

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

### CENTERING DIVERSE HEALERS FOR YOUTH WELL-BEING 2024BSK653RFP

---

RFP Release Date: **September 6, 2024**

---

Due Date: **October 18, 2024 by 5:00 p.m.**

---

RFP Lead **Phil Thompson PhiThompson@KingCounty.gov**

---

Funding: **Up to \$1,500,000 in PHSKC**

---

[Submitting a Proposal](#) Proposals are hereby solicited and will be received using the link below through ZoomGrants no later than 5:00 p.m. on the due date noted above. The services procured through this RFP shall be provided in accordance with the following and the attached instructions, requirements and specifications. Applicants are responsible for regularly checking ZoomGrants for any updates, clarifications or amendments to this RFP.

### **Submit proposals through ZoomGrants at:**

<https://www.zoomgrants.com/gprop.asp?donorid=2209&limited=5415>

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	
I. Introduction .....	3
A. Division/Funding Source.....	3
Best Starts for Kids/Public-Health Seattle & King County Health Sciences Division with funding from Department of Community and Human Services/Behavioral Health and Recovery Division.....	3
B. Equity and Social Justice.....	3
II. RFP Overview.....	4
A. Program Purpose Statement.....	4
B. Background.....	5
C. The Request.....	7
III. Eligibility.....	9
IV. Available Funding.....	10
V. RFP Process.....	10
A. Timeline.....	10
B. Questions.....	11
C. Information Session (not mandatory).....	11
D. Communication .....	11
VI. Proposal Process .....	12
VII. Application Assistance.....	13
VIII. Selection Process.....	13
A. Rating Criteria .....	13
B. Review Process .....	16
C. Selection Process.....	16
D. Funding Allocation and Contract Negotiations .....	16
IX. Glossary of Terms .....	16
X. RFP and Contract Terms .....	17
A. RFP Terms.....	17
B. Contract Terms .....	18
C. Qualitative Data.....	20
D. Narrative Reports.....	20
E. Public Records Act.....	20

F. American with Disabilities Act.....	21
G. Language Accessibility.....	21
XI. List of Attachments .....	21

# I. Introduction

Public Health - Seattle & King County (PHSKC), in collaboration with King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) Behavioral Health and Recovery Division (BHRD), is pleased to release this Request for Proposal (RFP) for Strategy with funding from Best Starts for Kids (Best Starts) and MIDD.

[Best Starts for Kids](#) is King County’s community-driven initiative to support every baby born and child raised in King County to be happy, healthy, safe, and thriving. Initially approved by voters in 2015 and in place since 2016, Best Starts invests in comprehensive supports for children, youth, young adults, and families and caregivers, catalyzing strong starts in early childhood, and sustaining those gains as children progress to adulthood. Best Starts was renewed by voters in August 2021. Implementation of Best Starts is guided by the Best Starts Implementation Plan, approved by the King County Council in November 2021 for Levy 2022-27.

[King County's MIDD](#) is a countywide 0.1 percent sales tax generating about \$180 million per biennium, specifically for programs and services for people living with, or at risk of, behavioral health conditions. The MIDD sales tax was initially authorized by the King County Council in 2007 and was renewed in late 2016 for nine more years. King County’s MIDD fund is managed and operated by the King County DCHS BHRD.

This project seeks to fund organizations, groups, and entities with close ties to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, and Intersex (LGBTQI+) communities and will include outcomes such as increasing access to mental health resources and trainings, improving retention for youth serving organizations that support youth mental health, and increasing support for diverse providers who serve youth mental health.

## A. Division/Funding Source

Best Starts for Kids/Public-Health Seattle & King County Health Sciences Division with funding from Department of Community and Human Services/Behavioral Health and Recovery Division.

## B. Equity and Social Justice

For many in our region, King County is a great place to live, learn, work and play. Yet we have deep and persistent inequities - especially by race and place - that in many cases are getting worse and threaten our collective prosperity. In 2020 Executive Constantine [declared racism as a public health crisis](#) and set forth policy priorities to bolster King County’s commitment to being intentionally anti-racist and accountable to Black, Indigenous People, and People of Color. Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) is an integrated part of the County’s work and foundational to the work of Best Starts. Our goal is to ensure that all people, regardless of who they are and

where they live, have the opportunity to thrive, with full and equal access to opportunities, power, and resources.

For all Best Starts-funded programs, we seek to support community-led and community-informed organizations that are reflective of and embedded in the communities they serve across all aspects of their leadership and service. We further seek to support organizations that recognize and address the disparities that exist in our communities, particularly agencies that serve low-income families, families of color, immigrant, and refugee families, LGBTQ families, families with disabilities, families with foster children, and those geographically isolated – furthering Best Starts’ commitment to equity.

Applicants may be asked to demonstrate an understanding and a commitment to the principles of equity and social justice as shown through their staffing and their board, services tailored to community need and commitment to social justice and continuous improvement. One aspect of this work includes understanding – at both a program and system level – structural and institutional racism as it plays out for individuals served through Best Starts-funded services, and the disparate impacts on individuals’ collective experiences and outcomes compared to the population as a whole.

More information about King County’s ESJ work is available at:  
<https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice.aspx>

## II. RFP Overview

### A. Program Purpose Statement

This project will be led by Best Starts for Kids’ and PHSKC’s Community Well-Being Initiative in partnership with the DCHS Behavioral Health and Recovery Division’s Behavioral Health Workforce Investments team. The Well-Being Initiative is a strategy within Best Starts 2.0 and builds community capacity to share resources and deliver culturally relevant programming on emotional health and wellbeing to reduce stigma associated with mental health topics and reinforce compassion, connection, and care in communities.

The Behavioral Health and Recovery Division’s (BHRD) Workforce Investment Team is dedicated to strengthening King County’s behavioral health workforce. In collaboration with various partners, the team designs and implements strategies to address workforce challenges, aligning with national evidence-based practices. The BHRD Workforce Strategy Workplan focuses on attracting, retaining, and building a robust and diverse workforce, with at least 25 percent of funding aimed at increasing representativeness. The strategy aims to improve workforce stability, enhance diversity and inclusion, support professional development, and foster cross-sector collaboration, ultimately leading to better mental health outcomes for the community.

#### **This funding opportunity seeks to:**

1. Increase access to youth well-being and mental health supports.
2. Improve retention of a diverse workforce that supports youth mental health, especially for BIPOC and/or LGBTQ young people.
3. Increase support for providers who reflect the experiences of young people seeking support.

Nationwide, youth mental health challenges, including in King County, have become a growing concern, disproportionately impacting Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer (LGBTQ+) youth. **The lack of diversity within the workforce is a significant barrier to accessing quality services for these youth.** Identified challenges include insufficient compensation, limited diversity, curriculum issues, experiences of racism and discrimination, and a lack of mentorship opportunities. Accreditation, licensing, and credentialing also pose challenges for providers. These issues have also impacted other fields that support youth. To see a detailed list of or focus populations, you can refer to the **Background Section**.

Our goal is to center diverse communities in entering, accessing support and resources, and increasing representation within the broader youth mental health and healing fields. We recognize that community holds experience and expertise in developing creative solutions tailored for them, by them. This project will include outcomes such as increasing access to mental health resources and trainings, improving retention for youth serving organizations that support youth mental health, and increasing support for diverse providers who provide youth mental health and well-being services and supports.

## **B. Background**

### **1. The Data and Context**

This funding opportunity is intended to support a broad set of individuals and organizations to increase the retention and well-being of a diverse workforce invested in youth mental health and well-being. Young people who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual are twice as likely as their straight peers to experience persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, [according to CDC data](#), while young people who are transgender are twice as likely to attempt suicide compared to their peers, [according to a study published in the Journal of Adolescent Health](#). Young people who were Black or Latinx/a/o, were about 14% less likely than their white peers to receive treatment for depression, [according to research by Mental Health America](#). The same research shows that young people who are Indigenous, Black, or Latinx/a/o are more likely to attempt suicide than their white peers. There is a clear need to increase support for diverse young people and to increase the retention and support of diverse workers supporting BIPOC and LGBTQIA youth.

This funding opportunity is also informed by focus groups with local BIPOC & LGBTQ providers who shared their challenges and recommendations for actions to help them overcome barriers in their education and careers, as well as additional local and national data including the following points:

- [Healthy Youth Survey](#) and School-Based SBIRT data show significant disparities in behavioral health related challenges for BIPOC and LGBTQ young people in King County.
- Nationally, more than 80% of mental health counselors are white<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity : U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics \(bls.gov\)](#)

- According to [WA Sentinel Network](#), since 2013 there have been increases in individuals pursuing degrees in BH, but retention has been challenging due to work location preference, low pay and benefits, and need for supervisors.
- In the [2024/2025 CHNA](#) report, King County communities identified access to mental and behavioral health providers for adults and youth as one of the top priorities and called out the lack of culturally aligned providers and increasing mental health needs for young people.

In 2022 King County programs serving children and youth convened to discuss emerging priorities and potential collaboration related to youth behavioral health. Across programs, diversity and representation in the youth behavioral health workforce emerged as key concern from our communities that was impacting programs and the youth that they serve. To better understand the current context and needs in our community, the group supported [a landscape assessment of diverse youth-serving behavioral health providers and healers in King County](#). The project included literature review and focus groups with BIPOC and/or LGBTQ providers serving BIPOC and/or LGBTQ young people in King County, and findings informed recommendations for the County<sup>2</sup>.

## 2. Mental Health Workforce Challenges

This funding opportunity addresses one piece of much larger, systemic challenges facing our region’s workforce. The youth behavioral health workforce in King County is facing a critical shortage that significantly impacts the community's ability to access essential mental health and substance use disorder services. According to the Federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the nation is projected to have only 69 percent of the necessary mental health counselors, 62 percent of substance use disorder counselors, 73 percent of psychologists, and 54 percent of psychiatrists by 2032. This shortage mirrors trends across the United States and poses a significant challenge to meeting the growing demand for behavioral health care.

A 2021 survey conducted by the King County Integrated Care Network (KCICN) revealed that job vacancies in community behavioral health agencies were double the number seen in 2019. By October 2023, this issue had exacerbated, with approximately 600 staff vacancies reported across surveyed agencies, representing a 16 percent total vacancy rate. The challenges of recruiting and retaining master-level licensed mental health clinicians are particularly pronounced, impacting the county's ability to provide timely and effective care.

Workforce retention is also a significant concern. A February 2023 poll of healthcare workers in Washington State, including behavioral health professionals, highlighted that 80 percent of workers felt burned out, and nearly half were likely to leave their positions within a few years. Factors contributing to this include rising housing and childcare costs, inadequate wages, and significant student loan debt. When community behavioral health agencies cannot offer competitive wages and benefits, high turnover, and chronic vacancies result, further straining the system.

---

<sup>2</sup> [Experiences of Diverse Youth Mental Health Providers in King County — Communities Count](#)

### 3. Who This is for?

We recognize that community, especially diverse youth, can heal in a myriad of ways. Young people can access support from many individuals and trusted adults. This project seeks to support those who support youth mental health and well-being, and is inclusive of many individuals including but not limited to:

- Licensed providers working in nontraditional roles or non-Medicaid funded entities.
- Unlicensed mental health workers including cultural healers, energy workers, coaches, and others.
- Youth development workers that support youth well-being and/or are interested in growing their capacity to support youth mental health and well-being.
- Youth advocates and volunteers.
- Advisors, mentors, credible messengers, and others who support youth or student well-being.
- Individuals who work at community centers or other gathering places and support youth well-being.
- Restorative justice practitioners who support youth well-being.
- Providers and mental health supporters working in underrepresented areas of King County.
- Providers and mental health supporters serving youth in underserved age groups.
- Diverse providers with deep ties to BIPOC and/or LGBTQIA communities or who are serving BIPOC and/or LGBTQIA+ youth who experience greater mental health disparities.

This list is an example, and we recognize that not all professions were included. We welcome organizations that are aligned with our scope of work and outcomes such as increasing access to mental health trainings and development for staff, improving retention for youth serving organizations that support youth mental health, and increasing support for diverse providers who provide youth mental health and well-being services and supports.

## C. The Request

### 1. Scope of Work

We encourage creative ideas and approaches that support diverse youth mental health providers, healers, and wellness supporters connected to LGBTQIA and BIPOC communities and support retention of diverse providers, healers, and general supporters of youth mental health within the field. Given this broad definition, the scope of work is flexible and will vary depending on the applicant and their strengths. We believe that community is best positioned to recognize the solutions that will best benefit their communities.

The scope of work may include or incorporate some of the recommendations that our team has received from community stakeholders including:

#### **Community, Belonging, and Mentorship**

- Implement mental health education, outreach, and mentorship programming for staff.
- Support professional mentorship of providers and healers within your organization.

#### **Financial Support**

- Create a project to provide funding for unpaid internships within your organization.
- Set up an initiative to provide funding for continuing education credits or other professional trainings.

### **Partnership, Collaboration, and Resources**

- Implement support and opportunities to paraprofessionals, alternative and cultural healers.
- Partner with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and/or educational institutions to fund supports on licensure exam, application, internship and continuing education preparation and navigation.
- Create a sustainable resource inventory of BIPOC and LGBTQ+ providers, youth mental health support organizations, and programs in King County.

**These are merely examples**, and we welcome all sorts of ideas that can contribute to our goals of supporting and retaining a diverse workforce of providers, healers, and youth mental health supporters.

### **2. Investment Area(s)**

Community Well-Being is an investment area that will build community capacity to share resources and deliver culturally relevant programming on emotional health and wellbeing in order to reduce stigma associated with mental health topics and reinforce compassion, connection, and care in communities. It falls under our Sustaining the Gain strategy, which directs resources to our young people ages 5 – 24, so that young people have equitable opportunities to be safe, healthy, and thriving.

This project will provide resources and support to diverse mental health providers, healers, and other supportive adults advancing solutions that improve mental health and connect young people to mental health resources.

### **3. Focus Population(s)**

The applicants should demonstrate that they have deep connection to BIPOC and/or LGBTQ populations in King County and are able to support young people from these communities and backgrounds. Additionally, organizations should have a strong emphasis on supporting diverse BIPOC and LGBTQ providers, healers, and youth mental health supporters.

### **4. Outcomes**

We have recognized that access to quality support and mental health resources have impacted youth across King County. Compounding this issue is a lack of representation within the mental health field. According to national data, 4 in 5 mental health counselors are white<sup>3</sup>. This issue of access also impacts diverse individuals who work with youth or are interested in pursuing careers in the behavioral health field. Thus, our goals are focused on two levels: to see shifts in how youth can access services, which is a longer-term outcome. But our short-term goals and the focus of this project is to see an increase in diversity, equity, and retention within the behavioral health field and other fields that also impact youth well-being. Below are our outcomes with example activities listed below them.

### **Outcome One: Increasing Access**

---

<sup>3</sup> [Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity : U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage1.pdf)



- Make information about career pathways into the youth well-being and helping field more accessible.
- Increase access to culturally relevant supports and trainings.
- Increase access to and understanding of how to navigate licensure process.
- Provide more information on various mental supports and ways to support youth mental health, especially for non-licensed staff.

### **Outcome Two: Improving Retention**

- Create goals/programming that address issues of lack of representation, feelings of isolation, and other equity concerns of those interested in the field.
- Track staff well-being and sense of belonging.
- Have student support services like programming, safe space/community and wrap around supports to increase retention within the field.

### **Outcome Three: Increasing Support**

- Support diverse individuals who are interested in pursuing careers in supporting youth well-being.
- Increase professional development opportunities.
- Create supports for early career diverse individuals in navigating the licensure, credentialing, and training process.
- Create mentorship opportunities for diverse providers and youth wellness supporters.

### **Potential Long-Term Impacts on Workforce, Equity, and Diversity**

Our hope is to see longer term impacts because of the activities and outcomes above, some examples may include:

- Better sense of belonging for diverse BIPOC and/or LGBTQ mental health providers and other wellness supporters.
- Increased access to mental health supports for diverse youth.
- Increase in understanding how to use culturally relevant supports for youth.
- Ability to deliver supports and services in languages that are accessible to diverse communities.
- More support and mentorship for diverse providers and youth wellness supporters.
- Increased collaboration with BH providers outside traditional BH settings for feedback.
- Increase in retention within the field.

## **III. Eligibility**

This request is open to nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, tribes and tribal organizations, for-profit entities, and public or governmental agencies. Eligible applicants must be providing services related to mental health, healing, or wellness, with a focus on serving communities within King County. **Small nonprofits and community-based organizations are encouraged to submit proposals.**

We acknowledge that youth, with mental health needs may also have co-occurring substance use disorder (SUD) needs. Therefore, proposals may include SUD support as well.

We are also prioritizing and encouraging applicants from non-traditional behavioral health organizations and other healing centered CBO's, programs, projects, coalitions, and grassroots groups to apply.

## IV. Available Funding

PHSKC and DCHS has the budgeted amount not to exceed (\$300,000) per award from December 2024-27 for this project. Proposals in excess of \$300,000 will be considered incomplete and will not be evaluated. We anticipate funding up to 5 organizations for the 3-year award period.

**Any contract awarded as a result of this procurement is contingent upon the availability of funding.**

King County PHSKC and DCHS reserves the right to not award all funds advertised in this RFP.

Applicants are expected to estimate and develop a budget covering proposed goals, activities and outcomes.

## V. RFP Process

### A. Timeline

The following timeline represents the tentative schedule of the entire RFP process, from solicitation to program implementation. The dates listed here are subject to change. Applicants are responsible for monitoring ZoomGrants for any changes prior to the submittal deadline.

Information Sessions	September 12, 2024, And October 3, 2024
Final day for to initiate request for technical assistance	October 16, 2024
Final day to submit questions via ZoomGrants	October 16, 2024
<b>Proposals due</b>	<b>October 18, 2024 by 2:00 p.m.</b>
Responses reviewed	October 21, 2024 through November 4, 2024
Interviews with applicants (if applicable) <i>King County reserves the right to conduct interviews as needed to make award determinations.</i>	n/a
Notification of selected and non-selected applicants	November 2024
Anticipated program/contract start date	December 2024

## B. Questions

Interested parties may submit questions in writing prior to the date and time indicated in the RFP schedule through the Contact Admin tab in ZoomGrants. The PHSKC response to all questions received will be posted as an RFP addendum on ZoomGrants.

***If potential Applicants experience technical difficulties with ZoomGrants leading up to the due date, please email your Proposal to the RFP Coordinator directly to avoid a late submission.***

Applicants are encouraged to complete their applications early to avoid any difficulties or errors in submission. PHSKC is not responsible for any technical difficulties that an applicant may experience, and late submissions may result in rejection of proposal.

## C. Information Session (not mandatory)

A pre-proposal information session is scheduled to be held at the date and time indicated in the schedule. The location of the pre-proposal conference will be via Zoom. All prospective Applicants should attend; however, attendance is not mandatory.

PHSKC will only adhere to the PHSKC -written answers to questions. Questions arising at the pre-proposal conference or in subsequent communication with the RFP Coordinator will be documented and answered in written form. A copy of the questions and answers will be posted as an RFP amendment on ZoomGrants. Applicants are responsible to check ZoomGrants for any posted amendments to this RFP.

Two information sessions will be held for this opportunity both will provide a brief overview of the RFP and will be a chance to learn more about the opportunity and to address any questions or concerns.

**September 12th, 2024 from 2-3pm**

**October 3rd, 2024, from noon-1pm**

**Meeting Link and Passcode:** <https://kingcounty.zoom.us/j/2415584053>

Meeting ID: 241 558 4053      Passcode: 319014

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,2415584053#,,, \*319014# US (Tacoma)

+12532050468,,2415584053#,,, \*319014# US

## D. Communication

### 1. RFP Communication

All RFP documents will be uploaded through ZoomGrants, as described below.

The RFP Lead is the sole point of contact for this procurement. All communication regarding the subject matter of this opportunity between the applicants and PHSKC upon release of this RFP must be through ZoomGrants or the RFP Lead, as follows:

Phil Thompson  
Contract Specialist  
[PhiThompson@kingcounty.gov](mailto:PhiThompson@kingcounty.gov)

Any other communication will be considered unofficial and non-binding on King County. Applicants are to rely on written statements issued by the RFP Lead. Communication directed to parties other than the RFP Coordinator on this opportunity may result in disqualification of the applicant.

## 2. Applicant Communication

Unless otherwise requested, letters and other communications about this RFP will be issued to the e-mail address noted in the proposals created within ZoomGrants. If other personnel should be contacted via e-mail in the evaluation of this proposal, or to be notified of evaluation results, please complete the information in the area provided in ZoomGrants.

# VI. Proposal Process

Responses are hereby solicited and will be received using the link below through ZoomGrants no later than 5:00 p.m. on the due date noted on this RFP. Responders are responsible for regularly checking ZoomGrants for any updates, clarifications or amendments.

Note: Applicants bear the risk that technical difficulties may result in late or undelivered applications. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to submit materials through ZoomGrants on a timely basis, and to reach out to ZoomGrants as noted on this RFP early in the process if encountering technical difficulties. If the issue cannot be addressed through ZoomGrants, then reach out to the procurement lead as noted on this RFP.

### **Submit proposals through ZoomGrants at:**

<https://www.zoomgrants.com/gprop.asp?donorid=2209&limited=5415>

Complete proposal packages will include the following:

- Include and list all required elements of your RFP.
- Summary Questions
- Zip code question on zoomgrants

**\*\*NOTE: Also consider References/Letter of Support, Oral Presentations, or On-Site or Virtual Readiness Review. See C&P for suggested language.**

## VII. Application Assistance

Application assistance (also known as technical assistance) is available to support organizations in applying to this RFP. The main purpose of this opportunity is to eliminate linguistic, cultural and other barriers that might prevent organizations from seeking government funding. Application assistance is **free of charge**.

Technical assistance consultants can:

- a. Assist in determining appropriate fit between your proposal and this funding opportunity.
- b. Provide guidance on how best to answer questions.
- c. Support your application development, including editing and budget review.
- d. Consultants are not grant writers but can support you in explaining your proposal in the most clear and concise way.

See Attachment D in the ZoomGrants library and/or the [Best Starts website](#) for a list of TA consultants and their contact information. Organizations wishing to access application assistance should email the consultants directly. We encourage you to reach out to a TA consultant as early as possible. We cannot guarantee TA consultant availability within 5 business days of the deadline (the RFP's closing date). Assistance in languages other than English is available; let a TA consultant know your language need and Best Starts will try to accommodate.

We encourage you to only contact one TA consultant at a time and allow them 24 hours to respond before contacting any other consultants.

### Best Starts Capacity Building Services

Once the contract is finalized, Best Starts grantees may receive free capacity building services from Best Starts-contracted consultants. The goal of Best Starts capacity building is to support grantees' program and organizational development, implementation, and sustainability while being rooted in community strengths, needs, and values. Consultants provide resources and training along with individualized, responsive, and ongoing coaching and support. Best Starts capacity building consultants can also help Best Starts grantees create tools and build skills needed to meet Best Starts contract requirements. Categories of Best Starts capacity building support include board development, data & evaluation, equity & social justice, finance, human resources, IT, legal, marketing, needs assessment, and organizational development.

## VIII. Selection Process

### A. Rating Criteria

Responsive proposals will be reviewed strictly in accordance with the requirements stated in this RFP and any addenda issued.

All proposals received by the stated deadline will be reviewed by the RFP Lead to ensure that the proposals contain all of the required information requested in the RFP and meet minimum qualifications in section XX. Only responsive proposals that meet the threshold requirements will be evaluated by the PHSKC designated review panel. Any applicant who does not meet the stated qualifications or any proposal that does not contain all the required information may be rejected as incomplete.

The RFP Lead may, at their sole discretion, contact the applicant for clarification of any portion of the applicant’s proposal. Applicants should take every precaution to ensure that all answers are clear, complete, and directly address the specific requirement.

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a review panel. The process for choosing projects will include evaluation of the narrative and accompanying documents, and potentially, interviews. Below are the selection criteria that will be used during the evaluation process.

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<b>Organization’s mission and vision are clear and aligned with the proposed scope of work.</b>	10
Does the organizations mission and vision align with the RFP?	
<b>Organization has demonstrated capacity to work with priority communities as outlined in the RFP.</b>	10
Does the organization work with/support diver LGBTQ and BIPOC youth populations?	
<b>Organization demonstrates understanding of mental health, healers, and youth mental health supporter workforce needs and/or challenges.</b>	10
Does the organization understand the background need and challenges facing the workforce?	
<b>Organization provides clear, compelling project description and clearly articulates project purpose: Why it was chosen, goals it will achieve, and how it will contribute to increasing the retention of the mental health, healers, and youth mental health supporter workforce.</b>	10
Does the organization clearly describe its project and how it relates to workforce retention?	
If the project has recruitment elements, does it relate back to and support retention?	
<b>Organization clearly illustrates specific types of supports and activities that they are proposing to deliver and how they align with the project goals and outcomes.</b>	10
Does the organizations project align with the goals and outcomes in the RFP?	
Does the organization have a clear idea of what activities they will deliver?	
<b>EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE</b>	10
Proposal clearly illustrates and reflects deep understanding of equity and social justice (ESJ) issues and the underlying context in which culturally relevant services are provided to the focus population of this RFP and describes a plan to provide these culturally relevant services. Applicant	

demonstrates commitment to ESJ through organizational leadership and staffing, program design and service delivery. If needed, applicant includes actions to intentionally diversify staff and board.	
<b>BUDGET AND FISCAL</b>	10
Budget is complete, aligns with proposed activities and takes into account the full scope of funding needed to support the proposed program model.	
Applicant addresses fully and transparently questions related to management or accounting of government funds, audit findings, and its financial management system. Application includes information on capacity development or mitigation strategies to ensure sound stewardship and management of funds.	
<b>DATA COLLECTION AND EVALUATION</b>	10
Applicant clearly identifies what success would be for the proposed program and how the program would measure success as aligned with the outcomes. The applicant clearly outlines its interest in building capacity to collect data.	
<b>INTERVIEWS (IF NECESSARY)</b>	
An <b>interview may be</b> conducted with top applicants if a selection is not possible on the basis of the written application alone. If interviews are conducted, an additional maximum of 10 points may be given.	10

**(If Applicable, below is a generic scale. See RFP handbook for other examples.)** Review team members will assign scores on a scale of zero (0) to ten (10) where the end and midpoints are defined as follows:

Score	Description	Discussion
0	No Value	The Proposal does not address any component of the requirements or no information was provided.
1	Poor	The Proposal only minimally addresses the requirement and is missing components or components were missing.
3	Below Average	The Proposal only minimally addresses the requirement and the Applicant's ability to comply with the requirements or simply has restated the requirements. The Proposal is responsive, but does not represent best practices.
5	Average	The Proposal shows an acceptable understanding or experience with the requirement. Sufficient detail to be considered meeting minimum requirements. The Proposal represents best practices or an adequate alternative.
7	Above Average	The Proposal is thorough and complete and demonstrates firm understanding of concepts and requirements. Proposal provides a thoughtful and innovative response but may be missing components.
10	Excellent	The Proposal has provided an innovative, detailed, and thorough response to the requirements, and clearly demonstrates a high level of experience with or understanding of the requirements.

## B. Review Process

Review panels may consist of King County staff, external subject matter experts, evaluators, community members, advisory board members, participants with past or current lived mental health experience, and members or designees of the King County Council (who will serve as nonvoting members). PHSKC values the perspectives of community members, including those with lived mental health experience. All efforts will be made to include a minimum of 2 individuals representing community. Following application review, applicants may be asked to participate in an interview with the review panel prior to final scoring of proposals.

The RFP review panel will score each proposal based on the rating criteria described in Section VIII. Rating Criteria, of this RFP and create a ranking of proposals based on highest to lowest scoring. The reviewer's scores will be a factor used by the RFP rating panel to develop recommendations on the selection of proposals to the County along as well as factors such as geographic areas and population served. King County also reserves the right to serve as its own reference.

## C. Selection Process

Final selection of awardees will be made by King County division and department directors based upon recommendations from the review panel and based upon equity and geographic considerations to ensure services are responsive to funding priorities and community need. The PHSKC reserves the right to make such selections based on the best interests of King County, and as a result, may not select the highest scoring or lowest cost proposals for award, and it will execute contracts based upon the final selections.

## D. Funding Allocation and Contract Negotiations

PHSKC anticipates that requests for funding from the pool of selected applicants may exceed the total dollar amount of funding available through this RFP. If this occurs, the County reserves the right to enter discussions with applicants to assess if proposed services and activities can be scaled to match the dollar amount offered by the County. If the proposal is not scalable, or the applicant rejects the dollar amount offered by the County, the County reserves the right, to withdraw the funding offer to the applicant, and enter discussions with other high-ranking RFP applicants. Contract negotiations and development will begin when a funding amount for each proposal has been reached between the applicant and the County.

# IX. Glossary of Terms

A list of general procurement and contract definitions can be found here: [Contract Glossary](#). All other definitions specific to this RFP are as follows:

**Contractor:** Term used within the King County PHSKC Boilerplate Agreement, signifying the entity awarded funding in consideration for the performance of certain services and as described in the resulting contract.

**Culturally Relevant Services** means programming or services that are supportive and designed for the community that it serves.



**Equity:** means giving everyone what they need to be successful as opposed to equality which means treating everyone the same.

**Mental health and well-being services and supports:** For the purposes of this RFP, any services or supports that contribute to increasing the emotional and psychological well-being of individuals)

**Racial Equity:** Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them<sup>4</sup>.

**ZoomGrants:** an online application portal where applicants can access and view RFP information and submit bids for programs/services outlined in the RFP.

## X. RFP and Contract Terms

### A. RFP Terms

#### Revisions to the RFP

If PHSKC determines in its sole discretion that it is necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum to this RFP will be posted on ZoomGrants. For this purpose, the published questions and answers and any other pertinent information will also be provided as an addendum to the RFP and will be placed on ZoomGrants.

PHSKC also reserves the right to cancel or to reissue the RFP in whole or in part, prior to execution of a contract.

#### 1. Cost to Propose

PHSKC will not be liable for any costs incurred by the applicant in preparation of a proposal submitted in response to this RFP, in conduct of a presentation, or any other activities related in any way to this RFP.

#### 2. No Obligation to Contract

This RFP does not obligate PHSKC to enter into any contract for services specified in this proposal.

#### 3. Rejection of Proposals

PHSKC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all proposals received without penalty and not to issue any contract as a result of this RFP.

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary> (link from King County site: <https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/tools-resources/Racial-Justice.aspx>)

#### 4. Acceptance Period

Proposals must provide one hundred twenty (120) calendar days for acceptance by PHSKC from the due date for receipt of proposals.

#### 5. Best and Final Offer (BAFO)

PHSKC reserves the right to use a BAFO before awarding any contract to further assist in determining the successful Applicants. Terms of the BAFO will be communicated by the RFP Coordinator.

#### 6. Award

Final selection of awardees may be made by King County division and department directors based upon final calculations and recommendations from the RFP review panel. PHSKC will execute contracts based upon the final selections.

PHSKC intends to award one or more contracts to potential Applicants. The RFP Coordinator will notify all Applicants in writing of the acceptance or rejection of their RFP. Written notification will be sent via email to the email address(s) submitted on the cover sheet.

#### 7. Protest

King County has a process in place for receiving protests / Appeals based upon the RFP or contract awards. The protest / Appeal procedures are available at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/finance-business-operations/procurement/for-business/do-business/protest.aspx>.

### **B. Contract Terms**

#### 1. King County Boilerplate

Organizations awarded through this procurement process will contract with King County PHSKC. Funded organizations will be required to meet baseline requirements, including insurance, equal employment opportunity, record keeping, and more. See a sample of the department's standard services contract boilerplate with terms and conditions [here](#).

A contract may be negotiated with the applicants(s) whose proposal would be most advantageous to King County in the opinion of the PHSKC, all factors considered.

The contents of the selected applicant's proposal shall become contractual obligations if a contract ensues.

A contract between the selected applicant(s) and King County shall include the contract instrument, the original RFP as issued by King County, the response to the RFP, and any other documents mutually agreed upon. The contract must include, and be consistent with, the specifications and provisions stated in the RFP.

#### 2. Equity and Social Justice

In order to effectively operate and provide services within a culturally responsive framework, an organization shall intentionally consider equity and integrate it into its values and principles, decisions and policies. King County expects funded organizations to incorporate an equity lens in their service delivery models and administration in order to challenge systemic and structural inequality, reduce prejudice and racism, and advance equity. As part of this effort, organizations will be asked to provide individual-level demographic information (including zip codes) to inform analysis and understanding of barriers created by institutional racism

### 3. Performance Measurement and Evaluation

The primary purpose of performance measurement and evaluation is to use data to inform ongoing work, understand which activities are effective and why, and support shared and transparent responsibility for your programs' success. Another key purpose is to comply with initiative reporting requirements and offer transparency to the public about the programs we fund and their outcomes. If awarded funds through this RFP, there is an expectation that awardees will collect data aligned with the goals of this RFP.

Best Starts will work in partnership with funded organizations to develop a performance measurement and evaluation plan for funded programs that aligns with the outcomes outlined in this RFP. The plan will include key performance measures, type of data collection (individual identifiable or deidentified client-level, aggregate, and/or qualitative data), additional external evaluation activities if applicable, and quality improvement activities.

Part of the process of developing performance measurement plans will be conversations about program goals and how to know if participants are "better off". What change is your program trying to create and why? What will tell us when program adjustments are necessary? How will we know that the adjustments are working?

Performance measures are developed in partnership by the funded organization with King County and are informed by the program's model and purpose. As programs grow and evolve within the award period, King County staff will be available to make any necessary adjustments to the evaluation plan in collaboration with the funded organization. Programs which set performance targets may collect baseline data in advance of target-setting.

Partners that are awarded will be asked to create a performance measurement plan that answers these three questions:

- **How many people were served/reached by this program, or how many services were provided?**
- **How well did your program serve people?**
- **How are those you served better off?**

### 4. Data Collection and Reporting

Data collection types detailed in the evaluation plan may include:

**i. Individual-Level Data**

When appropriate for the program model, individual-level data will be reported by the funded program and will typically be reported semiannually.

Individual-level data elements may include individual demographics (including age, gender, race/ethnicity, and zip codes), basic information about services provided, survey information from regular times during program participation (for example at program entry and exit), and individual outcomes. Individual-level data is typically reported through King County's Client Outcomes Reporting Engine, also known as CORE.

**ii. Aggregate-Level Data**

When appropriate for the program model, aggregate-level data will be reported by the funded program and will typically be reported semiannually.

Aggregate-level data may include demographics (including age, gender, race/ethnicity, and zip codes), basic information about services provided, and outcome information of those services.

**iii. Qualitative Data**

When appropriate for the program model, qualitative data (such as from focus groups, open-ended surveys and questionnaires, and interviews) may be reported by the funded program.

**C. Narrative Reports**

Funded organizations will also submit annual narrative reports to share information about successes, challenges, system change efforts and other requested information.

**D. Public Records Act**

1. Washington State Public Records Act (RCW 42.56) requires public organizations in Washington to promptly make public records available for inspection and copying unless they fall within the specified exemptions contained in the Act or are otherwise privileged.
2. All submitted proposals and RFP materials become public information and may be reviewed by anyone requesting to do so at the conclusion of the RFP, negotiation, and award process. This process is concluded when a signed contract is completed between the County and the selected applicant.
3. Proposals submitted under this RFP shall be considered public documents and with limited exceptions, proposals that are recommended for contract award will be available for inspection and copying by the public.

If a applicant considers any portion of his/her proposal to be protected under the law, the applicant shall clearly identify on the page(s) affected such words as "CONFIDENTIAL," "PROPRIETARY" or "BUSINESS SECRET." The applicant shall

also use the descriptions above in the following table to identify the effected page number(s) and location(s) of any material to be considered as confidential. If a request is made for disclosure of such portion, the County will review the material in an attempt to determine whether it may be eligible for exemption from disclosure under the law. If the material is not exempt from public disclosure law, or if the County is unable to make a determination of such an exemption, the County will notify the applicant of the request and allow the applicant ten (10) days to take whatever action it deems necessary to protect its interests. If the applicant fails or neglects to take such action within said period, the County will release the portion of the proposal deemed subject to disclosure. By submitting a proposal, the applicant assents to the procedure outlined in this paragraph and shall have no claim against the County on account of actions taken under such procedure. Please notify the County of your needs through the Contact Admin tab in ZoomGrants and reference the table information.

Type of Exemption	Beginning Page / Location	Ending Page / Location

**E. American with Disabilities Act**

King County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Applicants may contact the RFP Coordinator to receive materials for this RFP in alternative formats, such as Braille, large print, audio tape, or computer disc.

**F. Language Accessibility**

Upon request, this RFP can be made available in other languages.

**XI. List of Attachments**

- A. Summary Questions or Agency Level Questions
- B. Narrative Questions
- C. Budget
- D. Technical Assistance for Applying for Funds (Informational)
- E. Standard Contract Terms Example (Informational)
- F. Acceptance of Potential Agreement