

## **Overview**

The Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (CLF) is seeking proposals from a qualified individual(s) to work with the Food Policy Networks (FPN) project on a transition plan for the project. The selected person will have expertise in organizational development, specifically network development and transition planning, and experience with non-profit organizations. They will work closely with CLF staff and others to guide the transition of identified activities of the FPN project from CLF to a partner organization.

Food policy councils (FPCs) and organizations that support their work have grown and evolved beyond the services that an academic center like CLF can provide. As such, the CLF seeks to engage active FPN members and partner organizations to help define the external infrastructure needed to support the evolving needs of the network of over 300 FPCs in the United States and to redefine CLF's role in supporting this network.

CLF's goal is to develop a plan for the next phase of the FPN project, including a recommendation for a new external organizational/network structure, a discrete scope of work for CLF, identified partnerships to support implementation, and a financial plan. We anticipate an approximately two-year timeframe to complete the plan and begin the project's transition.

As envisioned, CLF will retain an organizational development consultant (s) to advise the CLF, a facilitation team that will lead a network engagement process and an advisory team that will work closely with CLF to develop the transition plan. The consultant will work to ensure we ask critical questions and reflect on our learning throughout the transition plan development process.

## **Timeframe**

April 2024-October 2025, approximately 5 hrs/month.

## **Scope of Work**

1. Understand the status of the FPN project, both internal operations and program work, and the evolving external needs of the network.
2. Review interview questions for one-on-one interviews with key food systems networks and recommend network leaders to interview as part of the assessment phase in investigating networks.
3. Provide input into the design of the community engagement process and activities to gather feedback from the network of FPCs and partners about the next phase of the network. This phase of the process may include regional in-person and virtual gatherings.
4. Help to facilitate a two-day in-person planning meeting in Baltimore, Maryland.
5. Help develop criteria for partner organizations and identify gaps to improve the process of selecting potential organizational partners.
6. Review and provide feedback to the CLF and advisory team on the transition plan or other documents that are deemed needed for the transition.

7. Provide ongoing intermittent advice to the CLF, facilitation team and advisory team on the FPN's transition.

## **Values**

The Food Policy Networks project has made a formal commitment to reevaluate, refocus, and ground our work in racial and socioeconomic justice. With this commitment, we are challenging ourselves to make equity a central part of our work so that everyone—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, income, nationality, religion, sexual preference, physical ability or age—can fully participate in shaping a equitable, just, sustainable and healthy food system.

Our commitment to equity acknowledges the following:

1. Policy changes shift power and influence systems. If we are seeking to address inequities, we must responsibly engage in policy. Civic engagement processes help develop just policies and provide opportunities for all interested community members to participate.
2. Systems thinking will be required to transform the food system because solutions need to consider the complex relationships and connections among different sectors. Food systems change requires the coordinated action of individuals and organizational stakeholders who, collectively, bring their diverse expertise and experience to the policymaking table.
3. People's time is valuable, and just compensation creates a respectful and welcoming space for racially and economically diverse participants to engage in and guide the work of the FPN project.
4. Through collaboration, support and accountability, FPN can learn from other organizations, networks and coalitions led by those affected by food and farm inequalities and work to advance racial and socioeconomic justice.

## **Submission Requirements**

When responding to this RFP, include the following items in the order listed below.

1. Statement of understanding of the scope of work.
2. Philosophy and methodology specific to this project. This should include a description of the approach and activities that will lead to the successful completion of the scope of work.
3. Share how your values, practices and methodology influence your approach to change – specifically, how change is created, held, practiced, and evaluated.
4. A commitment and demonstrated practice of racial equity.
5. Examples of similar work you have completed of comparable size, scope, and complexity.
6. Relevant experience and training related to the scope of work.

7. Description of your overall experience working with non-profit organizations and/or networks.
8. Reference information for three current or former clients.
9. Proposed budget including daily rate.

### **Selection Criteria**

1. Strength of demonstrated experience working with organizations on transition plans, succession planning or a comparable activity.
2. Expertise in organizational development, including values and purpose, structure and governance, leadership, relationships, and work processes.
3. Proven trust and experience working with racial justice organizations, social justice movements, or organizations focused on civic engagement/collaborative democracy.
4. Practice of racial equity in relationship building and systems change work.
5. Applied knowledge of networks and network development.
6. Depth of experience facilitating in-person and virtual meetings with maximum inclusion of participants.

### **Calendar of key dates**

March 15, 2024	Written response to RFP due to Anne Palmer and Karen Bassarab
March 22, 2024	Selection notification of winning consultant
April 15, 2024	Tentative Start of Contract

Based upon the initial review of proposals, CLF may invite applicants to make a virtual presentation of their proposal and their capabilities as a further consideration in the selection process.

If you have any questions related to the RFP, please submit them no later than 5 pm ET on Wednesday, March 8, 2024. We will share our responses to questions with all interested parties. Please send us your email address if you intend to submit a proposal.

Questions related to the RFP should be directed to both:  
Anne Palmer, Director of Practice, [apalmer6@jhu.edu](mailto:apalmer6@jhu.edu)  
Karen Bassarab, Senior Program Officer II, [kbanks10@jhu.edu](mailto:kbanks10@jhu.edu)

### **Proposal Due Date**

Completed proposal submissions must be received by both CLF staff members listed above no later than 5:00 PM (ET) on Monday, March 15, 2024.

### **Relevant Background and Project Description**

Founded in 1996, the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (CLF) has been addressing some of the most pressing issues in the food system while advancing public health and protecting the environment. As an interdisciplinary academic center based within the Bloomberg School of

Public Health, CLF is a leader in public health research, education, policy, and advocacy that is dedicated to building a healthier, more equitable, and resilient food system. For more information, please visit: <https://clf.jhsph.edu>

Since 2013, CLF has supported the Food Policy Networks (FPN) project, whose goal is to advance state, local, and tribal food policy through networking, capacity building, research, and technical assistance to food policy councils (FPCs)<sup>1</sup> and similar groups. The FPN project convenes an informal network of people who are working in their respective communities to change their food system through partnerships, programs, and policies.

FPCs provide a structure for people from various sectors and diverse interests to develop relationships, engage in learning, and work together on common goals for food systems change. The FPN project supports multiple activities, such as hosting communities of learning and practice, conducting a biannual census of U.S.-based FPCs, providing technical support through curbside consulting, moderating a listserv with 2,200 members, and developing resources.

Through these activities, we have built trusted relationships with many FPCs, increased public recognition of CLF as a resource for and on FPCs, and improved understanding of these collaborative governance models for food systems change. For more information about the FPN project, please visit: <https://www.foodpolicynetworks.org/>

### **Contract Term**

CLF seeks to contract with the selected individual(s) for 18 months, effective upon a fully executed contract (expected April 2024). The terms of the contract will be set forth in a definitive agreement to be signed by Johns Hopkins University and the selected individual(s), which will contain usual and customary terms for transactions of this type, including standard representations, warranties, and termination provisions; any contract terms set forth in this RFP will be merged into and superseded by the terms of such definitive agreement.

### **Funding Level**

We have budgeted \$15,000 for this scope of work. Applications with proposed budgets over \$15,000 will be considered, but it is preferred that proposed budgets are closer to the budgeted amount.

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<sup>1</sup> FPCs (also referred to as food coalitions, food and farm alliances, good food networks, etc.) are groups of stakeholders from community, government, nonprofit and business, which may be sanctioned by a local or state government or may exist independently of government, that address food systems issues and needs within city, county, state, tribal, or multi-county regions through programs and policy advocacy.