



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### INTRODUCTION:

**Overview:** No child should go hungry but 1 in 8 kids may face hunger this year in America. Using proven, practical solutions, Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry is ending childhood hunger by ensuring that kids and their households get healthy meals where they live, learn and play. For more than 10 years and with a presence in all 50 states, our Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry campaign collaborates with stakeholders working to end childhood hunger and to support family nutrition assistance. We carry out awareness-raising state and national initiatives, mobilize action, and work directly in states and communities to implement strategies to ensure kids have the healthy, reliable nutrition they deserve to grow, learn and achieve. Rather than prescribing approaches and solutions, we place partnerships and human-centered approaches at the core of our work ([NoKidHungry.org](http://NoKidHungry.org)).

Increasing the availability of food for children and families is our north star. Like education, where most of our place-based Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry's efforts to date have centered, affordable housing communities is a system where social determinants of health can be greatly impacted. Collaborating with major housing developers reinforces our program priorities, offers new potentially scalable and sustainable pathways to end hunger and expands partnership networks available to address childhood hunger. The overarching goal for the Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry's Nutrition in Housing (NIH) work is to *significantly increase meals available to children and their families by integrating nutrition assistance and food access into affordable housing communities.*

**Project Background:** As we continue working toward a world where no kid is hungry and every kid is healthy, we are integrating a place-based strategy where we are working with managed care's affordable housing investments to adopt sustainable strategies and programs that increase access to healthy food and food security. We have been integrating enhanced food access, as well as nutrition assistance and education, within the existing services and culture of affordable housing communities serving families. We employ a model that strives to be both replicable and scalable and that is centered-in-community. Our vision for this project is healthier, food-secure communities where residents are able to access quality nutrition with choice, dignity and respect. Anticipated outcomes include increased food security, increase in fruit and vegetable consumption, improved dietary intake, and increased SNAP enrollment.

Since June 2022, beginning with a scan of the food and nutrition services within and around the affordable housing community, an asset map was created and utilized to facilitate an onsite resident-centered listening session at each of the four affordable housing communities participating in our NIH pilot. Taking information gathered from the listening session, a site-specific action plan was created to enhance or improve existing services and community-based organization (CBO) relationships and establish new partnerships and services that support food security. Resident Wellness Champions are a central component of this pilot as they provide support in the design, promotion, and implementation of the action plan. Site resident service coordinators and food enrichment coordinators are leading the efforts of implementing the site's action items and local and national partnerships are integral to the pilot's success.

The current NIH sites are located in Stockton and Esparto, CA, Savannah GA, and Houston, TX. Each of the NIH partner sites sit in a USDA-designated food desert. The combined resident population of the two California sites is approximately 50% Hispanic/Latino and 50% Black or African American, at the Georgia site approximately 98% of the resident population is Black or African American and within the Texas site approximately 75% of the resident population is Black or African American.

The overarching goal of our NIH pilot is to establish a sustainable and replicable model that can be implemented across major housing developer's affordable housing communities to support food security for families with children. The primary objective of the research project is to determine if the NIH model improves the food environment, with a secondary objective of understanding how the model works and what elements of the program contribute to outcomes.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry is pleased to release this Request for Proposals (RFP) which seeks an evaluator to conduct an outcome evaluation of its NIH project. This evaluation should address the question:

**Did Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry's investment and partnership with four affordable housing communities improve the food environment for the residents?**

Key measures of NIH success may include:

- A change in residents' food security as measured by housing partner's biennial data collection;
- A change in residents' perceived access to and actual receipt of federal nutrition programs (specifically SNAP-EBT);
- A change in resident access to nutritious foods including fruits and vegetables
- A change in the housing community's availability of onsite food distribution programs and resident use of programs;

- A change in residents' knowledge of, access to, and use of community-based nutrition services (e.g., community and/or faith-based food pantries, out-of-school-time meal distribution sites, etc.);
- A change in resident's dietary intake;
- A change in the wellness champions' perceptions of co-creating a vision for a healthier community.

In consultation with Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry, the research contractor will conceptualize and lead an evaluation (including study design, execution, analysis, and reporting) of the NIH model. The contractor will propose an evaluation design (which may include, for example, mixed-methods approaches) that are appropriate for answering the key research questions. Contractor will collaborate with the Share Our Strength team to finalize the evaluation plan, data instruments, and summaries of learnings. The evaluation strategy should include the following tasks and deliverables.

### **TASKS AND DELIVERABLES:**

Contractor will propose a study design (examples of possible methods include pre-and-post mixed method research, participatory evaluation, etc.) that is appropriate for answering the key research question outlined above.

Primary outcomes of interest include participation in food benefits programs (e.g. SNAP), redemption of food benefits, fruit and vegetable consumption, and food security. Secondly, process measures (e.g. stakeholder engagement, resident satisfaction, and program fidelity) could provide further context.

The evaluation approach should be sensitive to the limited capacity of housing site staff and burdens on residents, therefore integrating data collection into existing systems rather than creating new systems (where possible), seeking and leveraging existing data where possible, and aiming to minimize burden on study participants.

The project tasks and deliverables should minimally include, though are not limited to:

- Assessment of one component of the NIH model that involves a Food and Nutrition Access Pilot utilizing Instacart, with whom we have partnered. Methods should be proposed by the contractor, for example mixed methods integrating quantitative analysis (including, but not limited to, actual purchasing data and patterns) or qualitative data collection (in both English and Spanish) with participants and staff. The partnership with Instacart allows participants a no-cost, one-year Instacart membership and a \$40 per month credit to purchase fruits and vegetables. Assessment should cover topics such as, though not limited to:
  - Perception of food access and purchasing options;
  - Purchases and consumption patterns;
  - Enrollment in and/or utilization of SNAP-EBT.

- Description of the unique activities implemented within each of the four NIH sites intervention reach, and outcomes and lessons learned). Methods should be proposed by the contractor and may include, for example, qualitative methods such as case studies, interviews and surveys, activity tracking, and/or mixed methods analyses. Topics may include, but are not limited to, efforts to engage and empower wellness champions to co-create a shared vision; ways residents were involved in identifying desired interventions; the actual activities employed (e.g. promotion of community services, etc.) and measured outcomes (e.g. increased knowledge of and use of community services, etc.); factors that contributed to program successes, challenges or unintended outcomes; differences in experiences or outcomes by site location or demographic group; and recommendations for future changes to or scaling of model, including as it relates to equity, diversity, and inclusion. This data collection may occur with staff and residents.
- Any qualitative data collection should be conducted in all current NIH partner sites in four cities: Stockton and Esparto, CA, Savannah GA, and Houston, TX. and meet language needs (i.e. English and Spanish).
- Project management including project calls to discuss project needs or resolve emergent issues, relay updates, or engage with Share Our Strength to gather feedback on project components.
- Evaluation documents including research plan, data collection instruments, and reporting deliverables, finalized in collaboration with the Share Our Strength team. , etc.

#### **PROJECT TIMELINE:**

- Written proposal due to Share Our Strength: September 29, 2023
  - Proposals shall be emailed to the attention of [jgarcia@strength.org](mailto:jgarcia@strength.org) with the following subject line: “Share Our Strength NIH Evaluation: [Insert Organization Name]”
- Notification of award of work: October 15, 2023
- Project begins: November 1, 2023
- Finalized research plan, data collection instruments, and metrics for grantees to track: December 15, 2023
- Draft report outline and summary of preliminary findings: April 14, 2024
- Draft summary, report, and presentation deck: May 14, 2024
- Final executive summary, report, any site-specific briefs for staff or participants, and presentations to Share Our Strength staff and network as appropriate: June 14, 2024
- Review of any external-facing communication materials that may be developed by Share Our Strength: June 25, 2024
- Project completed: June 30, 2024

## **BUDGET:**

The budget for all project components is \$150,000. Proposals should take the budget into consideration. If there is a need to go beyond \$150,000 please detail what that additional amount would be used for and provide justification.

## **PROPOSAL GUIDELINES:**

Proposals should be limited to 10 pages (excluding appendices). Please include the following in your proposal response:

- Overview of your organization and/or team
- Overview of how you will meet each component of the project scope, including proposed design and justification for your approach. This will include recommended methods of collecting data, measures, analyses, and list of tasks and deliverables
- Proposed timeline from start of project to finalized deliverables. If the timeline must be extended beyond June 30, 2024 (we would need to determine if this can be approved), please provide the alternative timeline and justification.
- Any key differentiators about your team - Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). As part of Share Our Strength's equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts, it is critical to understand the diversity of contractors and experience in work that advances EDI. Please describe organizational and team diversity, lived experiences, experience engaging in similar settings or population groups, experience with community-centered and participatory research, or any additional information describing experiences with incorporating EDI frameworks into community research.
- Appendices: Biosketch, resume, or CV for key personnel
- Appendices: Budget amount and justification.
- Appendices: Examples of your work that will help us understand your style and approach

**Please contact Julie Garcia, Senior Manager, Share Our Strength at [jgarcia@strength.org](mailto:jgarcia@strength.org) for additional questions.**