CITY OF EVANSTON

Request for Proposals (RFP)

for

City of Evanston Financial Wellness Partnership

Release: September 25, 2019

RFP DEADLINE:  Noon October 23, 2019

Emailed to: pzalmezak@cityofevanston.org
(no hard copies please)
Request for Proposals

The City of Evanston is seeking a partnership with a qualified entity who will provide a financial wellness curriculum to City of Evanston residents at no charge. An ideal candidate would be a bank, credit union, or a mission-oriented financial service firm or organization that provides financial wellness services. Candidates will have an established financial wellness initiative or curriculum in place with a proven track record of success.

BACKGROUND

The City of Evanston recognizes that a strong financial education provides the foundation to increased financial well-being by learning how to build wealth through immediate and retirement savings, home ownership, debt elimination, and increased entrepreneurship. Financial wellness of individuals leads to stable communities. Unfortunately, personal finance education is not taught in great detail, and while all populations are impacted by poor financial planning, lack of retirement savings, and consumer debt, minority populations generally tend to be at a greater disadvantage.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), the U.S. government agency responsible for consumer protection in the financial sector, defines financial well-being as “a state of being wherein you:

- Have control over day-to-day, month-to-month finances;
- Have the capacity to absorb a financial shock;
- Are on track to meet your financial goals; and
- Have the financial freedom to make the choices that allow you to enjoy life.”

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The City of Evanston is seeking a financial institution partner (for an initial period of one year) to deliver a wellness initiative that includes programming such as pre-purchase homebuyer counseling, down payment assistance, retirement savings, debt management, credit education, budgeting, and understanding financial services. Specifically, personal financial wellness education should lead to increased levels of business startup activity, decreased debt, increased home ownership, and overall improved community health resulting from stress reduction.

Upon completion of the first year, the City of Evanston staff will review progress and service deliverables and determine if a multi year agreement is mutually agreeable, subject to City Council Approval.

The City of Evanston will not be offering financial assistance for the curriculum delivery. However, the City of Evanston will partner exclusively with the selected candidate by offering:

- Co-branding
- Marketing
- Advertising in City of Evanston communications including newsletters and websites.
- Use of City of Evanston facilities including the Civic Center, Levy Center, and Gibbs Morrison Cultural Center to teach the curriculum.
- Co-authoring grant applications (if applicable)
- Creation of a dedicated program micro-website

The program will be open to all City of Evanston residents, with priority given to low- to moderate-income residents. A system for determining eligibility will be determined in partnership with successful respondent. An ideal curriculum will result in some form of reward such as a certificate of completion or badging system.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION
The City will evaluate proposals based on the institution or organization’s previous success with financial education programs, capacity to deliver these services on an ongoing basis, and the prioritization of low to moderate-income individuals. Special consideration will be given to proposals that include teen programming. Specific evaluation measures will be determined upon negotiating the professional services agreement.

Proposals from interested parties should include the following:

- Organization Name
- Primary Contact Name, Address, Phone, Email
- Name of Curriculum
- Supporting curriculum documentation
- Referrals to individuals who have successfully completed the curriculum
- Referrals to other organizations who have hired or partnered with your organization to implement the curriculum
- Proposed length of program
- Proposed metrics of success and proposed reporting mechanism
- Eligibility criteria for participants (if required/applicable)
- Plan for community engagement

PROJECTED TIMELINE (dates are estimates and may change)

1. Issuance of Request for Proposals..................September 25, 2019
2. Proposals Due Date....................................... October 16, 2019, Noon
3. Tentative Follow Up Interviews.......................October 21-October 25, 2019
4. Notification of Decision........................................... November 1, 2019

Submittal Requirements: Electronic PDF submitted via email to pzalmezak@cityofevanston.org.

ANY PROPOSALS RECEIVED AFTER THE SUBMITTAL DEADLINE, WILL BE REJECTED. It is the sole responsibility of the proposer to insure that his or her proposal is emailed by the stated time.

Evaluation Criteria
The City will select the successful firm through an evaluation process based on the firm meeting the specifications which are outlined in this RFP. A review committee will review in detail all proposals that are received. During the evaluation process, the City may require a Proposer’s representative to answer questions with regard to the proposal and/or make a formal presentation to the review committee. The review committee will make a recommendation to award the contract based on the criteria set forth below. This contract will be forwarded to the City Council for final approval.

The evaluation criteria listed below will be used in the selection of the successful Proposer.
1. Qualifications and Expertise
2. Organization and Completeness of Proposal
3. Clearly defined program
4. Demonstrated and measurable positive outcomes

Selection Process
The City will select a firm on the basis of the responsiveness of the proposal to the RFP submittal requirements, the evaluation criteria stated above, and the demonstrated willingness to execute an acceptable written contract. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, and to request written clarification of proposals and supporting materials from the Proposer.

Responses may be rejected if the firm fails to perform any of the following:
A. Adhere to one or more of the provisions established in this Request for Proposal.
B. Demonstrate competence, experience, and the ability to provide the services described in this Request for Proposal.
C. Submit a response on or before the deadline and complete all required forms.
D. To fulfill a request for an oral presentation.
E. To respond to a written request for additional information.

Discussions and/or interviews may be conducted with responsible firms that have submitted proposals in order to clarify certain elements. All proposals shall be afforded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for clarification. In conducting discussions, there shall
be no disclosure of information derived from proposals submitted by competing firms. The selection shall be done by the City’s review committee and will be recommended to the City Council for final approval.

If the City is unable to reach any sort of agreement with the selected firm, the City will discontinue negotiations with the selected firm and begin negotiations with the firm ranked second and so on until an agreement is reached.

The firm to be recommended to the City Council will be the one whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the City in consideration of all the evaluation factors which are set forth in this Request for Proposal. No other factors or criteria not listed in this RFP shall be used in the evaluation.

QUESTIONS REGARDING REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS
All questions related to this Request for Proposals should be submitted in writing to Paul Zalmezak, Economic Development Manager at pzalmezak@cityofevanston.org