



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESS PLAN FOR EMERGING BUSINESS LINE IN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION**

#### **A. Statement of Consulting Project Purpose**

College & Community Fellowship, a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization, is seeking consultant services for the development of a business plan to support the expansion of its technical assistance program, THRIVE, by moving it from reliance on grant funding to fee-for-service program revenue. Successful completion of the project will result in the delivery of a viable business plan with due consideration of the proposed model of service provision, the potential of growth to serve a national market, financial considerations, and understanding of nonprofit business operations.

The estimate for the anticipated project price is approximately \$12,000-17,000. Compelling proposals priced above the high end of that estimate will be considered when they provide sufficient demonstration both of added value and of actual and reasonable cost. Proposals priced below the low end of the estimate may be accorded additional positive consideration as part of the review process when compared to other proposals of equivalent strength in the areas of consultant experience, proposed approach and work plan, and deliverables. *Proposals are due by 11:59 pm on Friday, December 14, 2018 via email submission.*

#### **B. Background on College & Community Fellowship and THRIVE**

Founded in 2000, College & Community Fellowship<sup>1</sup> (CCF) enables women with criminal convictions to earn their college degrees so that they, their families, and their communities can thrive. Our work is delivered across three program areas: (1) Direct Service, which assists college-aspiring women in New York City; (2) Policy & Advocacy, which advocates for equity and opportunity for the communities we serve; and (3) Technical Assistance, which exports CCF's service model to organizations and companies nationwide for adaptation or replication.

CCF has been effective in engaging and serving formerly incarcerated individuals looking to pursue higher education. CCF's approach is rooted in evidence-based practices that have contributed to success both in outcomes for students and around sustainability as an organization.

In 2016 with foundation support, CCF launched its Technical Assistance program, since rebranded as THRIVE, which reflects our commitment to not just helping students obtain college degrees but to helping them *thrive* through the programs and supports we offer, with overall service delivery tailored to each student's needs and goals. THRIVE has provided multi-day training and coaching to nonprofit organizations, government agencies, educational institutions, and businesses to transfer evidence-based practices and core CCF procedures that support the successful integration of people affected by

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<sup>1</sup> Additional information on CCF, including THRIVE, is available on our website: [www.collegeandcommunity.org](http://www.collegeandcommunity.org)

criminal justice-involvement. THRIVE is designed to help organizations that work with these citizens to strengthen their service delivery to justice-involved persons and to increase their knowledge and effectiveness in employing individuals with justice histories—a viable but under-utilized labor force within our society.

To date, THRIVE has been funded primarily with grants from foundations, with recent limited addition of fee-for-service contracted service delivery. Given the limitations in funding level and duration often associated with grant funding, THRIVE sees growth in fee-for-service revenue as critical for program sustainability and expansion, as well as a potential source of surplus revenue to invest in other organizational operations.

#### Organizations currently targeted for THRIVE

THRIVE is a customized technical assistance program that has targeted and has been tailored to the following distinct organization types: corrections facility staff; parole/probation staff; colleges and universities; community-based organizations, including but not limited to criminal justice/reentry providers; human resources staffing and hiring managers of companies; job placement agencies.

#### THRIVE Goals

- Raise awareness regarding evidence-based practices for working with criminal-justice (CJ) affected persons, including trauma awareness, financial capability, and two specific strength-focused frameworks (Motivational Interviewing and Asset Based Community Development)
- Educate and engage human resources staff and hiring managers of companies and job placement agencies regarding this untapped labor force and about the benefits of hiring CJ-affected people
- Improve understanding of the regulatory and legal environment, including
  - Federal-, state-, and local-level protections for CJ-affected people, not just restrictions;
  - common challenges faced by CJ-affected people;
  - mitigation strategies for challenges faced by CJ-affected people.
- Develop implementation plan to integrate evidence-based practices into each organization's specific culture that reduce barriers and promote successful integration of CJ-affected persons.

#### THRIVE Service Delivery Model

THRIVE engages participating organizations in the following key activities:

- Identification of key staff champions at organization
- Pre-Training Knowledge Assessment Survey
- 3-day onsite training
- 6-months follow up coaching and support (post-training group call, bi-weekly calls, financial literacy training to participants of sites, one additional site visit during consulting engagement)
- Module Content Surveys
- Exit Training Surveys

Participating organizations are provided with a range of reference materials, templates for forms and handbooks, and individualized implementation and monitoring tools to support incorporation of THRIVE practices into their programs, inform service delivery, support onboarding and professional development, or serve as points of reference post-training.

## **Scope of Work**

CCF is seeking a creative and seasoned business consultant that understands the nonprofit, public, and for-profit business sectors to engage THRIVE leadership and CCF senior management in the development of a business plan to support continuation and expansion of THRIVE with new earned income funding streams.

Key questions to be addressed through this project include:

1. What is the potential for expanding THRIVE nationally? What are the potential markets and who is the competition within them?
2. What are key strategies for reaching these markets to promote long-term growth and success, including geographic prioritization for phased-in growth?
3. What are the opportunities, challenges, and action plans for establishing Continuing Education Unit (CEU) eligibility for THRIVE with education and professional accrediting/licensing bodies? Are there other considerations for unique positioning or increasing THRIVE's appeal to potential participants?
4. What are the direct and indirect costs related to THRIVE now and with planned achievable expansion?
5. What is a pricing strategy that is competitive but that will result in long-term profit sufficient for investment in expansion of this or other CCF programs?
6. What does the organization need to do operationally to ensure compliance with any applicable laws or regulations governing nonprofit organizations incorporated in New York State and with nonprofit financial and administrative best practices as it adds a line of business that charges fees and potentially makes a profit?
7. What is a realistic and achievable five-year plan with financial projections, growth milestones and timeframes, and checkpoints for successful implementation?

## **Deliverables**

The consultant will deliver a draft business plan using a traditional format rather than a lean startup format that will answer the questions listed above, at a minimum identifying real and complete operational costs, assessing market potential, formulating strategies to expand within that market, establishing a profitable pricing structure for services, and outlining recommendations for successful operational growth and legal and regulatory compliance. The draft business plan should be accompanied by relevant appendices and attachments. Feedback and recommendations from CCF will be incorporated into the production of a final business plan and its appendices and attachments.

The business plan, appendices, attachments, and any other final or intermediate deliverables produced will be established as "Works for Hire" under the consultant agreement and will become the sole property of CCF.

## **Information Required of Respondents**

- In no more than four (4) single-spaced pages, please provide responses to Questions 1-6 below:

1. Demonstrate the respondent's capacity and experience as it relates to the scope of work and required deliverables with special attention to the following:
    - extent of business plan development experience overall and with nonprofit or social enterprise client organizations in particular;
    - understanding of nonprofit and public sector markets;
    - familiarity with training and technical assistance consulting business models;
    - experience with analyzing real program costs and establishing competitive pricing;
    - knowledge of issues facing CJ-affected populations and providers serving them.
    - any other aspects deemed relevant by your reading of the project purpose.
  2. Identify key project staff and subcontracted consultants, outline their expertise, and attach their resumes.
  3. Describe the respondent's proposed work plan for completing this project, including guiding principles that orient the work; key tasks, activities, and timelines.
  4. Describe the proposed content and format of the business plan deliverables including relevant appendices/attachments likely to be included. Identify any other deliverables if proposed.
  5. Describe the respondent's plan for monitoring with CCF the progress on work plan and successful completion of deliverable as well as for establishing any necessary modifications or course corrections. Identify the individual who will serve as lead project manager.
  6. Identify what makes your engagement style unique or what added value to CCF and THRIVE will result from working with you versus other business plan development consultants.
- Provide a concise budget that identifies the overall consulting project price, with the expected hours necessary for key tasks of the project, billing rates charged (including whether paid hourly or daily and any variations by staff/resource or activity), and identification of any proposed project expenses not directly incorporated into billing rates.
- List three prior client organizations willing to serve as references, including the name of the client, telephone and email contact information, and nature and timeframe of prior consulting work. At least two of the three references should relate to business plan consulting projects.
- The respondent may also choose to submit a reasonably limited amount of other material that it believes will assist CCF in the selection process by illustrating experience, capacity, or approach to work; submission of such material is not an explicit requirement.

### Key Dates for Selection Process and Project

| <b>Milestone</b>  | <b>Date</b>                   |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Request for Proposals Issued  | November 15, 2018             |
| Questions from Proposers Due  | December 13, 2018 by 5:00 pm  |
| Proposals Due   | December 14, 2018 by 11:59 pm |
| Anticipated Selection Notification  | January 7, 2019               |
| Anticipated Negotiation & Execution of Consultant Agreement                     | January 8-January 18, 2019    |
| Anticipated Start Date of Project   | January 21, 2019              |
| Anticipated Submission of Complete Draft Business Plan and related deliverables | February 25, 2019             |
| Anticipated Submission of Complete Final Business Plan and related deliverables | March 13, 2019                |

## **Selection Process**

CCF will review all complete proposals submitted by the solicitation due date and time. In evaluating proposals, price will be an important but not sole factor. CCF may consider any factors it deems necessary and proper, including but not limited to: price, experience, staff resources allocated to the project, proposed timeframes, approach proposed, responsiveness to this request, references from prior clients, and general reputation. CCF reserves the right to request an interview or presentation from highest ranking respondents or to ask for submission of additional information. The final selection decision rests with CCF, and CCF may determine that it is in its best interest to postpone the selection timeframe or to resolicit this consultant request in the current or a modified format.

The project timeline listed above calls for rapid negotiation of a consultant agreement. CCF reserves the right to withdraw from stalled negotiations to pursue an agreement with another qualified high ranking respondent. The final maximum reimbursable amount for any consultant agreement resulting from this RFP will be determined during negotiations but will not exceed the total project price as reflected in the submitted proposal budget. The consultant agreement will incorporate a payment structure based upon satisfactory achievement of negotiated project milestones and deliverables, with weighted payment for final deliverables.

## **Proposal Submission**

Proposals should be prepared in a straightforward manner with an emphasis on completeness and clarity of content. Questions may be submitted via email to Les Hayden, Deputy Executive Director, at [lhayden@collegeandcommunity.org](mailto:lhayden@collegeandcommunity.org) or by telephone at 646-380-7783 no later than 5:00 pm on Thursday, December 13, 2018; respondents should be aware that it may take one or more days to reply to submitted questions and plan accordingly.

Complete proposals must be submitted electronically via email in either Microsoft Office Suite file and/or PDF file formats using the following address:

Recipient name: Les Hayden, Deputy Executive Director  
Recipient email: [lhayden@collegeandcommunity.org](mailto:lhayden@collegeandcommunity.org)  
Email subject line: THRIVE business plan consultant proposal

**Due date & time: Proposals are due to CCF by Friday, December 14, 2018 by 11:59 pm. Proposals received later may not be reviewed.**