identifiable information (PII) that we feel is neither appropriate nor necessary for a non-profit corporation. Moreover, there is neither information nor assurance provided with regard to how the Mayor's Fund will secure this sensitive information from a breach. We are more than happy to provide corporate information rather than personal information for principal officers and senior managers. We would prefer to substitute the work address and telephone number for the home address and telephone number for this information. Is this permissible? Also, we would prefer to delete (not provide) the date of birth as this is also PII. Is this permissible?**

The policy of the Mayor's Fund requires the Doing Business Data form to be completed for an application to be responsive. This form collects identification information in order to comply with Local Law 34 of 2007 (LL 34). LL 34 limits municipal campaign contributions from principal officers, owners and senior managers of entities doing business with the City. Please refer to the Doing Business Data Form of this RFP for further information. Information that contains Personally Identifiable Information (PII) may be transmitted via a secure data transmission service of the proposer's choosing directly to CEO@cityhall.nyc.gov. This email address is accessed only by CEO staff who have cleared background vetting. This information is used solely for the purpose noted above, and will be maintained by the Mayor's Office of Contract Services in a secure location.

**Q: Does only the prime applicant of a partnership submit a Doing Business Data Form?**

In addition to the prime applicant, Doing Business Data forms are required for partner organizations.

**Q: Is there a format or instructions for a CV/Resume to be submitted with a proposal?**
There is no preferred format.

**Q: The RFP suggests that budget submissions utilize the Excel template included in the original solicitation. Must this template be included in the technical submission, or can it be submitted as a separate appendix?**
The Excel template and Budget Narrative should be included as attachments to the narrative.

**Q: The RFP suggests that budget submissions utilize the Excel template included in the original solicitation. Do such budget materials count toward the 15-page page limit?**
No the budget does not count toward the page limit.

**Q: We are citing several papers and reports in our narrative. Can the list of citations be included as an attachment, or would that be included within the 15 page limit?**
It can be an attachment.

**Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative**

**Q: What costs are allowable or unallowable under this contract?**
Funds awarded under this notice are subject to federal laws and regulations that include, but are not limited to: 48 C.F.R. §31 and 2 C.F.R. §200. Special note should be given to 2 CFR §200, which supersedes and streamlines OMB Circulars A–21, A–87, and A–122 (the former Cost Principles), the Administrative Requirements in Circulars A-102 and A-110, and the Circulars A-50 and A-133 (Audit).

**Q: Is there a maximum overhead rate? Does the funder have an indirect cost rate and policy?**
Terms and limitations of overhead are set forth in 2 C.F.R. §200.414 for institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations, and 48 C.F.R. §31.203 for commercial entities. Organizations that have an approved federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate or Forward Pricing Rate Agreement can provide a copy with their application. Organizations without approved rates should indicate the rate used and provide an appropriate explanation, not to exceed the limitations noted above (eg, 10% on Modified Total Direct Costs per 2 C.F.R. §200.68 and §200.414(f)). Explanations should include how the indirect cost rate has been computed and the basis upon which it was applied, sufficient to provide a basis for evaluating the reasonableness of proposed rate. All direct and indirect costs should be included in the proposers budget, which should not exceed the maximum budget figure in the RFP.

**Q: Is a fee allowed?**
In general, no. All items included in the budget must have a clear purpose and description, and must meet federal standards of being allowable, reasonable and allocable. See 2 C.F.R. §200 Subpart E and 48 C.F.R. §31.

**Q: Is travel cost-reimbursable?**
Yes, travel is an allowable cost that should be budgeted for and will be reimbursed under this award.

**Q: For budgeting purposes, will the review committee meet in person? And for how many days?**
The committee will likely meet in person and by phone. Please plan for 1 in-person meeting for 2 days in NYC for 1 person from the proposer.

**Q: For budgeting purposes, how many learning network events are anticipated each year?**
Please plan for 4 events for 2 days each in NYC for at least 2 people from the proposer.

**Q: For budgeting purposes, how many stakeholder meetings and presentations are anticipated each year?**
Please plan for 4 events for 1 day each in NYC for at least 1 person from the proposer.

**Q: Where should costs of participant incentives related to evaluation and data collection staff be budgeted? In the evaluator's budget or in the sites' budgets?**
Evaluation-related participant incentives should be in the evaluator's budget. In addition, any primary data collection by the evaluator outside of regular performance management data should also be built into the evaluator's budget.

**Q: The note on page 6 indicates that "Exact deliverables will be negotiated with the selected vendor through the contracting process." Given this, will the budget be modified upon award to account for a greater or lesser number of deliverables than anticipated in the proposal budget?**
Negotiations with the selected vendor will likely include specific deliverables and, as needed, the corresponding budget.

**Q: Does a separate Budget template need to be submitted for a subcontractor?**
Separate budget templates are required for partner organizations. A partner organization is an independent entity retained to perform program services. Individual consultants or subcontracts with an expected value of less than $25,000 per year should be included under "Consultants."

**Q: How should organizations use the budget tabs to calculate portions of salaries charged to the award? Does it have to be based on hourly or can it be a portion of annual salary?**
Salaries and wages of full-time and part-time employees allocated to the project can be calculated based either on hourly rate * number of hours budgeted or annual salary * % of time allocated to establish the total cost per position per year. In both cases, both the FTE and the number of hours to be charged should be included.

**Q: Please clarify what is meant by "annualized rate" in the Salary Detail tab. Does this refer to loaded rates or is it the annual salary divided by the number of hours?**
Salary rates should be reported on annual base salary. Fringe benefits, other direct costs and indirect costs should be reported on separate lines within the budget.

**Q: In the budget spreadsheet, is the "Annualized Rate" intended to be a staff member's Annual Salary or their hourly rate?**
Either is acceptable (see above).

**Q: Some organizations do not have an hourly rate but budget per project based on a percentage of their salary. Considering this, are these organizations permitted to budget this way in the "Salaries Detail" tab of the budget spreadsheet?**
Yes, see above.

**Q: In the budget spreadsheet it appears that "No. of Staff" is a percentage. Is this intended to be the FTE percentage for the staff member?**
"No. of Staff" should be the Full-Time Equivalent of the position being charged to the award.

**Q: What type of contract will be awarded?**
The contract will be negotiated with the selected contractor, and may include both cost reimbursement and performance-based payments tied to specific milestones and/or deliverables. Performance–based payments would be related to the timely achievement of milestones and/or delivery of key deliverables, as spelled out in the agreed to timeline.

**Q: Is the evaluator budget cap of $7.2 million inclusive of indirect?**
Yes.

**Q: Should we budget for any supplies (e.g., tablets, particular software) that we would want CBOs to use for data collection and submission?**
No, with the evaluator's guidance we will fund such supplies through the program budgets.

**Q: Is the total budget amount a consideration in evaluating the proposals? In other words, is there a competitive advantage to a low price?**
Proposals will be scored according to the criteria listed on page 10 of the RFP.

**Q: Milestone payments are usually associated with Firm Fixed Price projects not cost reimbursement projects. Services are, of course, subject to client acceptance. Would the Mayor's Fund and its partners consider removing this requirement?**
The structure of reimbursements and/or payments will be negotiated during contracting with the selected vendor.