



# **Request for Proposals for Executive Search Firm**

**Franklin County Rise Together  
Innovation Center**

June 11, 2020	RFP Issued
July 10, 2020 by 3:00 PM	RFP Responses Due

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Summary

In response to the increased presence of poverty within Franklin County, the County Commissioners convened a group of stakeholders to consider the urgent need to mitigate local poverty and propose solutions. The result of this convening was “Rise Together: A Blueprint for Reducing Poverty in Franklin County”. A major outcome of this report was that the commissioners would create the Franklin County Rise Together Innovation Center that would be tasked with carrying on the ongoing work of the blueprint and appoint a Leadership Council (“LC”) made up of leaders and residents from throughout the community to oversee it.

The Commissioners have pledged \$2.5M annually to support the Innovation Center and have approved three positions to begin implementing the work. Accordingly, the LC is issuing this Request for Proposals for the services of an Executive Search Firm (“RFP”) to solicit responses from firms interested in providing services related to identifying potential candidates for the position of Executive Director (“ED”). After careful review of responses received and associated due diligence performed by the LC, they will select one firm to perform the below described Executive Search Services.

Respondents will be competing against each other for selection to provide the Executive Search Services as more fully described in Section 2. The submissions of all Respondent firms shall be compared and evaluated pursuant to the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP.

#### **RESPONDENTS PLEASE NOTE:**

- Selection of a Respondent under this RFP does not commit the LC to procuring any services pursuant to this RFP.
- The LC will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by legal counsel and approval by the LC and or Innovation Center Board. A firm will be awarded the work upon signing of a Contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items. The LC reserves the right to reject all proposals.

### 1.2 The Rise Together Leadership Council

The Leadership Council serves as the executive advisory body that will assist in designing the infrastructure for the Innovation Center and work in concert with the Director of Franklin County Jobs and Family Services to help advance the work of the Rise Together: Blueprint for Reducing Poverty in Franklin County that is already underway and until the ED position is filled.

## 2 Services Required

### 2.1 Scope of Services

The Executive Search Firm shall assist the LC in attracting, interviewing, and hiring an ED. The ED of the Rise Together Innovation Center will provide strategic direction and oversight for the newly formed 501c3 organization, working closely with the staff and LC to develop the organizational, technological, and financial infrastructure. Specific duties could include but are not limited to developing policies and procedures, establishing permanent governance, developing and implementing a staffing plan, creating of a marketing and fund development plan, establishing community partnerships and relationships and other duties involved with running a non-profit organization.

The services that will be required shall include:

- Solicit input from the Search Committee, through meetings and/or interviews to understand the role, responsibilities, qualifications, and appropriate experience needed for the position.

- Develop a recruitment strategy, process and timetable for completion of the work in consultation with the Council's Search Committee.
- Review of the current job description to evaluate its attractiveness and assist to develop an one that will entice the right candidate. A job description for the ED is included as Attachment A.
- Source job candidates through a number of different channels including advertising in locally and nationally recognized publications likely to attract qualified candidates, proactively reaching out to candidates in the marketplace that may not be actively seeking the position, accessing the firm's network of qualified C-level candidates and other best practice recruitment strategies utilized in the industry.
- Assess the qualifications of interested candidates against those required in the job description and recommend potential candidates for interview to the Council's Search Committee.
- Support the Council's Search Committee in engaging in a rigorous interview, reference-checking and hiring process to select the best candidate.

### 3 Submission of Responses

#### 3.1 Schedule

- (a) The RFP process will proceed according to the following anticipated schedule:

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- (b) **Responses will be due no later than June 25, 2020 by 3:00PM.** Responses received later than the date and time specified will not be considered. The LC assumes no responsibility or liability for late delivery or receipt of responses.
- (c) The responses will be evaluated pursuant to the criteria set forth in this RFP. Notification of selection or non-selection of all Respondents who submitted conforming responses will be mailed when the selection process is final.

#### 3.2 Questions

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted to: [twright@rama-consulting.net](mailto:twright@rama-consulting.net)

#### **Instructions for Submission of Responses**

Respondents are cautioned to read carefully and conform to the requirements of this RFP. Failure to comply with the provisions of this RFP may serve as grounds for rejection of a response.

- (a) All responses must be submitted electronically in .pdf format to: [twright@rama-consulting.net](mailto:twright@rama-consulting.net) Submissions should indicate in the subject line that the message is "In Response to RFP for Executive Search Services"
- (b) A statement indicating compliance with the terms, conditions and specifications contained in this RFP must be presented in the response. Submission of the signed Authorized Respondent's Signature and Acceptance Form (Attachment B) shall satisfy this requirement.

### **3.3 Information Required**

- (a) **Executive Summary**: Respondents should provide a summary of their organization, their qualifications and their proposed approach for working with the LC. This summary should be a maximum of 2 pages in length.
- (b) **Statement of Firm Qualifications**: All responses must include a statement of qualifications, experience and description of the Respondent firm and its history. The response should specifically indicate the firm's current and historical expertise in providing the Executive Search Services identified in the RFP. Additionally, the response should demonstrate the firm's commitment to diversity and inclusion based on experience working with minority partners or organizations to identify and provide a diverse candidate pool.
- (c) **Staff Qualifications**: All responses must include names and titles of each individual who will be providing the Executive Search Services under any work order, as well as written descriptions of the individual's experience. All Respondents must identify the individual(s) who will have primary responsibility for contact and communications with the CL and the person who is authorized to negotiate and contractually-bind Respondent. The LC reserves the right to investigate and review the background of any or all personnel assigned to work under the Contract, including any work orders thereto, and, based on such investigations, to reject the use of any persons within the LC's discretion.
- (d) **Approach**: All responses should include a plan for performing the services which articulates what services and the level of effort that would be required for the initial engagement and what services would be required for future engagements.
- (e) **Billing Rates and Structure**:  
Respondents are required to include the following information in their response:  
Respondent shall provide a cost proposal for their Executive Search Services.
  - As part of the cost proposal, please list each person that may perform services and their title, the proposed rate or blended hourly rate proposed, and the level of involvement anticipated for each component.
- (f) **References**: All responses must include references from at least 3 clients of the firm, and preferably clients who have utilized the firm on matters related to Executive Search Services. The references must include a contact person, a full address, and a phone number.

## **4 Evaluation Process and Criteria**

The LC shall evaluate each Response that is properly submitted. After submission and review of Responses, interviews may be requested. Selection of a Respondent to provide the Executive Search Services will be based on the following criteria:

- (a) Experience and qualifications of the firm, and more specifically individual team members to be assigned to the engagement, in performing Executive Search Services for similar governmental and/or private organizations.
- (b) Proposal's responsiveness to RFP requirements.
- (c) Firm and staff's competence and knowledge demonstrated during the interview process, if applicable.
- (d) Commitment to diversity and inclusion demonstrated through their experience partnering with minority firms or diverse organizations to identify and provide diverse candidate pools.
- (e) Price

While the order of these factors does not generally denote relative importance, the LC acknowledges that selecting best value providers primarily requires a balanced combination of (1) reasonable rates

and the availability of flat fees, blended rates and caps on fees, (2) strong experience and demonstrated expertise in providing Executive Search Services, and (3) a demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion through ownership or existing collaborative relationships.

The LC reserves the right to consider such other relevant factors as it deems appropriate in order to hire the best value provider of the Executive Search Services. The LC may or may not seek additional information from Respondents prior to making a selection.

This RFP does not commit LC to select any firm, award any work order, pay any costs incurred in preparing a response, or procure or contract for any services or supplies. The LC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submittals received, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in its entirety, or change the RFP guidelines, when it is in the best interests of the LC to do so.

## **5 Other Provisions**

### **5.1 General Information**

- a) The LC will only award a contract to responsive and responsible Respondents. To qualify as responsive, the Respondent must respond to all requirements of the RFP in a complete and thorough manner. In order to qualify as responsible, the Respondent must demonstrate: (1) the availability of adequate resources and staffing to efficiently and expeditiously service the LC's needs; (2) the necessary experience, organization, qualifications, skills and facilities to provide the types of Executive Search Services set forth in this RFP; (3) a satisfactory record of performance in the provision of the Executive Search Services set forth in this RFP; (4) a demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion; and (5) the ability and willingness to comply with the requirements of Federal and State law relative to equal employment opportunity. **ANY PROPOSAL DETERMINED TO BE NON-RESPONSIVE TO THIS RFP, INCLUDING INSTRUCTIONS GOVERNING THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS, WILL BE DISQUALIFIED WITHOUT EVALUATION UNLESS THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE DETERMINES THAT THE NONCOMPLIANCE IS INSUBSTANTIAL.**
- b) The LC makes no guarantee that any Executive Search Services will be purchased pursuant to any Contract entered into with Respondent as a result of this RFP.
- c) Unless otherwise specified in this RFP, all communications, responses, and documentation must be in English, and all cost proposals or figures in U.S. currency. All responses must be submitted in accordance with the specific terms of this RFP.
- d) Respondents are prohibited from communicating directly with any member of the LC except as specified in this RFP, and no other individual employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any questions or inquiries concerning this RFP.
- e) The goal of this RFP is to select and enter into a Contract with the Respondent that will provide the best value of Executive Search Services to achieve the procurement goals of the LC. Respondents are therefore invited to propose alternatives which provide substantially better or more cost-effective performance than achievable under a stated RFP specification.
- f) Costs that are not specifically identified in the Respondent's response and/or not specifically accepted by the LC as part of the Contract will not be compensated under any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP. The LC shall not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by Respondents in responding to this RFP.
- g) Respondent's submitted Response shall be treated by the LC as an accurate statement of Respondent's capabilities and experience. Should any statement asserted by Respondent prove to be inaccurate or inconsistent with the foregoing, such inaccuracy or inconsistency shall constitute sufficient cause for rejection of the Response and/or of any resulting contract. The RFP evaluation committee will rule on any such matters and will determine appropriate action.
- h) If the LC determines that it is necessary to revise any part of this RFP, or if additional data is necessary to clarify any of its provisions, a supplement will be issued in the same manner as originally distributed. The LC's RFP evaluation personnel reserve the right to amend the RFP at any time prior to the deadline for submission of responses.
- i) Submitted Responses must be valid in all respects for a minimum period of sixty (60) days after the

deadline for submission.

- j) The LC's prior approval is required for any subcontracted services under any Contract entered into as a result of this RFP. Selected Respondents are responsible for the satisfactory performance and adequate oversight of their subcontractors. Subcontractors are required to meet the same requirements and are held to the same reimbursable cost standards as the selected Respondents.
- k) The Contract and work orders entered into as a result of this RFP shall be on a fee for service basis. It is anticipated that the LC shall select one Respondent to this RFP and intends to enter into a Contract with one Respondent. It is anticipated that the term of the Contract entered into pursuant to this RFP will be for a term of at least three months, with an option for the LC to renew it in its discretion.

## **5.2 Waiver Authority**

The LC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modifications of the response, to accept or reject any or all responses received, and/or to cancel all or part of this RFP at any time prior to awards.

## **5.3 Disclaimer**

This RFP does not commit the LC to award any funds, pay any costs incurred in preparing a response, or procure or contract for services or supplies. The LC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received, negotiate with all qualified Respondents, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in its entirety, or change the response guidelines, when it is in its best interests.

## **5.4 Changes/Amendments to RFP**

This RFP has been distributed electronically using various sites. It is the responsibility of respondents to check these sites for any addenda or modifications to a RFP to which they intend to respond. The LC accepts no liability and will provide no accommodation to Respondents who submit a response based on an out-of-date RFP document.

## ATTACHMENT A

### **JOB DESCRIPTION FOR INNOVATION CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

#### **Rise Together Innovation Center Executive Director Job Description**

#### **BACKGROUND**

- The Rise Together Innovation Center is a dedicated space to coordinate long- and short-term efforts to mitigate poverty and improve economic mobility, family stability, and equitable access to opportunity across Franklin County.
- The Innovation Center is responsible for convening community partners, aligning systems, and implementing the Rise Together Blueprint to Reduce Poverty in Franklin County, in addition to vetting other big ideas.
- Over the next 12-18 months, the Innovation Center will focus on 3 of the 13 goals and 1 big idea.
  - Goal #1 (Jobs): Increasing employers' engagement in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty – through the creation of living wage and high-paying jobs for residents.
  - Goal #3 (Jobs): Increasing access to relevant training for credentials that meet local demand with employer commitments to hire and promote.
  - Goal#11 (Youth): Increasing the number of students at or near the poverty level experiencing academic success.
  - Big Idea: Research, evaluate and vet an expanded childcare subsidy program and public pre-K for all Franklin County children
- The Franklin County Board of Commissioners are committed to devoting appropriate resources for the success of the Innovation Center. Oversight for the Innovation Center will come from a newly created Leadership Council consisting of 21 members. The Council will serve approximately 12 to 18 months to build the appropriate governance structure to support the strategy of the Blueprint.

#### **ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW**

The Rise Together Innovation Center is a standalone entity responsible for carrying out the day-to-day work of convening partners and aligning systems to implement The Franklin County Rise Together Blueprint, in addition to vetting other big ideas to disrupt poverty.

Reporting to the Innovation Center Board of Directors, the Executive Director will have overall strategic and operational responsibility for the Center's staff, programs, and execution of its mission. The Executive Director will initially develop an in-depth knowledge of the field, operations, and business plans with a commitment to being an effective anti-racist organization, actively pursuing racial equity and the eradication of structural racism as an explicit approach of its programming, partnerships, and big ideas.

#### **OVERVIEW OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Executive Director is the leader of the organization, tasked with establishing a vision for

community impact that is achieved through the efforts of a diverse team of high- performing leaders, staff, and volunteers alike, and focused on making policies, programs, and practices more racially equitable. The Executive Director should have an entrepreneurial spirit as “Chief Mobilizer” and leverage the power of relationships and networks to work across private, public, and corporate sectors to improve conditions and reduce poverty throughout Franklin County.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES/ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

### **Leadership & Management:**

- Play an active role in advising on the integration of racial equity concepts into all aspects of the Center’s community engagement and program strategy.
- Ensure ongoing local organizational excellence; rigorous program and Blueprint evaluation; and consistent quality of finance and administration, fundraising, communications, and systems.
- Recommend timelines and resources needed to achieve the strategic goals.
- Actively engage and energize Center board members, committees, partnering organizations, and funders.
- Develop, maintain, and support a strong board and advisory councils.
- Serve as ex-officio on each committee and workgroup.
- Seek and build board and advisory council involvement with strategic direction for both ongoing Blueprint efforts and vetting the big ideas of the Innovation Center.
- Lead, coach, develop, and retain Center’s high-performance management team.
- Ensure effective systems to track scaling progress, and regularly evaluate Blueprint components, to measure successes that can be effectively communicated to the board, advisory council, funders, and other constituents.

### **Fundraising & Communications:**

- Work with the board to develop long term financial plan.
- Secure and expand revenue through strategic partnerships.
- Deepen and refine all aspects of communications with municipalities—from web presence to external relations with the goal of creating a stronger brand for the Center.
- Use external presence and relationships to garner new financial opportunities.

### **Planning & New Business:**

- Design the implementation process for delivery of the Blueprint and complete the strategic business planning process for the Innovation Center.
- Begin to build partnerships in new municipalities, establishing relationships with the funders, and political and community leaders.
- Be an external local and national presence that publishes and communicates Blueprint results, with an emphasis on the successes of the public and private dollars and civic engagement.

## QUALIFICATIONS

The Executive Director will be thoroughly committed to the Center's mission. All candidates should have proven leadership, coaching, and relationship management experience.

Specific requirements include:

- Advanced degree, or the equivalent of work experience with at least ten (10) years of senior management experience, with a track record of effectively leading various stakeholder groups and staff.
- Ability to point to specific examples of having developed and operationalized strategies that have taken an organization to the next stage of growth.
- An action-oriented, entrepreneurial, adaptable, and innovative approach to business planning.
- Unwavering commitment to quality programs and data-driven program evaluation.
- Excellence in organizational management with the ability to coach staff, manage, and develop high-performance teams; set and achieve strategic objectives; and maintain a budget.
- Strong marketing, public relations, and fundraising experience with the ability to engage a wide range of stakeholders and cultures.
- Past success working with a Board of Directors, with the ability to cultivate relationships with existing board member.
- A persuasive and passionate communicator with strong written and verbal communication skills and excellent interpersonal and multidisciplinary project skills.
- Ability to work effectively in collaboration with diverse groups of people.
- Passion, idealism, integrity, positive attitude, mission-driven, and self-directed.

## CORE COMPETENCIES REQUIRED FOR THIS POSITION

- **Mission-Focused:** Catalyze others' commitment to the mission to create real social change that leads to better lives and healthier communities. This drives their performance and professional motivations.
- **Outward Turning:** Understands the dynamics of local, regional, and national environments, and works on an agenda rooted in the community's perception of its needs and aspirations.
- **Business Acumen:** Possess a high-level of broad business and management skills and is effective at generating financial support for the organization.
- **Relationship-Oriented:** Understands that people come before process and is astute in cultivating and managing relationships toward a common goal.
- **Collaborator:** understands the roles and contributions of all sectors of the community and can mobilize resources (financial and human) through meaningful engagement.
- **Results-Driven:** Dedicated to shared and measurable goals for the common good; creating, resourcing, scaling, and leveraging strategies and innovations for significant investment and impact.
- **Brand Steward:** Steward of the brand and understands her/his role in growing and protecting the reputation and results of the greater network.
- **Visionary:** Confronts the complex realities of the environment and simultaneously maintains faith in a different and better future, providing purpose, direction, and motivation.
- **Team-Builder:** First ensures that the right people are in the right roles at the right times; fostering commitment, trust, and collaboration among multi-cultural leaders and

stakeholders.

- **Network-Oriented:** Values the power of networks and strives to leverage the breadth of community presence, relationships and strategy.

**ATTACHMENT B**  
**AUTHORIZED RESPONDENT'S SIGNATURE AND ACCEPTANCE FORM**

The undersigned is a duly authorized representative of the Respondent listed below. The Respondent has read and understands the RFP requirements. The Respondent acknowledges that all of the terms and conditions of the RFP are mandatory, and that Respondent's response is compliant with such requirements. The Respondent specifically acknowledges the application of the procedures regarding disclosure of sensitive information as set forth in Attachment B of the RFP, and specifically agrees that it shall be bound by those procedures.

The Respondent understands that, if selected by the LC, the Respondent and the LC will execute a Contract.

Respondent agrees that the entire bid response will remain valid for sixty (60) days from receipt by the LC.

I certify that Respondent is in compliance with all corporate filing requirements and State tax laws.

I further certify that the statements made in this Response to the RFP, including all attachments and exhibits, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Respondent: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name of Respondent)

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Authorized Representative)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_