STRENGTHENING LA's HOMELESS SECTOR WORKFORCE:
Homeless Workforce Recruitment Analysis Request for Proposals

KEY DATES

Application Opens: Thursday, April 18, 2024

Optional Applicant Webinar: Thursday, May 2, 2024 from 11 am – 12 pm PT

Submissions Due by Friday, May 10, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. through UWGLA Grants Portal

BACKGROUND

United Way of Greater Los Angeles (UWGLA) commissioned a [report analyzing the Homeless Sector Workforce](#) in LA County, which documented the sector's challenges to attract, retain, and develop talent, directly impacting its ability to sustain and scale critical services and housing solutions.

Based on the recommendations of this report and with funding support from Cedars Sinai, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, LA Care Health Plan, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), and Health Net, UWGLA has launched a new initiative to build collaborative sector solutions. UWGLA has launched a Workforce Development Leadership Table (WDLT) of public sector leaders, service providers, and system investors to discuss, design, and deploy solutions. In partnership with the WDLT and other sector leaders, UWGLA will pilot strategies to reach and attract the next generation of workers, build supports that promote workforce retention, and invest in a variety of organization- and system-level solutions, starting with an initial investment in back office strengthening.

HOMELESS SERVICE SECTOR DEFINITION

While there are many organizations and government entities that support at-risk and unhoused residents. For the purposes of this project, we will focus on core service providers of the sector which is the combination of government and nonprofit organizations that are collectively responsible for funding and executing work related to outreach, assessment, sheltering, case management, and providing housing for people experiencing homelessness. It is estimated that the sector includes ~175 local governments and non-profit organizations.

Core to the Homeless Services Sector Workforce & Focus of this Project	Related (But Not Included) in the Homeless Services Sector Workforce Definition for this Project
- LAHSA - LA County-DMH - LA County-DHS - Public Housing Authorities - Providers that hold HUD-funded or Measure H funded contracts with LAHSA or another local government agency	- City of LA – LAPD - City of LA – LASAN - LA County – Sheriff - LA County – DPH - Federally Qualified Health Centers - Supported Employment providers that hold government contracts - LA County – DPSS - LA County – DCF - LA Unified School District - Managed Care Plans - Hospitals - Business Improvement Districts

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The purpose of this RFP is to identify an experienced consultant to conduct a rapid analysis specific on recruitment and onboarding strategies happening in the homeless service sector and provide recommendations to boost recruitment of next generation workers. This analysis will inform UWGLA as we seek to design pilots and an eventual campaign with the goal being to attract a higher rate of candidates from the incoming generation seeking employment (Gen Z) into the Homeless Service Sector Workforce. Overall, we aim to learn through this next phase more about what our sector should build or improve on to strengthen our workforce and ultimately strengthen the collective work to end homelessness in LA County.

SCOPE OF WORK & KEY DELIVERABLES

Situational Assessment

Every sector of the economy was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic conditions, and homeless services is no exception. To inform any strategic investments in the workforce, UWGLA must better understand the current state of the workforce crisis.

Key Questions for Analysis

1. Organizations have grown rapidly in the last few years with pushes for emergency housing efforts. How many positions are actively posted in any given quarter within a fiscal year? (Gauging number of open positions and recruitment efforts to fill them).
2. What is the latest ratio of client-facing positions to back-office staff (in updating the past analysis)? Of the two groups (front-line & back-office), where do we see the higher rates of turnover?
3. UWGLA has focused an investment on back-office staff to alleviate some of the bottleneck's organizations have identified that greatly impact service delivery. Presently, what percentage of back-office staff time is dedicated to recruitment and onboarding needs?

The Talent Pipeline – Recruitment (How People Enter the Sector)

Leaders in the homeless services sector have noted that we need to expand and diversify the pool of talent in multiple aspects. First, from a sustainability standpoint, the 2022 workforce analysis and report highlighted the sector's challenges and need to find new ways to recruit early career and next generation leaders. As we shift gears to a new incoming generation of workers (i.e., Gen Z and beyond), it is unclear why the Homeless Sector in LA County is not attracting this pool at a rate comparable to other sectors and previous generations. Second, it is clear we need to recruit and retain more people with lived experience/expertise (PWLE) to increase our credibility among clients who are skeptical that the crisis response and rehousing system can work for them.

We are seeking a consultant to help more deeply analyze current and potential workforce recruitment strategies that promote a strong and growing talent pipeline. For the purposes of this project, we define recruitment activities as 1) the use of platforms (e.g., Indeed or company websites) to promote open positions, 2) the participation of any external recruitment events (e.g., job fairs), and 3) leading processes that require interfacing with prospective candidates such as scheduling, interviewing or checking references.

Key Questions for Analysis

1. Understanding the Incoming Generation Seeking Employment (i.e., Gen Z)
   - For the youngest and newest members of the current homeless workforce in LA County, what were the key drivers behind their decision to join this sector? What, in their perspective, did newly hired candidates think it meant to work in this sector before starting? What are their drivers for staying in the sector? What (if any factors) are driving decisions to consider a career outside of this sector? What do they value in the work culture offered in this sector?
   - Which recruitment strategies (if any) are being employed successfully to bring new talent into the homeless service sector? Are most of the newest members of the new workforce entering the sector after a college-level graduation or are most gaining work experience outside of the sector before

entering? Are there particular types of position Gen Z is typically applying for (i.e., administrative, front-line client facing, etc)?

- What factors, other than compensation, can impact recruitment? Are there other factors that are dissuading new recruits seeking employment from joining the sector? For example, the desire to work remotely versus a hybrid or other kind of alternative work schedule.

2. <u>Recruitment Activities and Incentives</u>
   - What incentives and supports are available that speak to attracting talent with transferable skills into the sector?
   - Are there particular benefits or other offerings that organizations and staff note as particularly compelling to attract new talent?
   - Are there any shared recruitment strategies (across service providers) being utilized that are promising or successful? Shared recruitment strategies are defined as activities outside the organization in collaboration with other partnering organizations. What were some of the outcomes? Over the past year, we have heard that a few organizations within the homeless service sector participated in job fairs held at parks or college campuses. Was this a useful shared recruitment strategy?
   - Are recruitment activities targeted to any specific demographic and if so, which one(s)? For example, were any strategies geared specifically to Gen Z, students, or BIPOC leaders.

3. <u>Who Recruits & How?</u>
   - What primary external software (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn, etc) or tools are used as part of recruitment activities? How effective or costly are these tools and do they yield the intended outcome?
   - Which positions (e.g., HR, Program Manager, outsourced, etc.) are responsible for recruiting talent at the organization level? Do organizations utilize recruiters and if so are these staffed positions or outsourced through consulting or temp agencies? If recruiters are not utilized, where in the organization do recruitment activities live? Is this model sustainable, why or why not?

Onboarding Practices: Training as Professional Supports (How People Succeed in the Sector)
A career in homeless services can be extremely rewarding, but it can also be very complex, exhausting, and individuals can feel under supported by community members and the media. Investments that build the capacity of professionals who choose to do this work are critical, especially as individuals are first welcomed into the sector.

Through this analysis we hope to better understand whether existing training and professional supports are widely available, targeted to specific roles (i.e., front-facing staff), and if there are benefits and opportunities in creating a commonly shared training curriculum / onboarding to support next generation and new workers to the sector.

Key Questions for Analysis
- We know that some organizations have created curriculums as part of their onboarding practices for new staff. What do these onboardings/curriculums encompass? What format do these take (i.e., videos, reading material or classroom style one-time trainings)? What is the price tag or investment for this kind of curriculum and where does this funding come from (i.e., private fundraising, foundations)? What level (if any) of dedicated staff are there whose job is to develop training material and implement on-boarding activities, or are these responsibilities part of existing roles?

- For organizations who have developed curriculum have there been notable changes in retention rates of staff since implementing these onboarding practices? Are the impacts seen in all roles, or primarily in specific categories of roles (e.g., client facing, back-office, leadership, etc)?
- For organizations who have not developed curriculum or designed a consistent, sustainable internal onboarding practice, is this an organizational interest/priority? If so, what are some specific challenges hindering the process of this work?
- What is the relationship between service provider organizations and the Centralized Training Academy?

KEY DELIVERABLES

Deliverable #1: Analysis and Engagement Plan (Months 1-2)

A sound analytical and engagement plan, not to exceed five pages, should explain how the analysis will be conducted from a methodological standpoint, which organizations will be engaged in the process, how they will be engaged, and why the results can be trusted as an objective source of information.

Deliverable #2: Current State Assessment Report (Month 2-3)

This diagnostic report should contain all the key observations patterns, and findings resulting from the execution of the analysis and engagement plan. It should contain qualitative and quantitative insights from the situational assessment, the examination of the talent pipeline recruitment specific activities, an evaluation of available onboarding practices and professional support.

Deliverable #3: Opportunities for Enhanced Recruitment Strategies & Onboarding Practices (Month 3-4)

Analysis based recommendations and observations to inform potential pilot development and systemic implementation of solutions to sustainably grow talent pipeline and explore shared onboarding practices that promote successful early career adoption that set up the potential for long-term sector retention.

Deliverable #4: Final Presentation (Month 4-5)

Insights and recommendations from this Scope of Work will be leveraged to present opportunities for strategic investment in the homeless sector workforce. Therefore, a set of at least 2 final presentations will be required with key stakeholders such as the Workforce Development Leadership Table, Funders Collaborative, or other key UWGLA-identified leadership space where the homeless sector workforce is being discussed.

ANTICIPATED PROJECT TIMELINE - *Overall project is estimated to take 3-6 months. Final timeline will be informed by selected consultant's project plan.*

Early June 2024	Proposal Selected
June 2024	Finalization of Scope of Work & Contracting
July 2024	Anticipated Project Start
July/Aug 2024	Deliverable #1: Analysis and Engagement Plan
Aug/Sept 2024	Deliverable #2: Current State Assessment Report
Sept/Oct 2024	Deliverable #3: Opportunities for Strategic Shared Recruitment Strategies
Oct/Nov 2024	Final Presentation
November 2024	Anticipated Close of Project

PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

Organization Details

- Proposal Contact & Organization Details
- Organizational Documents (IRS Determination Letter or W-9 Document)

Proposal Components

- Proposal Submission (Upload) – This PDF or PowerPoint presentation should outline Qualifications, Team, Approach to accomplishing the noted Scope of Work and Deliverables and address overall costs.
- Consulting Team Overview (Upload) - Provide outline of all planned team members, including name, organizational title, project role, and any relevant information on the background and experience they bring to the project. Include key project team members from any partnering / subcontracted organizations.
- Proposed Budget (Upload) - showcasing costs aligned to project plan and deliverables. While consultants are welcome to use hourly rates for calculations, budget must be a deliverable-based fee structure aligned with initial contracting and four Key Deliverables outlined in Proposal Submission.
- Total Budget Amount (USD $) - List estimated overall cost. Should match total in uploaded budget.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

All application materials are available for download on United Way Grantseekers webpage.

Applications will only be accepted through electronic submission using UWGLA's Survey Monkey Apply grant system. Applicants that have previously applied to UWGLA should use their existing login. If your organization is unsure if it has a login, contact rfp@unitedwayla.org.

Only one application will be considered per organization. Late or incomplete applications may not be considered.

APPLICANT SUPPORT

All RFP and application materials will be hosted on UWGLA's Grantseekers webpage (www.unitedwayla.org/grantseekers) for this opportunity.

UWGLA will host an optional Informational Webinar for this RFP on Thursday, May 2, 2024 from 11 am – 12 pm PT via Zoom. Applicants are required to RSVP in advance using the registration link available on UWGLA's Grantseekers webpage.

Additional questions may be emailed to rfp@unitedwayla.org with subject line "Workforce Analysis." UWGLA staff will respond to relevant questions within 2 business days.

REVIEW PROCESS

All applications will undergo an initial screening for completeness, satisfaction of minimum requirements, and alignment with the initiative's goals and priorities. Only applications meeting the minimum eligibility criteria will be considered and reviewed.

A set of finalists will be selected to be interviewed as a final review round. Interviews will be coordinated the UWGLA team and applicant but are anticipated to take place in late May / early June.

Final decisions are anticipated to be made in early June.