

# Request for Proposals:

## *Northwest Arkansas Community of Practice Convener and Facilitator*

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Arkansas has been home to Walmart since 1962, when Sam Walton opened his first store in the region. Walmart and the Walmart Foundation continue to invest in the region that has allowed Walmart to become the global company it is today. One way our regional giving strategy works to enhance the quality of life is by improving the **access and availability to healthier food** for all residents in Northwest Arkansas.

### **Purpose**

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the gaps and barriers within the regional food system in Northwest Arkansas. Individuals and families seeking assistance are relying on community resources more than ever before and we are seeing the essential role programs and organizations like SNAP, WIC, food banks, and emergency school meal programs play in meeting the needs of our community. COVID-19 has also exposed how essential it is for us to coordinate across organizations to serve the region. Our local system needs greater coordination, enhanced community-generated solutions for improving food meal programs, and more equitable access for all members of the community. Although there are a number of convening forums in the region, there is no coordinated effort focused on the topic of food insecurity and access to healthier food with the intent to strategically and cohesively respond to the ever changing food insecurity needs of the region.

The Walmart Foundation seeks to fund an experienced organization to design, convene, and facilitate a Northwest Arkansas *Community of Practice* to improve equitable access to healthier food, while increasing the ability of food insecure individuals and households' to find and consistently consume healthier foods in Northwest Arkansas – ultimately, decreasing the rate of food insecurity in our region.

### **Background**

A 2018 Center for Government Research report funded by the Walmart Foundation identified barriers to and gaps in services within the Northwest Arkansas charitable food network. CGR analyzed national and local demographic and socioeconomic data; inventoried and surveyed local charitable food providers; partnered with the HARK Center for Collaborative Care to conduct 24 focus groups with charitable food providers and people experiencing food insecurity; and created an online interactive map displaying the location and characteristics of food resources in the context of geographic socioeconomic data. The study identified key challenges within the charitable food network that included providing a variety of healthy, fresh food on a regular basis, offering individuals accessing charitable food resources during non-work hours, and making available transportation to charitable food resources. Findings from the report can be found here (<http://reports.cgr.org/download/report/5c800e72c33f6>) and the interactive map can be found here. (<http://datascience.cgr.org/arkansas-food-insecurity/>)

The project also identified the demand for community-generated ideas to address food insecurity and strengthen the food access network in Northwest Arkansas, including the recommendation to form an advisory group to further source community-generated ideas for improving access to healthier food. The recent pandemic has reinforced the inequities in local food access programs and intensified the interest and demand for stronger regional coordination to ensure equitable access for food insecure individuals and households in Northwest Arkansas.

## **Scope of Work:**

Proposals should outline how the organization would design, convene and run a *Community of Practice* focused on regional coordination to increase access to SNAP/WIC, evolve food recovery and distribution models, and improve the ability for food insecure individuals to find food when they need it.

The proposal should include details outlining the approach to the following areas:

- 1) **Membership:** Develop criteria, recruit, and manage membership (20-25 orgs), including a specific role for area funders. To support equitable engagement, the budget should include financial support allocated for participating organizations (*excluding funders*).
- 2) **Regional Planning:** Lead joint planning among participants to develop a vision for how Northwest Arkansas can create equitable food access. Develop approach and facilitate working groups on priority topics. Prioritize solutions to address gaps and build the necessary capacity and coordination of local partners to improve access and availability of healthy food.
- 3) **Shared Learning:** Design, implement and facilitate shared learnings among participants (in person and/or virtual). Build a learning and capacity building agenda, that may include, but not limited to human centered design, data driven decision making, and the creation of a shared diversity, equity and inclusion framework. Develop online and on-demand communication tools and resources that facilitate learning and sharing among participants. Connect with and include external experts to implement learning and skill building sessions.
- 4) **Measurement and Evaluation:** Document learnings across region, including insights, trends, and gaps to support Community of Practice in developing future strategies.

**Length of Grant:** Three years (December 2020 – December 2023)

## **Qualifications:**

Organizations submitting proposals should demonstrate experience in the following areas:

- Food access programs (i.e. federal nutrition programs, summer, schools, and/or charitable meal programs) and/or supply chain management
- Facilitation and peer learning
- Change management among cross-sector collaborators
- Systems thinking
- Project management

- Measurement and evaluation
- Diversity, equity, inclusion
- Human centered design

*\*may subgrant or hire consultants if organization does not have all this expertise in house*

## **Minimum Requirements:**

- Registered 501c3 public charity operating in the US
- Grant request does not exceed 30% of the applicant's total operating budget for the most recent fiscal year
- Overhead costs do not exceed 10% of total budget
- Collaborative proposals with two or more eligible organizations will be considered; however, one organization must serve as the grantee applicant. Collaborative proposals should clearly define roles of each organization and any amount to be transferred by the grantee applicant to the collaborator.
- Funding provided by the Walmart Foundation cannot be used to provide services, compensation, or preferential treatment to Walmart stores or affiliate businesses.
- Funds cannot be used for lobbying.
- Organization will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the Walmart Foundation prior to any funds being transferred.

## **Evaluation Criteria:**

- **Experience and track record (30%)**
  - o Applications will be assessed on the expertise that staff and the organization have on the qualifications listed in the section above.
- **Proposed plan for design and execution (30%)**
  - o Applications will be assessed on the strength of the proposed plans to execute on the deliverables listed above under expectations of the facilitator.
- **Diversity, equity, and inclusion (30%)**
  - o Applications will be assessed on commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion as discussed in proposed design and implementation plans as well as the community and ability to build trust.
- **Budget (10%)**
  - o Applications will be assessed on the use of funds, clarity of descriptions for use of funds and cost effectiveness.

## **Review and Selection Process**

Selections will be made through a two-step process. Organizations interested in this opportunity are invited to submit a Letter of Inquiry (LOI). LOIs will then be reviewed and finalists will be invited to submit a full proposal.

If your proposal is selected as a finalist, the proposal will go through legal review, including conducting necessary diligence, before finalizing the approval and grant agreement. Finalists may also be asked to modify their proposals to strengthen methodologies, adjust budgets, or answer questions about their proposed program before the Walmart Foundation makes a decision on funding.

## **Submission Format, Procedures and Timeline**

Proposals must be submitted via CyberGrants, an online application system. To begin, visit:

[http://www.cybergrants.com/walmart/national\\_loi](http://www.cybergrants.com/walmart/national_loi)

- Use invitation code: **RFPNat**
- Click on “Start a New Application” under the National Giving Program LOI.<sup>1</sup>
- Select “Hunger Relief and Healthy Eating: as your focus area

You must use the invitation code: **RFPNat** each time you access the application. **Proposals must be submitted by 11:59PM CST, August 17, 2020.** Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered. Proposals should be submitted as soon as possible, even prior to the deadline. This allows the Foundation to ask clarifying questions or address errors or misunderstandings if necessary before the application closes.

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| • RFP issued                              | July 6, 2020     |
| • Letter of Intent Due                    | August 17, 2020  |
| • Invitation to Submit Full Proposal Sent | August 31, 2020  |
| • Full Proposal Due                       | October 5, 2020  |
| • Grant decisions                         | November 2, 2020 |

## **Defining Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)**

The D5 Coalition (<https://www.d5coalition.org/about/dei/>) defines Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as the following:

- *“Diversity- The demographic mix of a specific collection of people, taking into account elements of human difference, but focusing particularly on:*
  - *Racial and ethnic groups: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Hispanics/Latinos/Latinas, African Americans and blacks, and American Indians and Alaska Natives*
  - *LGBT populations*
  - *People with disabilities*
  - *Women*
- *Equity Improving equity is to promote justice, impartiality and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of resources by institutions or systems. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the underlying or root causes of outcome disparities within our society.*
- *Inclusion Refers to the degree to which diverse individuals can participate fully in the decision-making processes within an organization or group. While a truly “inclusive” group is necessarily diverse, a “diverse” group may or may not be “inclusive.”*

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<sup>1</sup> The National Giving Program LOI application form is used across various Walmart.org programs. Please reference this RFP for information on the scope of this invitation and eligibility requirements.



For the purposes of this opportunity, diversity includes underrepresented groups disproportionately impacted by issues on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, economic status, or ability. For more information, please visit <https://www.d5coalition.org/about/dei/>

**Statement of Non-Commitment**

Issuance of this RFP does not commit the Walmart Foundation to award a grant or to pay any costs incurred in preparation of the proposals to respond to the RFP. Those responding to this RFP must follow its procedures and requirements. Failure to comply with or complete any part of this RFP may result in rejection of the proposal. The Walmart Foundation reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or to negotiate separately with competing applicants for funds described in this RFP.

**Walmart.org Overview:** Walmart.org, through the combined philanthropic efforts of Walmart and the Walmart Foundation, helps create opportunities for people to live better every day. Along with the unique expertise of Walmart’s business, Walmart.org aspires to build healthier, resilient systems that are good for society. Walmart.org is helping people live better by supporting programs that work to accelerate upward job mobility for frontline workers, address hunger and make healthier, more sustainably grown food a reality, and build strong communities where Walmart operates. Walmart.org works not only to tackle key social issues, we also collaborate with others to inspire solutions for long-lasting systemic change. To learn more, visit [www.walmart.org](http://www.walmart.org) or find us on Twitter [@walmart.org](https://twitter.com/walmart.org)

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