

# **Request for Consultant: Engagement & Facilitation of Lived Experience Working Group**

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**From River Valleys Continuum of Care**

**through its designated Lead Agency,  
Institute for Community Alliances**



**Request released: September 29, 2023**

**Proposals due: November 6, 2023**

# A. Instructions for Completing Your Response

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Follow the steps below to complete your response to this solicitation. More detail is provided in later sections of this document.

**1. Read this Request document and ask questions.**

Questions must be emailed to Jennifer Prins [jennifer.prins@rivervalleyscoc.org](mailto:jennifer.prins@rivervalleyscoc.org) no later than 4:00pm on October 23, 2023. Responses will be provided via an FAQ, which will be available on the CoC website. Responders will be notified once the FAQ is posted.

**2. Write your Response.**

The required proposal contents are described in Section E. Prepare a written response and supply all requested content. Responses should address the requested information and include all requested documentation. Incomplete responses and responses that otherwise do not follow guidelines of the RFP may be rejected.

**3. Submit your Response.**

Email all required documents to the email address below with “Engagement Consultant” in the subject line. All documents can be combined and submitted together as one file if preferred.

Proposals must be received no later than 4:00pm on November 6, 2023. Late responses will not be considered.

Submit your response to: Jennifer Prins [jennifer.prins@rivervalleyscoc.org](mailto:jennifer.prins@rivervalleyscoc.org).

## B. Project Background

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River Valleys Continuum of Care (CoC) is a community-led and community-based coalition dedicated to preventing and ending homelessness in twenty counties of southern Minnesota.

The CoC and its members lead regional planning and coordination of resources to improve the homeless response system. In that pursuit, the CoC conducts regular needs assessments and planning activities to help agencies and individuals across southern Minnesota work together better and demonstrate outcomes for people experiencing homelessness. The CoC is supported by a team of four full-time and part-time staff and a network of partner agencies across the region. CoC staff are employed by the CoC's designated Lead Agency, Institute for Community Alliance (ICA).

From existing response system data, the CoC has identified that over 2,700 people in nearly 1,500 hundred households experience homelessness and housing instability within the region each year. In addition, people who identify as Black or multi-racial, people with disabling conditions, and people who experience domestic violence and other forms of violence and trafficking are more likely than their counterparts to experience homelessness in the region.

In July 2022, the CoC committed to increasing leadership and representation of people who have experienced homelessness and housing instability in its decision-making. One step in that commitment was to establish a Lived Experience Working Group reflective of people facing homelessness in the region. However, due to limited funding, the CoC was unable to staff the group effectively to engage existing members, add new members, and establish ongoing roles for the group.

With new funding through a partnership with Three Rivers Community Action (a regional Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program grantee), this RFP is a direct response to that need. This RFP seeks a contractor to support the Lived Experience Working Group's growth and development within CoC decision-making over the next two years.

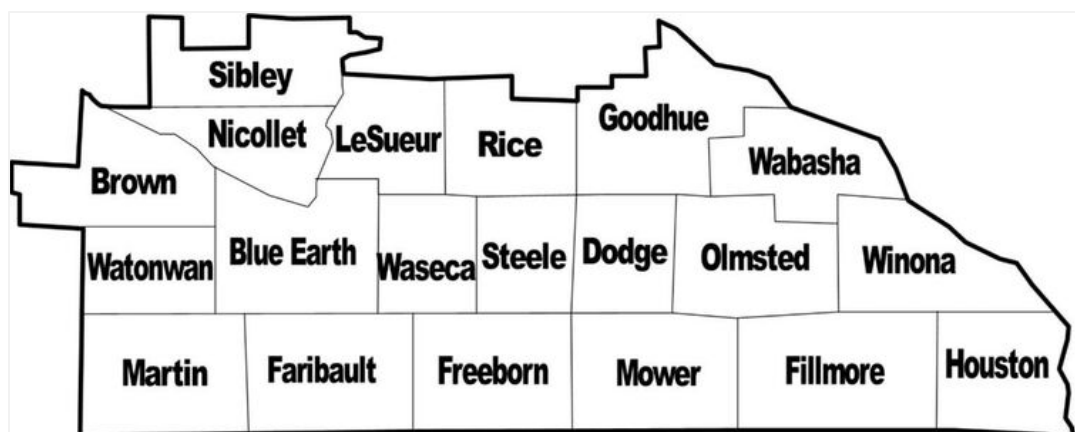


Figure 1:  
Map of  
CoC region

## C. Scope of Work

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The purpose of the Engagement Coordinator Consultant is to develop greater leadership within CoC groups to work toward ending homelessness within the CoC region. The Consultant provides direct member outreach and engagement for the CoC's Lived Experience Working Group and facilitates ongoing development of the group and its members. The Consultant also assists the CoC Director to maintain operations and alignment between the group and other CoC activities and priorities.

Lived Experience group member outreach and engagement (35%)

- Promote CoC involvement with individuals and agencies to engage potential participants from across the region, especially in communities or populations underrepresented in CoC decision-making
- Build positive relationships with participants and potential participants through in person, phone, or other virtual means
- Effectively share CoC goals and leadership opportunities

Lived Experience group development and facilitation (55%)

- Work with interested members to establish group schedule, location/method, norms, and goals
- Facilitate open, supportive, and brave conversations to guide CoC decisions on specific topics or general direction
- Provide direct support to members to develop public speaking and leadership skills in CoC
- Collect notes from meetings to report out to CoC Director and/or committees

Operational support (10%)

- Secure accessible physical or virtual spaces for the group to meet regularly
- Assist with managing stipend payments to group participants
- Maintain current contact list of group participants
- Meet monthly with CoC Director to coordinate on group topics and next steps

The anticipated contract period is approximately twenty-one months (December 1, 2023 - September 30, 2025), dependent on performance. Contract renewals are also possible, contingent on performance and funding availability.

This role is estimated at 15-20 hours per month, with travel within the region. The maximum initial contract amount will be \$8,500/year. (Funds for group participant stipends and travel reimbursement are not included in the Consultant budget.)

River Valleys CoC does not make regular payments based solely upon the passage of time; it only pays for services performed or work delivered after it is accomplished.

## D. Goals and Metrics

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The primary result of the Consultant's work will be an ongoing Lived Experience Working Group within the CoC, reflective of populations experiencing homelessness within the region. The Lived Experience Working Group will have defined the scope of their responsibilities together with CoC staff and leadership, which may include the following:

- Provide expertise and guidance to CoC staff and committees to implement and monitor CoC goals
- Participate in the planning and preparation for meetings
- Attend and present at meetings
- Meet at least once quarterly with CoC staff
- Meet at least every other month as a team
- Engage in the work and vocalize their ideas, thoughts, concerns, and questions
- Review materials and documents, such as funding applications, CoC communications, program guides, requests for proposals, etc.
- Support evaluation and process improvement
- Support the development of additional opportunities to engage with individuals with lived experience of homelessness in CoC work

Metrics the CoC will consider in evaluating the Consultant's progress toward this overall goal:

- Member representation: 1) All group participants have experienced homelessness or housing instability; 2) Some group participants have experienced unsheltered homelessness; 3) Group participant reported demographics compared to population experiencing homelessness in the region
- Member engagement: 1) Group participants per month and per year; 2) Group participants involved for six months or more
- Member development: 1) Level of group participant involvement in other CoC activities or meetings; 2) Number of agreed ongoing group responsibilities

## E. Proposal Instructions

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### 1. Elements of the proposal

Complete proposals will include the following forms and documents:

- Cover Letter with Consultant contact details
- Qualifications of Consultant – Experience, Approach
- Project Workplan/Schedule of tasks
- Project Budget

Forms are provided in the Appendix to this RFP. All documents can be combined and submitted together as one file if preferred.

### 2. Submitting the proposal

Email all required documents Jennifer Prins [jennifer.prins@rivervalleyscoc.org](mailto:jennifer.prins@rivervalleyscoc.org) with “Engagement Consultant” in the subject line.

Proposals must be received no later than 4:00pm on November 6, 2023. Late responses will not be considered.

## F. Proposal Evaluation

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River Valleys CoC prioritizes proposals that demonstrate strong organizational and collaborative skills, incorporate persons with lived experience of homelessness in their project team, and demonstrate experience in outreach or services to people representing culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds and individuals who are without shelter or have severe service needs.

The CoC will evaluate all responses received by the submission due date, using the following 100-point scoring structure:

- Qualifications of consultant – 40 points
- Workplan – 40 points
- Budget - 20

After initial scoring, responders with up to the top three proposals based on total points will be invited for a virtual interview.

After the interview, the CoC will make its selection based on the extent to which the proposal aligns with CoC requirements described in this RFP and best value to the CoC. Final selections will be made following the scoring structure:

- Interview – 50 points
- Reference checks – 20 points
- Cost value – 30 points

River Valleys CoC reserves the right to issue an additional Request or to fill future consultant contracts that may arise from this project from applications received under this Request.

# Forms Appendix

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## Form 1 – Qualifications of Consultant

Responders must thoroughly answer the following questions as part of their submitted response. Please do not exceed 5 pages for Form 1.

1. Describe why you are interested in this opportunity.
2. Describe your background and experience that makes you uniquely qualified for this project. Share at least three examples of similar projects and any work you have done with people representing culturally or ethnically diverse backgrounds and individuals who have experienced homelessness. Examples from both rural and urban locations recommended.
3. Detailed work experience that is relevant to this scope of work.
4. List at least three references from clients and colleagues with whom you worked for projects listed in question 3. Include name, email, phone number, and related project name.

## Form 2 – Project Workplan/ Schedule of Tasks

Responders must describe in detail how they will support the development of the Lived Experience Working Group and its members. Please use as much space as needed to help the CoC understand how tasks will be accomplished.

Responders may propose other tasks that support the goals and metrics of the project, but they must list them separately.

Task	Detailed steps to complete task	Completion date and/or frequency of task
Lived experience group member outreach and engagement		
Lived experience group facilitation and development		
Operational support		
Other activities proposed:		



### Form 3 – Budget Detail

Responders must describe proposed project costs in the format below, when submitting their response. The rate(s) identified must include all costs, except stipends and reimbursements paid directly to Lived Experience Working Group members. Included costs are consultant travel expenses, mailings, fees, commissions, compensation, equipment, and other charges.

If other activities are proposed in Form 2, rate and costs information must provided in the budget detail

<b>Task</b>	<b>Hourly rate</b>	<b>Estimated number of hours</b>	<b>Total cost</b>
Lived experience group member outreach and engagement			
Lived experience group facilitation and development			
Operational support			
Other activities proposed			
<b>TOTAL</b>			