



## **Request for Proposal For Community Needs Assessment for Fayetteville Public Library**

September 1, 2021

### **PURPOSE**

This proposal is for services to assist Fayetteville Public Library (FPL) in conducting a community needs assessment with the goal of identifying unmet community needs. The assessment will act as a guide in strategic planning and development of services designed to increase inclusivity of services and the library's patron-base.

### **CONTRACT PERIOD**

November 2021 – July 2022

### **FAYETTEVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY BACKGROUND**

In the years since its opening in 1916, Fayetteville Public Library (FPL) has transformed and empowered its community through free and public access to knowledge. Awarded the prestigious Library of the Year by Library Journal in 2005 as well as an LEED Silver-NC rating from the U.S. Green Building Council, FPL has set the standard for innovation and community building for modern public libraries.

FPL offers over 100 programs each month for children, teens, and adults on top of a vast collection of over 390,000 books, audiovisual items, equipment, and tools. FPL currently serves more than 74,000 cardholders in the Northwest Arkansas area. In 2019 alone, FPL was visited an average of 185 times per hour, and patrons checked out over 1.3 million library materials, proving that FPL is the central gathering point for the entire community to learn, connect, and explore.

Despite recent extenuating circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, FPL continues daily provision of crucial free resources to its 74,219 cardholders with tireless flexibility and limited-service interruptions. FPL has worked hard to create innovative solutions to pandemic-related obstacles, including curbside materials pick-up, grab-and-go browsing, public Wi-Fi hotspots, and consistent virtual programming and services. During



the 2020 fiscal year, a remarkable 601,134 physical materials were circulated, and over 40,000 people tuned in to daily online programming.

In early 2021, FPL opened a 103,000 square foot expansion that more than doubled the size of the library. The expansion included an increase to the children's and teen libraries; a Center for Innovation with audio and video recording studios, virtual reality labs, a simulation lab, fabrication lab, and robotics lab; a teaching kitchen; an art and movement room; and a 700-seat multipurpose event space. All of the new services and spaces are free for community members to utilize and explore.

In recent years, FPL has put much focus into a Multicultural Engagement Initiative, a project that included hiring an outreach liaison to develop outreach programs and services to engage underserved populations and implement multilingual programming held at the library. In 2020, FPL staff completed a 9-month DEI training program which resulted in a diversity, equity, and inclusion implementation plan.

Since then, FPL has focused on ensuring internal practices are inclusive while providing trainings for library leadership and staff on unconscious biases. Through this work, the Library has identified and is committed to following goals:

- Hire, retain, and grow our diverse talent at all levels and develop and prepare a pipeline of diverse candidates who are ready for next level leadership assignments.
- Work to ensure that every employee feels welcome and included at the Fayetteville Public Library.
- Represent our patron community in diversity and mindset, protect their intellectual freedom, and support them in literary advancement opportunities.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The qualified proposer will be responsible for the coordination, research, writing, and presentation of a fully completed and comprehensive Community Needs Assessment with a focus on data gathering and analysis.

The proposer will write and perform data analysis that is easily understood by multiple audiences, collect quantitative, demographic data from multiple, relevant sources, and through coordination with FPL, collect quantitative and qualitative data through a variety of ways including, but not limited to, focus groups, interviews, community forums, patron



surveys, etc. Documentation and data summaries will be included with final reports, and the results of the assessment will be presented to Library leadership.

At a minimum, the following items should be included as components of the Community Assessment:

1. Comprehensive analysis of the Fayetteville, Arkansas community, including census tract and block, zip code, Ward, neighborhood cluster, and any other geographic level data deemed appropriate.
2. Demographic make-up of potentially eligible library patrons including their geographic location and racial/ethnic composition.
3. Participation and information from community groups who are not current library patrons.
4. Library patron satisfaction data.
5. Input gathered from key sectors (i.e. community organizations, faith groups, private sector, public sector, and education).
6. Assessment of assets and barriers for access to library services.
7. Unmet information needs in the community.
8. Strategies for reaching unserved community members.
9. Recommended locations best served by FPL Bookmobile and pop-up libraries.
10. Recommended customer service/library experiences that provide welcoming and equitable services and experiences to people visiting the library.
11. Opportunities to support diverse communities and new audiences through library collections and programming.
12. Potential community partner organizations.
13. Data analysis and identification of areas of greatest community needs.
14. Key findings section to the final report.

## PROPOSAL CONTENT

Interested parties should submit the following:

- Contact information (Legal name, address, phone, email, and year firm was established)
- Qualifications and related experience.
- An organizational chart indicating the roles of all individuals and company/organization involved in this project.



- Resumes for all relevant team members.
- Proposed scope of work and plan to accomplish the work.
- Schedule or timeline for project.
- Project budget, including budget narrative that details each line item.
- At least three references with contact information (email and phone).

Successful applicants will clearly demonstrate the following:

- Proven knowledge of and successful implementation of Community Needs Assessments.
- Familiarity with the Fayetteville, Arkansas community.
- Access to data gathering and analysis resources and software.
- Ability to communicate effectively with diverse and multilingual audiences.
- Knowledge of governmental agencies, public libraries, and nonprofit organizations.
- Open communication throughout the duration of the contract. Communicate expectations prior to visits and follow-up after. Ongoing communication and feedback between visits.
- Experienced and effective meeting facilitators.
- Flexibility.
- The accepted vendor/contractor shall provide insurance certificates evidencing the required coverages and must be authorized to do business in Arkansas.

#### **TIMELINE**

The project cycle will begin November 2021 and be completed by July 2022.

The selected consultant will be notified by October 15, 2021.

Letters of Proposal are due by **5pm CST on October 1, 2021** to Fayetteville Public Library, Attention: Willow Fitzgibbon, 401 W Mountain Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Any questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Willow Fitzgibbon (wfitzgibbon@faylib.org) at Fayetteville Public Library.