



**Healthy People Healthy Places  
Community Engagement Consultant  
Request for Quotations**

**Submission Deadline: March 6, 2020**

**Overview**

Elmina B. Sewall Foundation seeks an external consultant to help facilitate a community engagement process to redesign a portion of one of its signature programs. The Community Engagement Consultant will help form a planning team of Community members and Foundation staff, who will co-design a new, community-driven approach to philanthropic work in a diverse, working class city in Maine. The consultant must bring experience in working with diverse stakeholders, group facilitation and consensus-building, equity- and trauma-informed practice, community engagement, and philanthropy. A working knowledge of complex system change, community economic development, health and wellness, and the environment would be beneficial as well. The engagement timeline is late April through late October 2020.

**Background: Sewall Foundation's Healthy People Healthy Places Program**

Elmina B. Sewall Foundation supports work in Maine to improve the wellbeing of people, animals and the environment in Maine while fostering equity and centering community voice. In 2015, Sewall launched its signature program, Healthy People Healthy Places (HPHP), to support organizations that promoted the wellbeing of humans and the environment in an integrated way, and organizations that worked to improve systems to meet the basic needs of Maine people.

From the start it was clear that, with so much good work happening in Maine, we would have to narrow our focus to deepen our impact. With the help of a developmental evaluator, staff pulled together quantitative data on the first three years of HPHP grants, and qualitative data from grantees and peer funders. That baseline revealed a half dozen areas where work by a number of nonprofit and community partners was coming together and where a more focused commitment of Sewall resources might significantly boost those efforts. Three of those areas are place-based (Lewiston-Auburn, Washington County, and the Katahdin Region), two are issue-based (Nature-Based Education and Food Systems), and one, Tribal Communities, focuses on a population group.

Also, during this period of program refinement, Sewall Foundation board and staff have been engaged in a learning journey to deepen equity both internally and externally. That learning has informed our thinking both about what we do and how we do it. We anticipate shifting to processes that are more relational than transactional; programs that are co-designed with community members and peer funders; and multi-strategy approaches undertaken with longer-term commitments. We are also decentering power and resource flows both internally and externally and developing structures to clarify our equity lens to support and sustain these efforts.

## **HPHP Refinements in Lewiston-Auburn to Date**

Through a fairly traditional grantmaking process (e.g., an annual, open, competitive cycle of applications reviewed by foundation staff and approved by our board), Sewall Foundation made HPHP grants to 14 nonprofits in the twin cities of Lewiston and Auburn (L-A) from 2015 to 2017. Many were to immigrant-led organizations or nonprofits serving immigrants in the Tree Street Neighborhood of Lewiston. Some addressed basic needs systems such as housing, food security, and public health, while others, including groups that promote community gardens and support immigrant farmers, integrated environmental and human well-being, a primary objective of the HPHP program.

Since 2018 Sewall staff has been working on redesigning HPHP work in L-A, following a process that is illustrated in the attached graphic. **Phase 1**, Community Outreach, involved meeting individually with the original 14 grantee partners, beginning in January 2019. The purpose of those conversations was to deepen our relationships and understanding of the L-A community. We asked each partner to “help us see Lewiston through your eyes” and we ended the conversations by asking who else we should reach out to. Over the course of the year we met with about 60 organizational and community leaders, including nonprofits, public school personnel, business leaders, and municipal staffs.

**Phase 2** involved a convening in December 2019 of those we’d met with earlier in the year, to provide a feedback loop, gather further input, and continue to strengthen relationships with and among members of the community. One important point we tested was whether or not to include Auburn in the focus area; consensus was to do so, recognizing that a great deal of work is underway to build bridges between the two municipalities and to exclude one would be divisive for the community and contrary to the spirit and intention of our process. Other themes we explored were: L-A’s Natural and Built Environment, Municipal Agencies and Schools, Employment and Economy, and Health and Human Services. Forty of the Phase 1 participants attended this convening, along with four Sewall staff members and our developmental evaluator. Two community members met with Sewall staff to plan the event and they co-facilitated the community convening. A report summarizing community feedback on these key themes is currently being drafted and will be available to the Community Engagement Consultant selected for **Phase 3** of this process.

## **Project Summary**

**A Community Engagement Consultant (CEC)** is needed to support a collaborative effort by Sewall staff and members of the Lewiston-Auburn, Maine (L-A) community to identify community priorities for Sewall’s work in L-A over the next 5 years. The project will begin with guiding the formation of a Program Co-Design Team; the CEC will then work with that Team to identify community priorities and points of alignment with Sewall Foundation’s mission and values. The project will end with the drafting of a Summary Report on the findings of the Co-Design Team, including articulation of priorities and recommendations for grantmaking and non-grantmaking aspects of Healthy People Healthy Places (HPHP) work in L-A, starting in 2021.

### ***Community Engagement Consultant’s Roles and Responsibilities***

- Guide the formation of a Program Co-Design Team (Team) comprised of Sewall staff, a developmental evaluator, and members of the Lewiston-Auburn community
- Design and facilitate a series of working sessions with the Program Co-Design Team:
  - Using culturally appropriate participatory methods of engagement

- Integrating existing community plans and information, including Sewall’s Phase 1 and Phase 2 report to guide conversations<sup>1</sup>
- Facilitate Team meetings, to identify L-A community priorities and points of alignment with Sewall’s mission and values, to guide Sewall’s work in L-A over the next 5 years
- Draft a Summary Report, due no later than October 1, 2020, that identifies priorities and recommended approaches (see *Project Results and Deliverables*, below), based on findings of the Co-Design Team, to guide Sewall’s HPHP work in L-A for five years, starting in 2021.

***Project Results and Deliverables***

- A preliminary in-person meeting with Sewall staff in Lewiston, to become better acquainted both with the Foundation and with the L-A community
- A process, developed in conversation with Sewall staff and developmental consultant, for forming L-A’s Program Co-Design Team
- A minimum of 4 working sessions with the Program Co-Design Team, utilizing participatory equity-informed and trauma-informed facilitation methodologies
- A summary report (due by October 1, 2020) that includes:
  - the L-A community’s priorities for HPHP work in the next 5 years
  - guidelines and agreements on a collaborative effort between Sewall Foundation and the L-A community, to address community priorities
  - recommended goals, strategies, and criteria for Sewall’s grantmaking and non-grant work in L-A over the next 5 years
  - recommendations for continued community engagement, guidance, and decision-making processes (for example, formation of a standing community advisory group; systems mapping or other process to improve networking and coordination of existing efforts; annual meetings of community representatives and funding partners, etc.) to support Sewall’s work in L-A starting in 2021
- Regular communication (biweekly phone calls and e-mail as needed) with Sewall Foundation staff during the engagement period

**Components of Quotation Proposal**

Please provide a quotation proposal, detailing how you or your organization would approach this project, including steps you would take to carry out the project, a description of the approach you would use, the timeline for these steps and deliverables, any limitations you would experience due to your availability and/or budgetary constraints, and how you would address those limitations. Specifically, please include:

***Proposal***

- Qualifications and experience of your organization, including facilitation of community conversations involving speakers with different languages and cultures
- Scope of work and deliverables
- Theory and practice behind your proposed approach

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<sup>1</sup> For example, see *Growing Our Tree Streets*, Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan, <http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/933/Choice-Neighborhood-Grant>; and the 2019 Local Foods Local Places plan, [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-04/documents/lflp5\\_summary\\_report.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-04/documents/lflp5_summary_report.pdf)

- Your understanding of community trauma and resilience, and how they inform your work
- Detailed workplan with approximate timeline, including who (if a team is doing this work) will take the lead on each part of the process and the deliverables
- Budget and brief budget narrative, explaining each component of the project

#### ***Attachments***

- Individual profiles of team members involved in this project, noting their experience working:
  - with a trauma-informed and equity-informed lens
  - in a racially and linguistically diverse community
  - with multiple stakeholders, including municipal agencies and nonprofits of varied sizes, cultures, and missions
  - at the intersection of environmental and human well-being
- A client list that notes three recent clients who could serve as references, with a brief description of work completed for each of the three

The quotation proposal should be no more than 7 pages in length, not including attachments (references and client list, project team profiles and qualifications).

#### **General Terms and Conditions**

Documentation submitted in response to this RFQ may be distributed to members of Sewall's Board of Trustees, Sewall staff and development evaluator, and to select members of the community of Lewiston-Auburn, Maine (L-A). Submissions will not be used for other purposes without prior written consent of the applicant. Proprietary and confidential information which cannot be shared in this way should not be included in this proposal.

The selected applicant will be required to enter into an agreement with Sewall Foundation. By signing the agreement, the selected Consultant will agree to work with Sewall Foundation and its partners in L-A. Payments under this agreement will be made upon invoice and progress towards the agreed upon scope of work.

This solicitation is expected to result in an engagement of approximately six (6) months, beginning in late April and ending in late October 2020.

#### **Budget**

To be negotiated up to \$25,000, inclusive of travel, supplies and other expenses related to this project. The Sewall Foundation will provide any needed refreshments and assist in identifying venues for the Team meetings.

#### **Application Instructions and Deadline**

Quotation proposals should be submitted in PDF format via email to Laress Lawrence, Program Officer, Elmina B. Sewall Foundation – [llawrence@sewallfoundation.org](mailto:llawrence@sewallfoundation.org) – **no later than close of business on Friday, March 6, 2020.**

## **Selection Timing and Notification**

Sewall staff appreciates the time and consideration given to respond to this Request for Quotations. We will send an acknowledgment via email to the lead contact for each proposal within 48 hours of receipt. Applicants may be contacted to clarify questions prior to the final selection. Sewall staff will review proposals and make a selection no later than Friday, March 20. Once there is a signed agreement between Sewall Foundation and the selected consultant, Sewall staff will share more detailed materials on work to date as the basis for this project.

All applicants will be notified of Sewall's decision by Monday, March 30.

## **Criteria for Proposal Review**

- ***Qualifications and expertise:*** excellent trauma-informed facilitation skills; appropriate level of support and resources for project activities; previous experience effectively facilitating a complex community engagement process; a strong focus on and commitment to equity, cultural competency and humility; experience working with communities of color and with communities whose first language is not English; and good team-building skills. Lived experience with racially diverse communities and experience with democratic and/or participatory grantmaking processes are preferred.
- ***Methodology:*** The proposal should indicate how sound, culturally appropriate facilitation and community planning methodology, and participatory approaches to systems change, will be used.
- ***Understanding and commitment to racial equity and community voice:*** Sewall Foundation is committed to deepening equity and centering community voice. The Consultant should demonstrate that commitment through previous experience and through the strategies and approaches proposed for this project.
- ***Professional references:*** Applicants should provide three professional references for projects that are similar in scope, approach and/or nature. Please provide full contact information for each reference and a brief description of the work done with them.
- ***Completeness of application:*** Overall presentation and completeness of the proposal will be taken into account in the selection process.
- ***Budget:*** The proposed budget for your Quotation should not exceed \$25,000, inclusive of all expenses incurred in this project.
- ***Conflict of interest:*** Applicants shall attest that no conflict of interest exists, or appears to exist, if they are to be selected to carry out the work outlined in this Request for Quotations. If a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, may exist, the applicant should provide a description of the real and/or apparent conflict.

# HPHP Focus Area Planning Process

