June 29, 2020

**Project Summary**

KnowledgeWorks Foundation (KW) seeks proposals from qualified organizations or individuals to partner with us to co-design and implement a comprehensive training and development program that includes but is not limited to co-developing related tools and resources for KW staff, coaches, and consultants to strengthen our skills in promoting anti-oppressive practices, contributing to systemic reform, and fostering equity, inclusivity, and cultural responsiveness.

**About Us**

KnowledgeWorks is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing personalized learning that empowers every child to take ownership of their success. With nearly 20 years of experience exploring the future of learning and partnering with schools and state and federal policymakers, our passionate team believes in working together to create a system-wide approach to grow and sustain student-centered practices. Through customized professional development, in-depth research such as the Future of Learning Forecast™, federal education policy guidance and state-level ESSA implementation support, KnowledgeWorks has created opportunities for more than 135,000 students in 20 states through competency-based learning and early college.

KnowledgeWorks prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals based on their status as protected veterans or individuals with disabilities and prohibits discrimination against all individuals based on their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or national origin. Moreover, KnowledgeWorks takes affirmative action to employ and advance in employment individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or veteran status. As an organization of privilege, we have not done enough to address the systemic racism and white supremacy rampant in our education systems. Words are not enough. We need actions and outcomes behind these commitments. We must do better. We will. That starts now.

**Project Background and Scope**

KW has a long commitment to building individual and organizational capacity to lead community change through its work in founding the StriveTogether Network and EdWorks, the acquisition of the New Tech Network, and more recently in developing personalized-competency based learning opportunities in dozens of schools and districts across the country. Recently, our focus on equity has become more pointed, with new program criteria explicitly emphasizing our goals of addressing systemic inequities, serving student populations furthest from opportunity, and building diverse leadership pipelines. We have also recognized the need to build internal capacity to hire and sustain a more diverse learning community.
To refine our individual and collective capacity, we seek a sustained and significant engagement with the individual or organization selected through this RFP that would include: (1) individual and organizational assessment, including but not limited to equity audits/assessments of resources, messaging, and materials both internal and external; (2) development and facilitation of staff training and coaching; (3) board and executive training on anti-racism, whiteness, and White supremacy; and (4) review and refinement of internal policies, processes, and approaches. Our ultimate goal is to improve KW’s ability to function as a national driver of educational equity; and to be inclusive, critical, and strategic in our internal culture, operations, external communications, school/district/state partnerships, and delivery of services.
**Requirements**

Qualified firms or individuals must have experience building capacity around diversity, equity and inclusion with a variety of organizations. Specific experience working with philanthropic and education non-profit organizations is a plus. We seek an engaging, challenging, supportive partner who is interested in and has experience with long-term iterative partnerships. KW management and staff will be actively engaged in co-creating both the approach and implementation plan, and successful respondents will welcome this high degree of engagement.

**Proposal Content**

KW encourages respondents to suggest strategies that have been successful in similar engagements. Knowing that strategies and approaches are shifting due to the worldwide pandemic, we will work with our selected partner to craft a meaningful and feasible project plan, including how to deliver services virtually. We anticipate work beginning sometime in Summer 2020 and that this engagement will extend through 2020 and 2021 reserving flexibility to adjust that timeline depending on the ultimate plan. Proposals should be no more than ten (10) pages and should address the following areas:

1) Describe how you would assess our organizational and staff capacity to drive efforts to achieve equity. Please describe how growth, improvement and learning would be captured and analyzed throughout the project.
   a. How you would incorporate assessment tools into your approach specifically including metrics to demonstrate starting organizational points and progress, differentiating offerings based on varying staff needs and levels of understanding, and to hold the organization accountable to stated goals

2) Describe the general approach, tools and strategies that you would propose, including your staffing, work phases, forms of engagement, timelines and what you’d be asking of our staff. Some examples of issues we are interested in reviewing include:
   a. How you would balance individual and larger staff training and coaching
   b. Strategies you would propose to help staff practice and refine their skills, beliefs, and approaches over time
   c. Short description of an exemplar activity you like to use and why you find it valuable in this kind of engagement
   d. Strategies for engaging remote employees and/or organizations in delivering services

3) Please describe where you would expect organizational struggles or pain-points and how you would address or overcome them and help us to do the same.

4) Please provide background on the individual(s) who would be engaged with us on this work, including identifying the relevant experience, expertise, and positionality of each person listed.
5) Please provide a list of representative clients, plus three references who can speak to your leadership and competencies in similar work.

6) A price estimate for the engagement and a suggested timeline, including potential ways to phase this work if relevant to your suggested approach.

**Selection Process, Timeline, & Criteria**

KW will interview up to three respondents to explore their proposals and to assess capability and compatibility. A proposal revision may be requested following the interview and prior to selection. Proposals are due by July 17, 2020. After reviewing the proposals, we intend to schedule virtual interviews with selected respondents during the weeks of August 3rd and 10th, with final selection soon after. In making our selection, we will evaluate submitted materials, interviews, previous work with similar clients, references and cost.

**Pre-Proposal Conference Call for Further Discussion**

KW will host a ZOOM conference call the week of July 6th, where we will briefly review the proposed work and answer questions. Please contact Colmon Elridge, elridgec@knowledgeworks.org, if you would like to participate in this call, and we will provide you with call-in information. This call is highly recommended but not mandatory for consideration. If you are unable to participate in the call but would like access to the information discussed, please contact Colmon Elridge at the e-mail address above and we will make the information available to you in an alternative format.

**Submitting your Proposal**

Proposals will be due by Friday, July 17, 2020. Please email your proposal to Michael DiMaggio, VP Strategic Partnerships & Development, KnowledgeWorks, 1 West Fourth Street, Suite 200, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202 DiMaggioM@Knowledgeworks.org