



REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST:

Trauma-Informed Care and Antiracism Learning Collaborative

Release Date: September 15, 2021

Pre-Proposal Conference: October 6, 2021, 2 pm

Proposal Due: November 1, 2021, 12 pm

Anticipated Notification: December 6, 2021

Learning Collaborative Start: January 10, 2022

Issued by:

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REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST

Trauma-Informed Care and Antiracism Learning Collaborative

I. Overview of the Project

A. OVERVIEW OF BHSB

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc. (BHSB) is a non-profit organization tasked by Baltimore City to manage the city's public behavioral health system. As such, BHSB serves as the local behavioral health authority for Baltimore City. In this role, BHSB envisions a city where people live and thrive in communities that promote and support behavioral health and wellness.

BHSB is committed to enhancing the behavioral health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities through:

- The promotion of behavioral health and wellness prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery;
- The creation and leadership of an integrated network of providers that promotes universal access to comprehensive, data-driven services; and
- Advocacy and leadership of behavioral health-related efforts to align resources, programs, and policy.

BHSB is committed to promoting behavioral health equity in Baltimore City by ensuring that the behavioral health provider network is culturally and linguistically responsive to the diverse populations served; reducing behavioral health care access barriers for populations known to experience discrimination and marginalization; and supporting communities directly to develop services that are responsive to their unique strengths and needs.

B. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

Through this Request for Letters of Interest (RFLOI), BHSB is seeking up to seven organizations within Baltimore City to participate in a Trauma-Informed Care and Antiracism Learning Collaborative that will engage from January 2022 to June 2022. Participating organizations may include behavioral health service providers, faith-based organizations, and other community-based organizations that provide behavioral health related support services to individuals and families.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have a tremendous impact on wellbeing and lifelong health and opportunity. ACEs are defined as potentially traumatic events

that occur in childhood (0-17 years) that can undermine a sense of safety, stability, and bonding. For example:

- experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect
- witnessing violence in the home or community
- having a family member attempt or die by suicide
- substance use and/or mental health problems in the home
- instability due to parental separation or household members being in jail or prison

In 2018, over 10,000 Maryland households anonymously participated in the Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Survey that included ten questions on their experiences with ACEs. The statewide prevalence of having three or more ACEs was 23%, compared to 33% in Baltimore City.

These ACEs questions have been shown to be a strong determinant of adolescent and adult social well-being and health. As the number of ACEs increases in the life of an individual, there is an increased likelihood of risky behaviors and chronic physical and mental health conditions, such as substance use, binge eating, self-harm, and violence.

The prevalence of ACEs in Baltimore City, together with historic and ongoing systemic racism and the disparate rates of poverty, violence, homicide, overdose fatalities, and housing instability, increases the risk of behavioral health disorders. The data indicates a strong need for more organizations to adopt trauma-informed approaches to behavioral health programming.

The impacts of ACEs can be prevented and mitigated. Raising awareness of ACEs, including creating and sustaining safe, stable, and nurturing environments for all children and families can prevent ACEs and help all children reach their full potential. Additionally, providing trauma-informed and antiracist care and support, can help mitigate the effects.

BHSB has been conducting an annual Trauma-Informed Care Capacity Survey over the past three years to learn about the gaps and strengths the Baltimore City behavioral health provider network encounter when creating a resilient service delivery approach. Survey results indicate variability in organizations assessing for trauma-informed practices as well as a strong interest in participating in learning collaboratives with in-depth learning experiences and integrating addressing ACEs, toxic stress, and trauma into policies and practices.

Applicants selected through this process will engage in a learning collaborative that will provide training and professional development, with the following goals:

- increase knowledge of Neurobiology, Epigenetics, Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and Resilience (NEAR) science¹
- increase providers' capacity to create cultures and implement policies and practices informed by the NEAR science
- increase capacity of providers to prevent ACEs and support resilience for the individuals, families, and communities they serve

Understanding that the prevalence of traumatic stress in the lives of individuals, families, and communities is high and expected to increase due to “dual pandemics” of COVID-19 and racial trauma, organizations must become trauma informed to respond appropriately to the needs of trauma survivors. A trauma-informed organization is one where all policies, procedures, practices, programming, and services are viewed through the lens of trauma.

This Trauma-Informed Care and Antiracism Learning Collaborative provides guidance on how organizations in Baltimore City can evaluate current policies, procedures, practices, programming, and services and take specific steps to become a fully integrated trauma-informed organization.

Please note, there is no direct funding awarded through this procurement. Selected applicants will participate in the learning collaborate with no additional funding provided.

C. SCOPE OF SERVICE

This Trauma-Informed Care and Antiracism Learning Collaborative will include remote meetings to engage in shared learning and practice opportunities, make connections with other organizations, and receive technical support from an expert consultant. Participating organizations will engage in a bi-directional learning process through exchanges of ideas and lessons learned about operationalizing trauma-informed care within each of the organizations through a lens of racial equity.

This will be the second iteration of the Trauma-Informed Care and Antiracism Learning Collaborative, and it will operate from January 2022 – June 2022. Technical assistance consultation will be provided concurrently with monthly collaborative sessions for participants to meet and form a shared network of learning. Collaborative sessions will convene once a month.

Technical assistance will be provided by a consultant who will work closely with participants to operationalize a trauma-informed care and antiracist approach. This

¹ NEAR science is a cluster of fields of study that when understood as complex, separate and overlapping can help strengthen individuals, families, and communities

will involve conducting a trauma-informed care organizational assessment with a social justice lens, monitoring the results of the assessment to form objectives, and then practicing a framework of trauma- and equity-informed, -sensitive, and -responsive approaches, and monitoring results.

Dr. Paul Archibald, LCSW-C will continue as the technical assistant consultant for this second Trauma-Informed Care and Antiracism Learning Collaborative. Dr. Archibald is a public health social worker with over twenty years of clinical practice and training dedicated to the prevention and treatment of behavioral health outcomes among persons exposed to chronic stressors and trauma. His current research agenda is to utilize an intersectional approach to survey the role of stress and trauma in the contribution of stress-related health disparities.

Selected participants will be expected to participate in surveys to evaluate the impact of the learning collaborative in implementing trauma-informed care and antiracism organizational policies and practices.

Applicants should *Save The Date* for Monday, January 10, 2022, when team members will participate in the initial meeting of Trauma-Informed Care and Antiracism Learning Collaborative. This initial gathering will occur virtually on Zoom for 90 minutes during regular business hours. Exact times will be confirmed upon selection to the learning collaborative.

D. FOCUS POPULATION

The goal of this learning collaborative is to increase access to trauma-responsive and antiracist support services across Baltimore City.

E. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

There are no specific staffing requirements tied to this procurement; however, it is strongly recommended that each selected participant organize a team of staff to participate in the learning collaborative. Each team should include 3-5 people from various levels in the organization. The role categories included here are meant to summarize the types of roles that could be reflected on your team, even if they don't reflect the exact language you use to describe the positions in your organization. The strongest teams will have at least one person who has the positional leadership to ensure that changes can be implemented and sustained.

- **Frontline Staff:** Team members who interact and work directly with those receiving services provided by the organization. For organizations providing direct services, these team members would work with consumers daily, providing services, support, and/or care management (e.g., clinicians, case managers, social workers, etc.). For organizations that are not providing

direct services, these team members may include program coordinators, trainers, outreach coordinators, etc.

- **Supervisors:** Team members who supervise frontline staff (e.g., supervisors, program managers)
- **Senior Leaders:** Organizational leaders who have the authority to ensure that changes can be implemented, spread, and sustained over time (e.g., directors, administrators)
- **Additional Roles:** Team members who do not fall into the three prior categories but who provide essential added perspective and expertise about organizational problems, system change barriers, and potential change strategies. These roles may include family/youth partners, community partners, advisory board members, etc.

One team member must be designated as the "team manager." This person will serve as the primary contact for Trauma-Informed Care and Antiracism Learning Collaborative and will lead the team's process during this learning collaborative and beyond.

F. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

No funding will be awarded through this procurement. Selected applicants will participate in the learning collaborative and receive direct consultation only.

II. Overview of RFLOI

A. PURPOSE OF RFLOI

The purpose of this RFLOI is to select up to seven organizations to participate in a Trauma-Informed Care and Antiracism Learning Collaborative.

B. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

All organizations that encounter people in Baltimore City in need of emotional support, enhanced wellbeing, and/or behavioral health services are eligible to apply. Some examples are mental health providers, substance use disorder (SUD) providers, faith-based organizations, social support organizations, and community-based organizations, including organizations that have not been historically considered part of the traditional behavioral health system.

An intention of this procurement is to encourage applications from historically under-resourced, grassroots, faith-based and other community-based organizations working directly with communities to access behavioral health support.

C. PROPOSAL TIMEFRAME AND SPECIFICATIONS

1. Timeline

Release Date:	September 15, 2021
Pre-Proposal Conference:	October 6, 2021, 2 pm
Proposal Due:	November 1, 2021, 12 pm
Anticipated Notification:	December 6, 2021
Learning Collaborative Start:	January 10, 2022

2. Pre-Proposal Conference

Date: October 6, 2021

Time: 2:00 pm

Location: Microsoft Teams meeting - Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only): 443-819-0973

Phone Conference ID: 169 929 042#

Please join five minutes early to leave time to troubleshoot. If you have any problems accessing the meeting, please contact Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org.

All questions related to this RFLOI should be submitted in advance to Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org no later than the close of business on **Friday, October 1, 2021**. Questions submitted by email will be answered first, and if there is time at the end, additional questions may be asked during the meeting.

All applicant questions and BHSB's responses will be posted on BHSB's website at <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org/for-providers/funding-opportunities/> by **October 12, 2021**.

The questions and answers will also be emailed to all individuals who submitted questions. If you would like to be emailed this document but do not have a question, please let the Procurement Lead know by emailing Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org.

Questions received after this conference cannot be answered.

3. Proposal Due Date, Time, and Location

BHSB uses Survey Monkey Apply (SM Apply) to manage applications. All proposals must be submitted through this system. Applicants must register with the system ahead of time and submit narrative and supporting documents directly through the system. You are able to save your application and continue working on it before submitting it. BHSB encourages all applicants to test this system well in advance of submitting proposals.

Applicants can access SM Apply here: <https://bhsb.smapply.org/>

All proposals must be received no later than **12:00 pm (noon) EDT on November 1, 2021**. All submitted proposals become the property of BHSB.

If you are having technical troubles related to submitting your proposal, contact BHSB before the due date/time at Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org.

Proposals submitted after the due date/time cannot be considered.

4. Authorized Contact

Applicants are advised that the authorized contact person for all matters concerning this RFLOI is Shanna Borell whose contact information is listed below.

Shanna Borell, Procurement Lead
Email: Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org

5. Anticipated Service Term: January 2022 – June 2022

D. AWARD OF CONTRACT

The submission of a proposal does not, in any way, guarantee an award nor participation in this learning collaborative. BHSB is not responsible for any costs incurred related to the preparation of a proposal in response to this RFLOI. BHSB reserves the right to withdraw an award prior to execution of a contract with selected applicants in BHSB's sole and absolute discretion.

BHSB will select the most qualified and responsive applicants through this RFLOI process.

E. RFLOI POSTPONEMENT/CANCELLATION

BHSB reserves the right to postpone or cancel this RFLOI, in whole or in part.

F. APPLICANT APPEAL RIGHTS

Applicants may file an appeal within five days of notification of non-selection. BHSB will review the appeal, examine any additional information provided by the protesting party, and respond to the protestor within ten working days of receipt of the appeal.

III. Format and Content of Proposal

A. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants must submit all required information using Survey Monkey Apply (SM Apply) accessible here: <https://bhsb.smapply.org/>.

Late proposals cannot be considered.

It is the policy of BHSB to adhere to the rules and regulations in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). We do not anticipate that any proposal submitted in response to this RFLOI would include individually identifiable health information. However, if it does, please remember that protected health information (PHI) needs to be secured via encryption and should adhere to the Guide to IT Privacy and Security of Electronic Health Information:

<https://www.healthit.gov/topic/privacy-security-and-hipaa/health-it-privacy-and-security-resources-providers>.

B. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE OUTLINE AND RATING CRITERIA

The outline below shows the information being requested for applications and how points will be awarded during the review. Use SM Apply to submit your responses. See the instructions for more information about how to submit proposals.

1. Organizational Background and Capacity (25 points)

- a. Provide an overview of your organization – its history, mission, and connection to providing behavioral health support. Also describe your organization’s experience implementing trauma-informed care and/or antiracism organizational assessments.
- b. Describe whether any of the organizational leadership (including board members), clinical supervisors, clinical and direct support staff, peer supports, or/or administrative staff have been trained in trauma-informed care or trauma-informed supervision.
- c. Describe the types of trauma-informed care and/or antiracism/ diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training and supports have been provided to staff in the organization.
- d. Describe whether your organization makes intentional efforts to make staff and people served at your organization feel physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe. Describe whether your organization provides wellness and self-care resources for employees.
- e. Describe whether your organization is owned and/or led by members of historically marginalized or oppressed groups, including racial and ethnic groups (i.e., African American/Black, Latinx), LGBTQ communities, people with disabilities including behavioral health

disorders, etc. BHSB awards additional points to help address systemic barriers that have led to inequity in access to funding.

2. Principles and Values (15 points)

- a. Describe your organization's current practices to ensure services are delivered in a culturally and linguistically competent manner, responsive to the diverse communities served, including individuals for whom English is a second language.
- b. Describe your organization's commitment to racial and social justice and health equity. Include specific examples of what your organization does to illustrate this commitment.
- c. Describe your organization's commitment to a trauma-informed approach and any trauma-specific interventions your organization currently offers or would implement if selected to participate in this learning collaborative.

3. Service Delivery (20 points)

- a. Describe how your organization will collaborate with the trauma-informed care and antiracism technical assistance consultant to identify and engage staff and other people served by your organization to ensure that all individuals at various levels of the organization will, with consent, be involved with and benefit from the organization's involvement with this learning collaborative. List the outcomes your organization seeks to achieve as a result of participating in the learning collaborative.

4. Staffing Plan (5 points)

- a. Describe the staff positions from various levels within your organization who will participate in the learning collaborative. Include an organizational chart to show how these positions interact within the organization.

5. Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance (5 points)

- a. Describe how your organization obtains and incorporates feedback from people served and other stakeholders into the development, implementation, operation, and improvement of program services, including previous experience your organization has had taking that feedback and implementing it into programs and services.

6. Appendices

- Organizational chart
- Most recent site visit report from an Administrative Services Organization (ASO) and/or your organization's Accrediting Organization, including any Statements of Deficiencies and/or Program Improvement Plans

- Most recent Financial Audit and Management Letter, if applicable (or an explanation if this is not applicable)
- Most recent IRS 990 – Return of Organization Exempt from Income Taxes, if applicable (or an explanation if this is not applicable)
- Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation