

VALLEY HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION dba MAT-SU HEALTH FOUNDATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Evaluator for the Mat-Su Health Foundation Scholarship Program A program of the Mat-Su Health Foundation, Healthy Futures Focus Area

1. Date of issue: September 20, 2023
2. Deadline to submit proposals: October 6, 2023, at 5:00 PM (AST)
3. Award to successful firm/agency: October 18, 2023

Mat-Su Health Foundation is requesting proposals from qualified consultants to evaluate the outcomes of the academic, vocational, and professional development scholarship programs and to determine the overall satisfaction level of the current and past scholarship recipients. Qualified, interested parties must submit a completed proposal, along with signed cover letter, electronically, by 5:00 PM, Alaska Standard Time, October 6, 2023, to:

Mat-Su Health Foundation
Attn: Vandana Ingle
Senior Program Office
vingle@healthymatsu.org

I. About Mat-Su Health Foundation

Mat-Su Health Foundation (MSHF) is the official business name of Valley Hospital Association, Inc., which shares ownership in Mat-Su Regional Medical Center (MSRMC). In this capacity, the MSHF board members and representatives actively participate in the governance of Mat-Su's community hospital and protect the community's interest in this important healthcare asset through board oversight. The MSHF invests its share of Mat-Su Regional's profits into charitable works that improve the health and wellness of Alaskans living in Mat-Su.

- Vision: A community where all persons have the opportunity for a healthy life
- Mission: To Improve the Health and Wellness of Alaskans Living in the Mat-Su
- Values: Prevention, Access, Wellness, Fairness, Leadership, Collaboration

The Mat-Su Borough is located about 50 minutes north of Anchorage in Southcentral Alaska with a population of about 107,081. The Mat-Su Borough is slightly larger than W. Virginia and it includes three incorporated cities, Palmer, Wasilla, and Houston, 26 rural/remote unincorporated communities; and two federally-recognized Alaska Native tribes.

II. Background

The Mat-Su Borough is Alaska's fastest growing region. This growth is expected to continue over the next three decades. To help meet the growing workforce needs, the MSHF offers two types of scholarships to residents of the Mat-Su Borough interested in pursuing health and human services careers. Academic Scholarships help defray the cost of higher education for students pursuing education at an accredited college, university, or medical training program. Vocational Scholarships help pay for training and certificate programs in health and human services. The foundation also provides professional development training scholarships to support the leadership, staff development, and capacity-building of Mat-Su nonprofit service providers, governmental and tribal organizations, community councils and faith-based groups.

The Foundation is a leader in driving change in health and human services workforce development in Mat-Su. The senior program officer works with educators, employers, and community stakeholders to address workforce systems challenges. The scholarship program is a tool to build a robust healthcare and human services workforce in the Mat-Su and address occupational gaps. The MSHF scholarship program experienced significant growth in the last ten years from offering three scholarships totaling \$15,000 to awarding up to 517 scholarships totaling \$1,915,873 in 2022. The proposed evaluation is intended to inform the trajectory of the scholarship program to create a strategy that meets the current occupational gaps.

The objectives of the evaluation:

- 1) To describe the scope and activities of the MSHF scholarship program from 2017 to date, such as
 - a. The number of academic, vocational, and professional development scholarships provided
 - b. Types of health care, human services, and nonprofit management careers supported
 - c. Number of scholarship recipients attending in-state or out-of-state schools
 - d. Level of education supported, for example undergraduate, graduate, or certificate
- 2) To measure the impact of the scholarship program, such as
 - a. Number of recipients returned to work in the Mat-Su after completing their education
 - b. Number of academic and vocational scholarship recipients who completed health and human services related education programs and are currently or have worked in the Mat-Su since graduating
 - c. Impact of the MSHF scholarship in supporting recipients to attend and complete college
 - d. Economic impact of the scholarship on the recipients
 - e. Workforce impact of the types of jobs currently being held by scholarship recipients working in Mat-Su and statewide
- 3) To obtain program feedback from
 - a. scholarship recipients on the application and award process
 - b. training providers, universities/colleges, and community stakeholders

III. Scope of Work

Project scope: The contractor will work with Healthy Futures, Senior Program Officer, (Scholarship) Program Associate, Director of Data and Impact, the Grants Management team, and with community stakeholders to outline then objectives, and outcomes of the scholarship evaluation. The evaluation

process should be clear, well-organized, based on best practices for both quantitative and qualitative data collection, and able to evaluate the MSHF scholarship program from 2017 to date.

- 1) ***Survey Design and Formatting:*** Survey all current and past recipients in the last five years (mail survey, followed by telephone survey for those not reached by mail), approximately 500 recipients. Collect qualitative and quantitative data through the survey of scholarship recipients. Qualitative data collection may involve interviewing scholarship recipients. The survey will assess:
 - a. Program completion
 - b. Where they are currently working and at what type of position/organization
 - c. Impact of MSHF scholarship on their training completion and job attainment
 - d. Satisfaction level with their MSHF scholarship experience
- 2) ***Executive/Stakeholder Interviews:*** In-depth interviews with key employers and training programs/university leaders to collect their feedback on MSHF scholarship programs, including, for example, impact on our community, impact on their training/employment programs, barriers to access.
- 3) ***Data Analysis:*** Review of the Mat-Su Health and Human Services Workforce Development Assessment and Plan, Mat-Su based Department of Labor and Workforce Development data, and data gathered from the National Student Clearinghouse or other databases. Analysis and evaluation of MSHF scholarship recipient data from 2017 to date.
- 4) ***Review of the MSHF Scholarship program:*** A review of how the scholarship programs fit into and support the broader health and human workforce “system” in Mat-Su using data from #2 and 3 above. Calculating the impact of the scholarship program in reducing local vacancies and creating economic mobility over time for the scholarship recipients.

IV. Deliverables

- 1) Initial meeting with Senior Program Officer and the project team to create a schedule of regular meetings to review evaluator work and timeline.
- 2) Collect information and review: project proposal, components, outcomes, objectives, activities, work plan and timeline; other documentary information including existing reports, surveys, focus group materials, health foundation research documents, most provided by the Senior Program Officer.
- 3) Determine if other data collection is needed for baseline and/or ongoing monitoring.
- 4) Identify evaluation methods that include direct contact with students regarding the scholarship program’s outcomes, e.g., surveys, phone contacts.
- 5) Design the qualitative and quantitative scholarship recipient survey.
- 6) Secure membership of the National Student Clearinghouse.
- 7) Preparation of an evaluation report that describes the evaluation process and the findings of the evaluation. The report will include tables and charts assessing recipient responses to the evaluation.
- 8) Presentation of the report to the leadership team, and the board of directors of the MSHF and other community stakeholders.

V. Budget

The proposed budget should not exceed \$100,000 for services conducted in 2023 and 2024. If the contractor is located outside of the Mat-Su Borough, Mat-Su Health Foundation shall reimburse airfare and hotel expenses incurred by the contractor in travelling in performance of the services.

Interested vendors are requested to submit a proposed cost structure based on their knowledge of the time and resources needed to complete the project as described. The proposed budget should be commensurate with the scope and complexity of the requirements outlined in this RFP. We are seeking competitive proposals that offer value for money while ensuring high-quality deliverables. Vendors are encouraged to submit detailed cost breakdowns and pricing structures that align with the proposed project plan and deliverables.

VI. Work Schedule

The contract term and work schedule set out herein represent MSHF's best estimate of the schedule that will be followed. If a component of this schedule, such as the opening date, is delayed, the rest of the schedule will likely be shifted by the same number of days.

Tasks	Due Date
RFP award	October 18, 2023
Kick-off meeting (as soon as possible but no later than) at Mat-Su Health Foundation	October 25, 2023
Presentation of the evaluation plan and timeline by no later than	November 10, 2023
Presentation of final report	February 29, 2024

VII. Proposal Format and Content

MSHF seeks simplified, cost-effective proposals. However, in order for MSHF to evaluate proposals fairly and completely, offerors must follow the format set out in this RFP and provide all information requested.

Introduction

Proposals must include the complete name and address of offeror's firm and the name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person MSHF should contact regarding the proposal. Proposals must confirm that the offeror will comply with all provisions in this RFP. Proposals must be signed by a company officer empowered to bind the company. An offeror's failure to include these items in the proposals may cause the proposal to be determined non-responsive and the proposal may be rejected.

Evaluation Approach

Describe your approach to fulfil the scope of work described above, including:

- Process for identifying and refining evaluation questions
- Proposed methodologies for data collection and analysis
- How key stakeholders will be engaged in the evaluation process

Timeline

Provide a timeline detailing key activities and deliverables.

Experience and Qualifications

Describe the experience and qualifications of the individual, team, and any subcontractors, including experience with aggregating data from multiple sources and any relevant experience in evaluating scholarship programs. Offeror must provide the following:

- A brief narrative description of offeror's organization
- Contractor information, including:
 - Names and titles of key personnel and details regarding their program evaluation experience
 - Résumés of key personnel
- Reference names and phone numbers for similar projects the contractor has completed

Cost Proposal

Cost proposal must include an itemized list of all direct and indirect costs associated with the performance of the contract, including, but not limited to, total number of hours at various hourly rates, direct expenses, and supplies. Costs should be broken out by estimated number of work hours needed, hourly rates, and direct expenses and supplies. All work except for any planned in person meetings or tasks shall be done at the contractor's work site.

VIII. Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be weighed in evaluating the proposals for each response:

- Suitability of the proposal (15 points): The proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Evaluation approach and Timeline (35 points): Methodology suitable for this project and thoughtful presentation of a feasible timeline.
- Competency and experience (30 points): The contractor has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- Value/pricing structure (20 points): The price is commensurate with the value offered by the contractor.

IX. Additional Instructions

Location of Work

The work is to be performed, completed, and managed at the contractor's site and at locations where the stakeholders convene. MSHF will not provide workspace for the contractor. The contractor must provide its own workspace. Most meetings shall be by phone or Zoom. Allowance for travel costs for one trip/year for any contractors located outside of the Mat-Su Borough.

Right of Rejection

Offerors must comply with all the terms of the RFP, and all applicable local, state, and federal laws, codes, and regulations. MSHF may reject any proposal that does not comply with all the material and substantial terms, conditions, and performance requirements of the RFP. Offerors may not qualify the proposal nor restrict the rights of MSHF. If an offeror does, MSHF may find the proposal to be a non-responsive counter-offer and reject the proposal. Minor informalities that do not affect responsiveness

and/or change the meaning/scope of the RFP may be waived by MSHF. MSHF reserves the right to refrain from making an award if it determines that to be in its best interest.

MSHF Not Responsible for Preparation Costs

MSHF will not pay any cost associated with preparation, submittal, or presentation of any proposal.

Disclosure of Proposal Contents

All proposals and other material submitted become the property of MSHF and may be returned only at MSHF's option. All proposal information will be held in confidence during the evaluation process and prior to the time a Notice of Intent to Award is issued. Trade secrets and other proprietary data contained in proposals may be held confidential if the offeror requests, in writing and that MSHF agrees, in writing, to do so. Material considered confidential by the offeror must be clearly identified, and the offeror must include a brief statement that sets out the reasons for confidentiality.

Offeror's Certification

By signature on the proposal, offerors certify that they comply with:

- (a) the laws of the State of Alaska;
- (b) the applicable portion of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- (c) the Equal Opportunity Act and the regulations issued thereunder by the federal government;
- (d) the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations issued thereunder by the federal government;
- (e) all terms and conditions set out in this RFP;
- (f) a condition that the proposal submitted was independently arrived at, without collusion, under penalty of perjury; and
- (g) that the offers will remain open and valid for at least 30 days.

By signature on the proposal, offerors also certify that programs, services, and activities provided to the general public under the resulting contract conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the regulations issued thereunder by the federal government.

If any offeror fails to comply with (a) through (g) of this paragraph, MSHF reserves the right to disregard the proposal, terminate the contract, or consider the contractor in default.

Conflict of Interest

Each proposal shall include a statement indicating whether or not the firm or any individuals working on the contract has a possible conflict of interest and, if so, the nature of that conflict. MSHF reserves the right to cancel the award if any interest disclosed from any source could either give the appearance of a conflict or cause speculation as to the objectivity of the program to be developed by the offeror. MSHF's determination regarding any questions of conflict of interest shall be final.

Discussions with Offerors

MSHF will answer written questions pertaining to this RFP sent via email to vingle@healthymatsu.org submitted prior to September 29, 2023, at 5:00 PM (AST). The answers to these questions will be posted to the foundation's website on September 25, 2023, at 5:00 PM. Additionally, the MSHF may conduct discussions with offerors in order to determine if a proposal is reasonably susceptible for award.

Such discussions between the offeror and MSHF staff are permitted to clarify uncertainties or eliminate confusion concerning the contents of a proposal and which do not result in a material or substantive change to the proposal.

MSHF may also conduct discussions with offerors for the purpose of ensuring full understanding of the requirements of the RFP and proposal. Discussions will be limited to specific sections of the RFP or proposal identified by MSHF. Discussions will only be held with offerors who have submitted a proposal deemed reasonably susceptible for award by MSHF. If modifications are made as a result of these discussions, they will be put in writing. Following discussions, MSHF may set a time for best and final proposal submissions from those offerors with whom discussions were held. Proposals may be reevaluated after receipt of best and final proposal submissions.

If an offeror does not submit a best and final proposal or a notice of withdrawal, the offeror's immediate previous proposal is considered the offeror's best and final proposal.

Offerors with a disability needing accommodation may contact MSHF prior to the date set for discussions so that reasonable accommodation can be made. Any oral modification of a proposal should be reduced to writing by the offeror.

Alaska Business License and Other Required Licenses

Prior to work initiating and any payments made, the selected firm must hold a valid Alaska business license and any necessary applicable professional licenses required by Alaska Statute.

Proposed Payment Procedures

MSHF will make payments based on a negotiated payment schedule. Each billing may not exceed 40% of the contract amount and must consist of an invoice and progress report. No payment will be made until the progress report and invoice have been approved by the Executive Director. MSHF will retain 20% of the contract amount until the contract is successfully completed.