



Program Review and Strategic Planning Request for Proposals

Better Way Foundation is a private family foundation that works with partners to build a future where child well-being contributes to strong families and communities. We fund Indigenous Early Childhood Education in three specific geographies (Minnesota, New Mexico, and South Dakota); the American Indian Catholic Schools Network; and early childhood development in Tanzania. In addition, and as an outgrowth of our partnerships across Indian Country, we have one active partnership focused on truth and healing in Indian Country.

For more information about Better Way Foundation, please see our [website](#), including our mission, vision, and statement of values available [here](#).

Better Way Foundation seeks proposals from contractor(s) with demonstrated experience conducting organizational and program evaluation and who hold expertise in application of findings to facilitating strategic planning processes. The Foundation seeks contractor(s) to conduct an expedited, targeted evaluation of the foundation's processes, programs, and impact. The contractor will use findings from the evaluation to inform facilitation of a strategic planning process.

Key Deliverables: 1) summative evaluation report for three audiences: Foundation/Board of Directors, Partners, General Public; 2) facilitation of process for development of 5-year strategic plan.

Objectives

- To describe investment and impact across three priority grant making programs and their respective alignment with the foundation's values and mission
- To demonstrate scope of readiness, processes, and established, sustainable systems across partner sites
- To examine alignment of BWF's program approach (framework, theory of change, and knowledge assets) and program activities with mission/values, impact and investment
- To generate key strategic areas of work that will inform BWF 5 year strategic plan
 - To inform BWF resource allocation and prioritization.
 - To inform BWF potential new areas of focus
 - To inform BWF program approach and key domains of work
 - To inform BWF operational priorities
 - To inform BWF continued engagement with partners

Key Questions

- What is the nature and scope of the Foundation's impact on early childhood development in Indian Country and Tanzania, and on the American Indian Catholic School Network and its members?

- On a continuum of programming and impact, to what degree are investments in current partnerships yielding progress toward sustainable impact and programming? What are key indicators of sustainability?
- In what ways are the current areas of focus and priorities reflective of need for support?
- To what extent are critical changes to program engagement required to ensure progress toward Foundation's exit (responsible end of partnership)? How might the foundation strategically approach the balance between deep, long-term partnerships and the need to be intentional and transparent about exit strategies?
- What are the distinctive phases of work required to move partners from meeting initial needs to having sustainable impact?
- How can the foundation best balance different approaches to supporting its partners, along a spectrum from passive support to hands-on technical assistance, keeping in mind BWF staffing levels?
- In what ways are the current investments in partnerships yielding opportunities to scale and expand partnerships in new geographic areas, countries, communities?
- What are examples of partner innovations, foundation activities and national contributions to early childhood development, policy, and community change?
- What does the Foundation desire to accomplish operationally, programmatically, and fiscally?
- What are key themes and areas of focus that require attention within the next 1-2 years
- What are key findings and areas focus that require attention within the next 3-5 years?

Program Review and Strategic Planning

Anticipated Activities

1. In partnership with BWF staff, and in regular consultation with the strategic review task force of the BWF board of directors, develop a comprehensive understanding of BWF's programs and partnerships to understand the foundation's work to date, strengthen BWF's strategy to impact community, and inform staff and board decisions about future goals, priorities, and foundation activities.
 - a. Conduct document review of:
 - i. key strategy documents;
 - ii. partner reports;
 - iii. BWF theories of change (Indigenous ECD & Tanzanian ECD);
 - iv. Financial investments in partnerships
 - v. staff memos; and
 - vi. other relevant documents.
 - b. Conduct one-on-one and group interviews with BWF staff (executive director and program manager, multiple times), selected board members, and 15-25 external partners/resource people (in-person/phone/video, as appropriate) to understand BWF's approach and impact, capture promising practices and

successful approaches, identify opportunities to enhance impact, and provide insight into potential pathways toward achievement of greater future impact.

- c. Attendance at May 14 BWF board meeting (8:30-11:30 a.m. CST, Wayzata, MN)
 - d. Attendance and participation in Indigenous ECD cohort meeting (Rapid City & Pine Ridge, SD), June 11-12, 2020.
2. Facilitate BWF strategic plan for 2021-26.

Deliverables

Description	Due date
Document Review and Interview Protocols - provide draft of document review process, and protocol and interview questions	April 10, 2020
Memo – initial observations and emerging themes and questions, to be prepared for discussion with BWF board of directors at May 14 board meeting	May 5, 2020
Review report , including executive summary, presenting highlights, observations on impact, emerging lessons; questions to guide ongoing and future program activities; and strategic recommendations for next 5 years	June 30, 2020
Strategic Planning Process , informed by review report	August 31, 2020
Presentation to board at September board of directors meeting (via video)	September 2020

Deliverables may be further defined and/or altered during the scope of the agreement as determined and needed during the process.

Timeframe, level of effort, and payment

This consultancy is estimated for a level of effort of approximately 40-60 days from the period of March 30, 2020 through September 30, 2020. The consultant must provide invoices and submit completed deliverables before payment will be issued. The consultant is encouraged to invoice against the activities outlined above.

Please respond with questions or bids to Mercedes Plendl at mplendl@betterwayfoundation.org by March 13, 2020.