Overview

Trailhead Institute, the administrative home for the Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger, offers this Request for Proposals (RFP) to respondents who are interested in serving as the lobbying partner for the Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger. This request for proposals will be for one year, with a possibility of extension for the full five-year period.

Background

The Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger is a multi-year plan to end hunger for all Coloradans. It was developed, with funding from the Colorado Health Foundation, by individuals and organizations from across the state who are addressing or experiencing hunger in their own homes and communities.

Key elements of the plan include efforts to:

- **Maximize enrollment** of income-eligible Coloradans in both the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Women, Infants, and Children Food and Nutrition Service (WIC), which focuses on mothers and children under five years of age.
- **Increase participation** in Federal Child Nutrition programs.
- **Grow the number** of Coloradans who can access the food they need in their communities.
- **Develop a groundswell** of Coloradans advocating to end hunger in our state.

The Blueprint is currently transitioning from development and planning to implementation. These efforts are supported through funding from the Colorado Health Foundation, with the intent to bring in additional funders as the work progresses. The Colorado Health Foundation contracted with Trailhead Institute (Trailhead) to serve as the Program Office to facilitate the process of moving the Blueprint’s aspirational goals into action. In this role, Trailhead serves as the administrative point of coordination for implementation efforts.

To achieve the goals and strategies outlined in the Blueprint, numerous organizations and individuals across Colorado have joined four goal-focused workgroups based on their areas of expertise or interest. Trailhead coordinates the logistics and multi-sector collaboration for these workgroups. A Governing Council serves as the oversight body for the project.

The Blueprint Lobbying Contractor will work directly with Trailhead through the Blueprint Program Office and the Governing Council to support a policy agenda for the 2020 legislative session and help to prepare and support a policy agenda for future legislative sessions.

Objectives of the Evaluation

The overarching goals for the 2020 legislative session are as follows:
• Work to advance the Blueprint’s policy agenda for 2020: one already identified priority is to increase funding for SNAP Outreach, focused specifically on the intersection between SNAP enrollment and educational outcomes.

• Assess progress towards a joint policy agenda, helping to coordinating lobbyists from across the different stakeholders to ensure advancement of the entire policy agenda.

• Work with the legislative policy team for Workgroup 4 to identify potential avenues to make steps towards increasing the minimum benefit for SNAP and WIC for the 2021 legislative session.

• Attend regularly scheduled meetings, as well as additional meetings needed for legislation or other policy matters.

• Participate in the monthly policy workgroup, which is currently being led by Hunger Free Colorado, but which will move to fall under the Blueprint sometime in late 2019 or early 2020.

• Help members reach out to elected officials and candidates in their area, including scheduling, set up, preparation of materials, attendance when possible, and any necessary follow-up.

• Produce an updated bill list prior to the regularly scheduled policy committee meetings which will include legislation affecting food security and hunger in Colorado.

• Provide monthly email updates to all members regarding legislative, policy and budget issues.

• Update and distribute the fact sheets describing purpose and membership of the Blueprint to End Hunger to key stakeholders, including legislators and legislative staff.

• Plan and organize visits to the state Capitol. Will handle logistical details, assuring communications and meetings with legislators.

• Provide support in the planning of a joint day at the capitol for Blueprint stakeholders.

• Provide guidance, support and direction in the public policy process.

• Communicate regularly with the Policy Committee chair and the Policy and Communications Manager for the Blueprint.

• Work with the Policy Committee and membership to identify legislative priorities to be lobbied during each legislative session. Determine specific responsibilities with committee chairperson, members and director.

• Serve as a thought partner for the Policy and Communications Manager regarding state board rules that impact hunger, with the Policy and Communications Manager leading this work.

• Facilitate communication and coordination between the state agencies regarding policy and funding issues.

• Facilitate communication and coordination between other organizations with complimentary missions and legislative agendas.

• Work with other key lobbyists as necessary to support mutual legislative objectives.

• For those bills identified as top priorities, will conduct a variety of activities to assure successful passage, including identifying bill and amendment sponsors, preparing those sponsors, scheduling and preparing witnesses, preparing fact sheets, arranging member communication with key legislators, preparing bill drafts and amendments, negotiating with other lobbyists and organizations, and other related activities necessary to achieve org’s goals.

• Represent the positions of the Blueprint to End Hunger to the General Assembly, other lobbyists, and other potential partners or adversaries on key legislation.

• Educate members of the Colorado General Assembly about the Blueprint to End Hunger and the necessity of ending hunger in Colorado.
Budget and Contract

The budget for the first year of this work should fall within $25,000-$30,000 including all fees and expenses.

Responding to the Request for Qualifications

Given the firms, groups or individuals must have experience in the following areas:

1. Success in advancing legislation for their clients, specifically in the social needs space.
2. Experience working with large-scale collaborative projects.
3. Outstanding reputation with legislators and clients.
4. Excellent communication, reporting, and interpersonal skills.
5. Understanding of food security and its impact is preferred, but not required.

Proposal responses are due by Monday, October 21st by 5:00pm and should address the following (proposals should not exceed five pages):

- Project plan, timeline and budget for providing work outlined in the Scope. The price quoted should be inclusive.
- Brief description of company’s lobbying services experience, approach and management.
- List of three current client and/or legislative references.
- Names, credentials and experience of the project team that will be assigned to the Blueprint to End Hunger.
- Other services provided for all your clients – such as newsletters, use of office space etc.
- Response to the question: Do you have any perceived or real conflicts of interest?
- Primary contact name, email and phone number.

How to Apply

This RFQ includes the following phases:

- Proposal Deadline: Monday, October 21st, 5:00 (MDT)
- Invitation to participate in interview to top proposals: Wednesday, October 23rd
- Interviews take place at Trailhead Institute on October 28th from 9-1
- Award Announcement: Wednesday, October 30th

Please send the proposal electronically in Microsoft Word or PDF format to Erin Ulric, Implementation Director, eulric@endhungerco.org, (303) 974-8427. You may also send any questions about the RFQ or process to Erin as well.

Terms and Conditions

Application Rejection: Trailhead Institute reserves the right to reject any or all applications and to waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received and to accept any portion of an application or all items proposed if deemed in the best interest of the Trailhead Institute.
Modification or Withdrawal of Applications

Applications may be modified or withdrawn prior to the established deadline.

Expenses

Trailhead Institute is not liable for the costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP.

Review

The review will identify the applications that most effectively meet the requirements of this RFP. The work will be offered to the contractor whose application conforming to the RFP will be most advantageous to the Trailhead Institute, price and other factors considered. Women, people of color, and LGBTQ-led organizations are highly encouraged to apply.