



**2021 Request for Proposals - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Facilitator
DUE: Thursday, May 27, 2021**

Instructions for Submission

Proposal submissions are due via email to easterncoc@pennsylvaniacoc.org no later than 5:00PM on Thursday, May 27, 2021.

Questions?

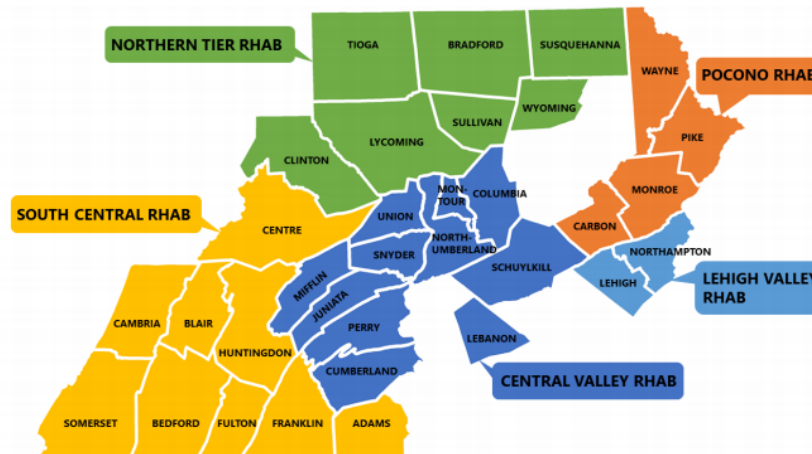
Questions related to this RFP should be emailed to easterncoc@pennsylvaniacoc.org with the subject line of *Question About DEI Committee Facilitator RFP* to ensure a quick response.

CoC Background Information

The mission of the Eastern PA Continuum of Care (CoC) is to end homelessness throughout its geographic region, which encompasses 33 counties, primarily rural, in the eastern part of Pennsylvania. Representatives of relevant organizations in these counties have come together to establish the CoC in order to carry out specific responsibilities laid out by the federal government in advancing efforts to end homelessness.

The Eastern PA CoC includes 33 counties located in five regions, represented by Regional Housing Advisory Boards (RHABs):

- Central Valley – Columbia, Cumberland, Juniata, Lebanon, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Schuylkill, Snyder, Union
- Lehigh Valley – Lehigh, Northampton
- Northern Tier – Bradford, Clinton, Lycoming, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wyoming
- Pocono – Carbon, Monroe, Pike, Wayne
- South Central – Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Somerset



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Background Information

The Eastern PA CoC is committed to ensuring the homeless response system is working for all people experiencing homelessness. To that end, the CoC has historically employed targeted approaches to ending homelessness for populations such as veterans, persons fleeing DV, families with children, people experiencing chronic homelessness, and youth to be responsive to the unique barriers they face in resolving their homelessness. Given that people of color have historically been subject to discrimination in housing, education, employment, and healthcare, they are overrepresented in homelessness. Nationally, people of color represent 13% of the population, 19% of the population living below the federal poverty line, but 40% of those experiencing homelessness. In the Eastern PA CoC, people of color comprise 11% of the population, but 28% of those being served by the homeless response system.

Advancing racial equity in homeless response systems has been a national focus in recent years. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) began requiring CoCs to submit an annual racial disparities assessment summary in 2018. These assessments sparked conversation within the Eastern PA CoC about racial disparities in both access to the system and system outcomes. In spring 2020, the Eastern PA CoC Board requested that the CoC consultant conduct a more robust quantitative racial disparities analysis than the one conducted by the CoC for submission to HUD in [2018](#) and [2019](#). During this same period, the CoC hosted a 2-part LGBT Equity training and a 2-part Racial Equity training for providers. The CoC's [Racial Disparities Analysis Report](#) was presented to and discussed with each of the five regions. One of the nine recommendations included in the the Report was the creation of a [CoC Non-Discrimination Policy](#), which was approved and implemented in October 2020.

Another recommendation included in the Racial Disparities Analysis Report is directly related to the purpose of this RFP: "To further the Board's vision/ goal(s), establish a diverse committee of individuals who are interested in working collaboratively to develop an equity framework and plan. The framework/ plan should include a review of all levels of the homeless assistance process including system design, policies, program design, operations, funding, training, etc. The framework/plan should seek to address identified inequities and improve the system to better serve individuals of historically marginalized communities, including: "Black and African Americans; people who identify as Latinx, Native, or Pacific Islander; individuals with disabilities; people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ); incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals; and undocumented individuals and mixed-immigration-status families and communities".¹

The Eastern PA CoC is in the process of recruiting for and launching its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee. The Scope of the DEI Committee includes leading the CoC's efforts to address inequality and advance equity through ongoing evaluation of the homeless assistance system's program models (outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, joint

¹ THE FRAMEWORK FOR AN EQUITABLE COVID-19 RESPONSE, Equity Based Decision Making Framework, Version 1; Developed by the National Innovation Service; Last Updated on May 27, 2020, <https://www.nis.us/equity-based-decision-making-framework>

transitional-housing, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing) and processes (access, assessment, and referral to housing programs) to ensure access to the system and system outcomes are equitable. The Committee will make recommendations to improve the system on an ongoing basis. The Eastern PA CoC is committed to providing this Committee with the level of support needed to get up and running and establish a framework for how it will operate and accomplish developing the CoC's diversity, equity, and inclusion framework and plan.

Scope of Services

The CoC is seeking proposals from a qualified individual, firm, or organization to facilitate the CoC's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee. The facilitator will assist the CoC to establish the infrastructure that will support the work of the DEI Committee and lead to system transformation.

The CoC wishes for the facilitator to focus on supporting the DEI Committee members to:

- foster supportive/collaborative working relationships; be authentically themselves; check/mitigate power, positionality, and privilege; and have cultural humility
- establish the structure and framework for developing goals and implementing strategies and actions that prioritize ensuring there are mechanisms for gathering and using viewpoints from various voices and perspectives and guide their work to establish a DEI framework and plan for the CoC.

To achieve these, the CoC expects the DEI Facilitator to:

- participate in a launch meeting with CoC board members to clarify expectations and desired outcomes and ensure alignment of the DEI Facilitator's work with desired goals. In advance of this meeting, the DEI Facilitator should review the [CoC's strategic plan](#) and [racial disparities analysis](#).
- develop an agenda for and facilitate at least 6 virtual DEI Committee meetings
- orient/provide training to the DEI Committee on DEI concepts and principles and strategic mechanisms for integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion principles into the CoC's ongoing work with the goal of:
 - preparing the Committee with the foundational knowledge and skills needed to successfully create the CoC's diversity, equity, and inclusion framework, set action items to improve the CoC's culture, work with relevant groups in the CoC, and help the CoC improve over time including:
 - fostering relationships that create a Committee culture that supports respect and an inclusive working environment that meets people where they are, prepares the Committee for hard conversations and discomfort, and assumes good intent
 - Providing insight and knowledge on DEI best practices in the field (with a particular focus on homelessness and housing)
 - developing a set of principles, values, and common language that will inform Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) practices and approaches to assessing and evaluating the CoC culture, practices, and policies

- support the DEI Committee to develop a DEI governance framework/ structure to guide their agenda of work and decision-making processes related to DEI strategies, including
 - creating an annual content calendar that will focus on a continuous learning and empowerment culture
 - setting clear agenda of work

Budget and Timeline

The maximum amount of funding available through this RFP opportunity is \$15,000. The CoC anticipates awarding the contract no later than Friday, June 18, 2021. The CoC expects the facilitator to begin delivering the scope of services within 15-30 days of the date the contract is awarded. If the facilitator will be unable to begin within 15-30 days of the contract award date, the facilitator should advise in their response to this RFP, proposing an alternative start date in their timeline/ schedule of tasks. The award/ contract will run through October 31, 2021. Additional funding may be secured to extend this contract beyond October 31, 2021. The facilitator will subcontract with Diana T. Myers and Associates for this project.

Qualifications

- expert knowledge in DEI theories, practices, and standards and experience strategically applying this knowledge in a community, non-profit, or government setting
- demonstrated history of success in building sustainable DEI plans with clients
- experience working with a variety of clients or communities; the Eastern PA CoC is comprised of 33 counties with geographic diversity that includes urban, suburban, and rural areas (preferred)
- Be expert in designing and facilitating interactive and participatory online meetings using Zoom (or equivalent) technology
- demonstrated knowledge of homelessness and housing-related issues (preferred)
- demonstrated experience working with representatives of communities/ volunteer committees, nonprofits, and/or governments

Proposal to Include:

- Contact information (Name of individual with authority to negotiate and authorize a contract, Entity Name, Physical Address, Email Address, Phone Number, preferred method of communication, Type of Legal Entity)
- 3-4 page proposal narrative describing:
 - individual, firm, or organization's history and description of the business (size, services offered, etc.) and its team
 - qualifications/experience supporting representatives of communities/ volunteer committees, nonprofits, and/or governments on DEI assessment, planning, and strategy; developing, facilitating, and supporting implementation of organizational culture change initiatives; working with diverse clients or communities representing urban, suburban, and/or rural areas; designing and facilitating interactive and participatory online meetings; and working in the homelessness/ housing arena
 - approach and philosophy/ elements that guide work
 - the ideal working relationship between the contracted organization and the Eastern PA CoC and how the organization will approach communication and coordination with the Eastern PA CoC
 - proposed work plan with timeline/ schedule of tasks, desired outcomes, and strategy for accomplishing scope of work
- Attachments

- Budget proposal with cost details/ narratives to include the task and number of hours required, hourly rate, and a total price for work to be performed in accordance with this RFP
 - Proposals may include alternative strategies other than what is described in the RFP Scope to accomplish the project goal
 - Proposals may include, on a separate page, a list of additional services believed to be necessary to the success of the project, along with the reason for such
- CV/resume/ qualifications of personnel assigned to the project along with their roles and responsibilities for the project
- Three professional references/ a list of three clients (Name, Title, Address, and Phone Number for each reference) for whom similar work has been prepared in the past five years, including a brief summary (not to exceed one paragraph for each client) of the work completed and how it relates to the scope of services included in this RFP.

Application Review & Selection Information

All Proposals will be reviewed by the Eastern PA CoC Governing Board based on the following criteria. The applicant that is selected will be notified by the Eastern PA CoC no later than June 18, 2021. The project will commence within 15-30 days of the date the contract is awarded.

Selection Criteria:

- 6 points: Demonstrated DEI expertise and experience of the personnel assigned to the contract (CV/ Resume/ Qualifications and Professional References attachments)
- 5 points: Experience of the applicant organization and the personnel assigned working with representatives of communities/ volunteer committees, nonprofits, and/or governments; with a variety of clients or communities representing urban, suburban, and/or rural areas; and within the homelessness/ housing arena (proposal narrative and Professional References attachment)
- 6 points: Experience designing and facilitating interactive and participatory online meetings that create a Committee culture that supports respect and an inclusive working environment that meets people where they are, prepares the Committee for hard conversations and discomfort, and assumes good intent (Proposal narrative and Professional References attachment)
- 6 points: Demonstrated ability to complete the Scope of Service and Tasks within the time proposed and the timeline reasonable and feasible; proposed work plan with timeline/ schedule of tasks, desired outcomes, and strategy for accomplishing scope of work, including alternative strategies than what are described in the RFP to accomplish the project goal (proposal narrative)
- 5 points: cost details/ narratives for each task, number of hours required, and hourly rate (Budget attachment)
- Interview (if any)