REQUEST FOR CONTRACTED SERVICE PROPOSALS

How Do Rural Missourians Understand, Experience, and Talk About Equity?

Missouri Foundation for Health
a catalyst for change
Missouri Foundation for Health (MFH) is requesting proposals from qualified contractors to conduct exploratory research into how Missourians living in predominantly rural counties think about the concept of equity and how they have observed and/or directly experienced the health consequences of discrimination, exclusion, and marginalization.

Description of Services Required

MFH’s mission to eliminate the underlying causes of health inequities, transform systems, and enable individuals and communities to thrive, requires a nuanced understanding of how Missourian’s perceive and experience inequities in communities across the state. Missouri is geographically large and demographically diverse, with nearly 40% of the population living in rural areas. National surveys have recently shown that rural Americans believe they have little in common with urban America, especially when it comes to values. Finding language to communicate about the value of equity across the “rural-urban divide” is an ongoing challenge, yet little data exists to inform MFH’s efforts in this area.

To partner and collaborate effectively with rural communities and organizations serving them, MFH seeks a deeper understanding of the range of attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions rural Missourians hold regarding equity (in all its forms) and its relationship to health and well-being. MFH intends to use insights generated from this research to effectively communicate about equity and equity-related issues and enhance our program, policy, and communications strategies concerning rural health and well-being.

Understanding that perspectives among Missourians living in rural areas are far from monolithic, we expect the contractor to gather information from a broad sampling of demographically diverse rural residents using mixed-methods research. Methods may include but are not limited to qualitative interviews and focus group discussions, surveys, polling, and analysis of secondary data, if appropriate. We welcome innovative and participatory research methods that center intersectionality and respect the lived experiences of participants, use of technologies to enhance participation among people with disabilities, as well as analysis and dissemination strategies that productively engage community members in sense-making. The selected partner will work with MFH and its partners to shape the research and carry out identified activities, including identifying geographic areas of focus. Illustrative research questions include:

- How do people who live and work in rural communities define or describe equity?
- What messages or information have rural Missourians heard about equity and from what sources?
- What have rural residents observed or experienced regarding how inequities present themselves in the community?
- What attitudes and beliefs do rural Missourians hold about different forms of equity (e.g., race, class, gender, disability, etc.) and how they show up in rural Missouri?
- How do rural residents think inequity impacts people’s health and well-being in their communities and across the state (and/or how could equity produce better outcomes for people’s health and well-being)?
- What language and framing makes rural residents more or less likely to engage on issues of equity?
Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted online.

To begin a proposal, click here.

To return to a proposal in progress, log in to your Account.

Proposal Requirements

- Submission acknowledgment. Complete and submit the one-page acknowledgment form.

- Proposal narrative. Address each of the sections below.
  
  - **Approach to services.** Provide a brief description of the approach to services and address each of the following:
    
    - Overarching design of the study and overview of proposed methods
    
    - Procedures for sampling/collecting primary data and/or securing access to secondary data sources; include sample size calculations, if appropriate
    
    - Analysis plan for each type of data
    
    - Overview of plan for protecting human research participants and obtaining IRB approval, if necessary
    
    - Plan for engaging with community members/stakeholders at key points in the study to ensure community voices are reflected in the study design, results, and dissemination process.

  - **Deliverables and proposed timeline.** Provide a work plan and timeline that identifies activities and deliverables. The contractor should plan for the project to begin around June 2022.

  - **Organization history and qualifications.** Provide a summary of the experience and qualifications of the organization’s staff as well as any proposed subcontractors. Include bios of key personnel. Provide information on prior experience conducting social science research in rural communities and/or on mindsets and beliefs related to racial and other types of social equity. Provide examples, if any, demonstrating how your organization shares MFH values and critical concerns as described below. We are particularly interested in working with partners whose executive leadership and staff demonstrate they recognize the benefit of racial and gender equity and that their practices reflect their value human dignity.

- **Cost proposal.** Provide a detailed cost proposal and justification for: professional services (hourly rate and number of hours), travel specifically related to the project, subcontractor fees (attach proposal or contract), and other direct costs that can be tracked specifically to the project. Respondents should submit a cost proposal that aligns with the scope of the project and supports required deliverables. MFH reserves the right to negotiate proposed costs.

  *Note: Requested travel will be reimbursed for coach airfare booked within a reasonable timeframe, lodging, standard rental car or public transportation, meals and incidental expenses at a rate not to exceed the federal per diem rate.*
Intellectual property list. If applicable, attach list of intellectual property.

Additional required documents:

- The names and contact information of 2 – 3 individuals or organizations MFH can contact to verify past work.
- Completed W-9 form
- Completed Conflict of Interest Disclosure form

Proposal Review and Evaluation

Proposals will be reviewed in accordance with the requirements of this RFP. Only those proposals that meet all the mandatory criteria in the RFP will be given consideration.

A respondent’s submission of a proposal in no way guarantees procurement. MFH will not reimburse a respondent for the cost of developing or presenting a proposal in response to this RFP. The proposal will be considered confidential.

Right to Reject

MFH reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals submitted
- Request additional information from any or all respondents
- Conduct discussions with respondents to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to the solicitation requirements
- Negotiate modifications to a respondent’s proposal prior to final award for the purpose of obtaining best and final offers
- Approve subcontractors proposed or used in carrying out the work

Contact Provisions

If selected, contractor will be required to enter into a Service Agreement with MFH. To review the terms of the agreement, click here.
Contact and Deadline

If you have questions please contact Megan Simmons, Senior Research Strategist, at msimmons@mffh.org or (314) 345-5567. Proposals must be received by 12p.m. (Noon) Central on March 11, 2022.

For more information on the online submission process, click here. If there are additional questions, please contact Wendy Rohrbach, Project Coordinator, at wrohrbach@mffh.org or (314) 345-5504.

MFH Values and Critical Concerns

MFH is committed to engaging partners who share and demonstrate our values of equity, integrity, humility, and commitment. In addition, MFH has identified advancing equity and inclusion, promoting human dignity, and making environmentally conscious decisions as critical concerns. Should your organization wish to become a provider, you will be asked to sign a statement affirming that:

- Employment practices of your organization ensure that there is no discrimination in hiring and promotion practices. This includes discrimination based on gender, age, race, disability, veteran status, religious affiliation, or sexual identification.

- No part of your organization’s operations or communication with the public discriminate against any individual or group based upon any of the factors listed above.

- Any violation of this provision shall be considered a violation of the material provision of this procurement and shall be grounds for cancellation, termination, or suspension in whole or in part of any related agreement by the MFH

About Missouri Foundation for Health

Missouri Foundation for Health is building a more equitable future through collaboration, convening, knowledge sharing, and strategic investment. Working in partnership with communities and nonprofits, MFH is transforming systems to eliminate inequities within all aspects of health and addressing the social and economic factors that shape health outcomes. To learn more please visit mffh.org.