



## Request for Scope of Services

### Activating Communities to Heal Across Missouri Evaluation

Missouri Foundation for Health (MFH) in partnership with Alive and Well Communities (Alive and Well) is requesting a proposal from XXX to provide evaluation services related to Alive and Well's *Activating Communities to Heal Across Missouri* effort.

#### Background & Project Overview

Since 2016, Alive and Well has developed and implemented a model for building community understanding of trauma and the systems that perpetuate it. Alive and Well has trained and activated community leaders hired as Community Consultants in communities experiencing high levels of trauma and toxic stress including the St. Louis Promise Zone, East St. Louis and Hazelwood, MO. In these communities, Alive and Well hires and trains Community Consultants who facilitate workshops to build understanding among their neighbors about the impact of trauma on well-being; how individuals can promote their own well-being; and how they can work collectively to change the conditions that create intergenerational cycles of trauma and toxic stress. These leaders and their neighbors choose to engage in personal and community change in a variety of ways based on the issues in a particular neighborhood and what is prioritized by its residents. In many communities, schools are critical to these efforts as they are the epicenter, providing essential services beyond education for families, as well as serving as a critical source of social support.

*Activating Communities to Heal Across Missouri* – an effort supported by MFH - expands this model from more urban-centered areas into rural areas of Southeast Missouri including Mississippi, Scott, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Dunklin Counties. While this will expand the existing Alive and Well model to new regions, the aim is to adapt and evolve the model to meet the needs of the expansion communities.

Alive and Well Communities also supports institutions, including schools, in their journey to become trauma informed with a specific focus on advancing equity. In 2018, Alive and Well worked with the Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to develop the Missouri Model for Trauma-Informed Schools. Today, Alive and Well Communities and DESE are supporting schools across the state to use this model to respond to the social and emotional needs that have emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools in Southeast Missouri are accessing these resources



while residents are building their capacity to lead responses to trauma in their own communities.

### **Opportunities to Build on Current Research & Evaluation**

Adverse Childhood Experiences, referred to as “ACEs,” have been identified as a predictor of health, economic and social outcomes in adulthood. Populations with fewer resources or in historically oppressed communities experience higher rates of ACEs, due to community conditions and systems that created environments where ACEs are more likely to thrive. Adverse Community Environments paired with Adverse Childhood Experiences (the “Pair of ACEs”) manifest conditions that widen disparities in economic and health outcomes. A growing body of trauma and resiliency [research](#) is revealing best practices for becoming a trauma-informed community, and communities that achieve a set of key resiliency factors, can predict better health outcomes.

As Alive and Well expands their community engagement model into rural areas of Missouri, a community steering committee will guide each community approach. The steering committee will use the “Pair of ACEs” as a guiding framework that will aid the community in developing strategies to address critical factors for responding to the adversity in the community; however, each community approach will be adapted in response to individual community values, needs and priorities.

The pair of ACEs framework also guides Alive and Well’s Community Consultants as they facilitate community training and awareness building. As part of Alive and Well’s previous efforts, evaluation measures have been put in place to assess the change in workshop participants’ topic-specific knowledge as a result of community-based trauma trainings. Additionally, data was gathered regarding participants’ plans to use what they have learned to positively influence their community. For instance, the Community Consultants in St. Louis have run for office, joined regional steering committees, built their own programming, and taken on leadership roles in community organizing efforts as a result of their engagement in this work.

The Alive Well model rests on the underlying hypothesis that when organizations and communities build a common understanding of how trauma and toxic stress impact individual and community outcomes, they are better equipped to enter into difficult conversations about racism and other structural traumas that affect community outcomes. Because they are well-positioned to connect with peers in authentic, meaningful ways, Community Consultants –



people who live, work, and have ties to the community – are vital to furthering communities’ engagement and trauma awareness. Taken together, these factors are critical to Alive and Well’s approach to collaboratively creating equitable, resilient communities.

As Alive and Well recruits Community Consultants and adapts its model in the new region, there is an opportunity to build upon the existing evaluation efforts, further investigate the critical components of the Alive and Well model, and add to the emerging research related to the “Pair of ACEs” framework and community-led systems change.

Alive and Well and MFH request that the evaluation approach explore three key questions: (1) How is the Alive and Well model implemented and adapted to advance community resilience and racial equity in new, rural environments? This includes exploring communities’ cultural, historical, and political contexts and the implications on adapting the existing model in different communities. (2) To what extent does the Alive and Well model activate Community Consultants as change-leaders in their communities? (3) What is the relationship between community engagement, individual and collective capacity for community action, and community-driven systems change? Understanding systems change takes time, one aim of this evaluation is to begin to identify intermediate outcomes that preclude or lay the groundwork for systems-level shifts (i.e. changes to power-dynamics in decision-making processes, racial inequities as key consideration for community planning, etc.).

This RFP is requesting evaluation services solely for Alive and Well’s *Activating Communities* project; however, MFH supports various community empowerment efforts that aim to create systems change. In the future there may be similar project-level evaluation services needed for two to three additional projects, as well as opportunities to look across projects to consider key themes, challenges and insights related to community-driven system change efforts. Ideally, the selected partner would have interest, expertise and bandwidth to engage in these prospective evaluation activities with MFH over the course of the next two to three years and the ability to scale up evaluation activities if needed.

### **General Requirements**

The evaluation partner will:

- Use a developmental evaluation approach, engaging each of the expansion communities’ unique set of stakeholders to inform the evaluation questions and design. The developmental approach should balance community member engagement with burden of participation in the evaluation.



- Have knowledge and experience evaluating trauma-informed approaches to community empowerment and/or community resiliency. Familiarity with the “Pair of ACEs” framework is preferred.
- Be adept at gathering qualitative and quantitative process data and making meaning of findings with diverse groups of stakeholders as the effort is unfolding.
- Work closely with Alive and Well evaluation staff and contractors to align existing evaluation plans and data collection systems.
- Provide meaningful, real-time data to community stakeholders, as well as Alive and Well and MFH, in order to inform ongoing decision making as part of the design, development, and implementation of *Activating Communities*.
- Embrace principles of the [Equitable Evaluation Framework™](#), particularly as it relates to centering participant ownership and utility of the evaluation results. This includes ensuring the stories of Community Consultants and others engaged in the effort provide context to understand observable change.
- Be a thought partner to community stakeholders, Alive and Well, and MFH regarding the relationship between community empowerment and resiliency efforts and systems change.

### Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted online.

To begin a proposal, [click here](#).

To return to a proposal in progress, log in to your [Account](#).

In the online form, from the Program drop-down box on the Proposal Requirements page, please choose Equitable Systems (ES) and from the Primary Staff drop-down box, please choose Megan Klenke- Isgriggs.

### Proposal Requirements

- Submission acknowledgement.** Complete and submit the [one-page acknowledgement form](#).
- Proposal narrative.** Address each of the sections below
  - **Organization name and primary contact information.**
  - **Approach to services.** Provide a brief description of the approach to services and address each of the following:
    - Describe the developmental evaluation approach and methods you would take to address the three levels of evaluation questions outlined on page three.



- How would you approach and what potential evidence of progress toward racial equity might you be looking for across all three evaluation areas?
  - What evaluation experiences and/or best practices would you draw from to design measures and processes to begin to understand community-level intermediate outcomes that preclude or lay the groundwork for systems-level shifts?
  - Understanding community experience and perceptions on issues related to racism and racial equity may vary greatly, describe your team's approach to leaning into groups' varying levels of discomfort related to conversations about race. How would you balance conversations to elicit multiple points of view and important data that could move people collectively forward, without alienating or shutting down meaningful conversation about racial equity and racism?
  - How would you center the Equitable Evaluation Principles in this project? Specifically, how would your approach ensure participant ownership and community-level utility of the evaluation process and findings?
  - Understanding there are multiple audiences/consumers of this evaluation (e.g. community partners, Alive and Well, MFH, the field of trauma-informed care, etc.). What is your approach to ensure utility and application of results across various audiences/consumers?
  - While this project will focus on Alive and Well's Activating Communities project, briefly describe how your identified approach could be adaptable and scaled to include additional community-driven, power-building projects at a later date. What capacity and expertise do you have for taking on future projects and potentially conducting cross-analysis between them?
- **Deliverables and proposed timeline.** Provide a work plan and timeline that identifies activities and deliverables.
  - **Organization history and qualifications.** Provide a summary of experience and qualifications of the organization's staff as well as any proposed subcontractors. Include bios of key personnel.
- Cost proposal.** Provide a detailed cost proposal and justification for: professional services (hourly rate and number of hours), travel specifically related to the project, subcontractor fees (attach proposal or contract), and other direct costs related specifically to the project. Respondents should submit a cost proposal that aligns with the scope of the project and supports required deliverables. MFH reserves the right to negotiate proposed costs.

*Note: Requested travel will be reimbursed for coach airfare booked within a reasonable timeframe, lodging, standard rental car or public transportation, meals and incidental*



*expenses at a rate not to exceed the federal [per diem](#) rate. Please note how COVID-19-related restrictions may impact travel.*

- Intellectual property list.** If applicable, attach list of intellectual property.
- Additional required documents:**
  - The names and contact information of 2 – 3 individuals or organizations MFH can contact to verify past work.
  - Completed [W-9 form](#)
  - Completed [Conflict of Interest Disclosure form](#)

### **Contract Provisions**

The agreement will be up to 36 months in duration. If selected, contractor will be required to enter into a Service Agreement with MFH. To review the terms of the agreement, [click here](#).

### **Contact and Deadline**

MFH and Alive and Well welcome inquiries and questions. Please email Megan Klenke-Isgriggs, Senior Learning Strategist, at [mklenke@mffh.org](mailto:mklenke@mffh.org) with questions or to arrange a phone call. Proposals must be received by Monday, May 17, 2021 at 12 pm (Central Time).

For more information on the online submission process, [click here](#). If there are additional questions, please contact Wendy Rohrbach, Project Coordinator, at [wrohrbach@mffh.org](mailto:wrohrbach@mffh.org) or (314) 345-5504.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

MFH will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status. Respondent will be required to affirm respondent will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status either in its employment practices or in its policies and procedures on account of any services, or activities made possible by or resulting from an agreement resulting from this Scope of Service. Any violation of this provision shall be considered a violation of a material provision of this procurement and shall be grounds for cancellation, termination or suspension in whole or in part of any related agreement by the MFH.

### **About Missouri Foundation for Health**



Missouri Foundation for Health is building a more equitable future through collaboration, convening, knowledge sharing, and strategic investment. Working in partnership with communities and nonprofits, MFH is transforming systems to eliminate inequities within all aspects of health and addressing the social and economic factors that shape health outcomes. To learn more please visit [mffh.org](https://mffh.org).