

**January 26, 2022**

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

Hamilton Community Foundation is requesting a brief proposal to assist us with a project to design and implement an outcome evaluation of HCF's ABACUS-supported programs. Submission date is February 10, 2023.

### **Background**

Hamilton Community Foundation was established in 1954 as Ontario's first community foundation. Today, it is a member of over 191 community foundations across Canada and a rapidly-expanding international network. In a nutshell, community foundations have three roles:

- Working with donors to build funds that support local charities.
- Giving grants across all sectors of the community: arts and culture, education, recreation, health and human services and the environment.
- Community leadership – bringing people together to address issues and opportunities facing their communities.

HCF is driven by its:

- Vision: A vibrant, diverse and inclusive Hamilton, and
- Mission: To drive positive change by connecting diverse people, ideas and resources.

### **The project**

ABACUS, a collaborative initiative of Hamilton Community Foundation and [The Fairmount Foundation](#), is a 10-year commitment to increasing the likelihood that young people who face multiple barriers will graduate high school and access post-secondary by focusing on the pivotal middle school years and supporting the transition into high school.

ABACUS initially launched in 2015, and in 2022 the Foundation launched ABACUS Phase II, which further focuses our grants and systems change work with refinements that include:

- A deeper focus on student populations who face persistent and pervasive barriers in the education system and taking an intersectional approach to meeting their needs
- Expanding investment to include the transition period *into the middle-school years* (Grades 4 and 5), with a particular focus on addressing learning interruptions arising from the pandemic.
- Increasing support for the transition *out of the middle-school years and into high school*, including Grade 9 and the transition into Grade 10.

Our website: [www.hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca/leadership/abacus-advancing-post-secondary-access/](http://www.hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca/leadership/abacus-advancing-post-secondary-access/) provides more information.

### ***Scope of work***

HCF has structures in place to collect grantee reporting on program outputs and lessons learned. For this project, HCF seeks highly skilled support to work with grantees to develop indicators or proxies that reasonably measure HCF's strategic education goals.

The scope of the work includes:

- Creating an evaluation framework to be used to assess outcomes of ABACUS-supported programs
- Leading and designing an evaluation of outcomes achieved by 21 grantee organizations
- Developing, in consultation with ABACUS grantees and HCF staff, indicators to measure youth sense of belonging; trusted adult role model; and academic learning, skills, and competencies
- Supporting grantees to collect participant demographic data using an anti-oppressive and trauma-informed framework
- Collecting, cleaning, and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data to answer agreed-upon research questions
- Collaborating closely with an Indigenous evaluation consultant, who will lead evaluation efforts of Indigenous-based programs
- Meeting with HCF as needed to guide and implement the evaluation, minimum bi-weekly
- Producing a written report and summary slide deck of key findings

To provide context to the work, HCF staff will advise the successful consultant on existing reporting and evaluation mechanisms, and facilitate connections between the consultant and grantees.

### **Experience and qualifications**

The successful consultant will have an in-depth knowledge of program evaluation, qualitative research, and community-engaged research approaches. Experience working with community groups and equity-deserving communities are essential; experience working with local (Hamilton area) groups is considered an asset.

Our estimated budget for this project is \$30,000. We would like to receive the final report on this work by June 30, 2024.

### **Proposal content**

If your firm is interested in bidding on this work, please provide a proposal to CA Klassen, Education Program Manager, at [ca.klassen@hamiltoncommunityfounadtion.ca](mailto:ca.klassen@hamiltoncommunityfounadtion.ca) The proposal must include the following:

- Your understanding of the initiative and the scope of work to be accomplished.
- Brief bios of team members who would be involved in the work, and the roles they would play.
- Examples of your work that demonstrate your experience in conducting similar projects; in particular we are interested in work conducted with non-profits/charities.
- Project plan and critical path/timeline. It is anticipated the work would commence approximately during the month of March, 2023, and be completed by June 30, 2024. Project plans should include a breakdown of tasks and timelines (e.g. number of days)
- Your expectations from the HCF team through each phase of work outlined in the project plan
- Deliverables. We expect that at a minimum this would include:
  - Research plan
  - Bi-weekly meetings with staff to share updates and guide the evaluation (may be more frequent as needed)
  - Written updates via email
  - Final report including at minimum introduction, methods, and findings

- Summary slide deck of key findings
- Fee proposal, plus hourly and per diem rates for any additional services.
- The names and contact information for two organizations for whom you have completed similar work in the past five years that we may contact.

### **Evaluation**

Proposals will be evaluated on:

- The consultant(s) understanding of ABACUS and its goals
- The proposed approach to achieving the goals of the project
- Past performance – demonstrated expertise in providing similar projects, in particular working as a collaborative partner and resource to staff in completing the work, plus references.
- Fees

Short-listed firms may have an opportunity to expand on their proposal via zoom. This will consist of a 30-minute zoom meeting to ask and answer questions about the proposal.

### **Process**

<b><i>Task</i></b>	<b><i>Date</i></b>
<b>Submission deadline</b>	<b>12 pm, February 10, 2023</b>
Shortlisted candidates meet with staff	Week of February 20, 2023
Successful candidate informed	February 27, 2023
Contract begins	March 1, 2023 (subject to change as needed)

### **RFP Terms**

1. The proponent firm shall bear all costs associated with responding to this RFP.
2. HCF is not bound to explain its decision regarding submitted proposal.
3. By accepting a proposal, HCF does not intend to bind itself legally in any way.

HCF intends solely to begin negotiating a contract on the subject matter of the proposal. Unless HCF states otherwise in writing at the time, oral or written communications between the firm and HCF on the subject matter of the proposal are always to be considered as subject to the execution of a formal written agreement. In addition, the execution of this contract in no way binds HCF to an ongoing relationship with the vendor. This contract should be considered as a standalone.

4. Prior to the closing date of this RFP, respondents should not establish contact with anyone (staff or board) inside the organization regarding this RFP, other than the representative identified. Failure to abide by this requirement could be grounds for rejection of your proposal.

#### **Background materials**

A fact sheet is attached; our website is [hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca](http://hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca); Twitter: @HamCommFdn, Facebook: @HamCommFdn. A copy of our annual report is available [here](#);

#### **HCF Contact**

Please direct all questions to:

CA Klassen (he/they)

Education Project Manager

Phone: 905-523-5600 x 255

Email: [ca.klassen@hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca](mailto:ca.klassen@hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca)