

## Letter of Interest

*For establishing a Partners Group to support efforts to prevent and end homelessness in Seattle and King County*

A coalition of civic leaders<sup>1</sup> representing housing and homelessness advocacy and faith based organizations, people with lived experience of homelessness, philanthropic and business organizations are seeking to support the establishment of a formal Partners Group that can bring together diverse external stakeholders to closely partner with government on advancing solutions to homelessness in King County that are racially equitable, community-driven and data-informed.

Our goal is that the Partners Group can work closely with government homelessness funders of the newly established King County Regional Homelessness Authority) to more effectively work together as a community on efforts to prevent and end homelessness in King County.

### **BACKGROUND**

Homelessness and housing instability continue to increase given the fact that our community has lost and is continuing to lose housing affordable to people who have low and extremely low incomes. Rents are increasing significantly faster than income in King County. While homelessness is a complex issue that impacts and is impacted by many conditions and institutions in a given community, housing market dynamics are exacerbating the problem. Given the history of structural and institutionalized racism and the treatment of indigenous people, the homelessness crisis has an outsized impact on communities of color. Though people of color only make up 33% of the total King County population, more than half of those experiencing homelessness are people of color.

Solving homelessness is a top community concern. Yet, the community has struggled to come together to act on a unified, coordinated and bold approach until now.

Through activities conducted over the last two years, it has become clear that philanthropic and public sector partners across King County are poised to take action in unprecedented ways that will increase alignment and coordination on efforts to address homelessness. Specifically, a core group of business and philanthropic organizations<sup>2</sup> have been meeting regularly to:

- Support the establishment of the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) that consolidates funding and policy regarding homeless crisis response activities across Seattle and King County and provides an accountability mechanism for community-wide action and alignment.

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<sup>1</sup> Lived Experience Coalition, Youth Advisory Board, True Vine of Holiness Missionary Baptist Church, Mockingbird Society, Housing Development Consortium, Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, King County Housing Authority, Seattle Housing Authority, Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, University of Washington, Campion Foundation, Ballmer Group, Symetra, Microsoft, and Vulcan.

<sup>2</sup> Core group of funders and business organizations include the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Ballmer Group, Campion Foundation, Raikes Foundation, Microsoft, Vulcan, Seattle Foundation, Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Symetra and United Way of King County

- Support the development of a [Regional Action Framework](#)<sup>3</sup> that identifies needed action steps in affordable housing, improvements to the crisis response system and supports from behavioral health and other mainstream systems to increase prevention. The goal is that this will be a foundational document that helps to guide the work of the KCRHA and this Partners Group.
- This group also supported Building Changes and Kinetic West to develop a business plan with significant input from key stakeholder groups on the critical roles a Partners Group could play in our community to support alignment and coordination of efforts. For more information, download the [Business Plan](#) and [Theory of Change](#).

### **HIGH LEVEL GOALS AND DESIRED RESULTS**

The goal is to establish a Partners Group that can work closely with government funders to reduce and ultimately end:

- the number of people experiencing homelessness in Seattle and King County
- racial disproportionality in who is impacted by homelessness; and
- fragmentation in our community’s response to homelessness

Similar to the [Home for Good Initiative](#) in Los Angeles, the goal is to formally establish a Partners Group that can bring together a coalition of philanthropy, business, people with lived experience, government, service providers, faith based leaders and community leaders to:

1. Speak with a unified voice on advocacy and communications. This includes advocating for:
  - Unified and regional approach to solving for the problem
  - Increased housing resources, especially housing units that are affordable to households at 0-30% area median income
  - Systems focused efforts at decreasing inflow (prevention, early intervention) and increasing outflow (e.g., more resources whether it’s diversion, rapid re-housing, affordable housing, and/or permanent supportive housing, to quickly end the crisis of homelessness)
  - Anti-racist policies that reduce the racial disproportionality

It also means creating and implementing a communications effort to support the Regional Action Framework directed towards business, philanthropy and the general public including building the case that the homelessness crisis is primarily an affordable housing crisis.

2. Identify and support short-term and long-term goals in preventing and ending homelessness including identifying roles different stakeholders can play in support of these efforts
  - Short-term and long-term goals should be guided by the Regional Action Framework
  - These goals and aims should be informed by and determined with our government partners

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<sup>3</sup> In the Business Plan the Regional Action Framework (RAF) is referred to as the Regional Action Plan (RAP)

- Once these goals are determined, the Partners Group will identify opportunities for private funding with an emphasis on multi-year investments and increasing total private contributions
  - Investments decisions will include and center people with lived experience and ensure funds are directed towards eliminating racial, LGBTQ, and disability inequities within the homelessness system
  - Partners Group will also identify how other stakeholders can engage to support short term and long-term goals and aims
3. Celebrate progress and identify continuous improvement strategies in our effort to reduce and end homelessness in King County
- Partners Group will foster a culture of transparency, shared accountability and ownership among stakeholders in achieving short-term and long-term goals and aims.
  - Partners Group will work closely with government partners to transparently share data on baseline and progress being made
  - Partners Group will also work closely with government partners to identify continuous improvement strategies
4. Build community and strengthen relationships. This could include:
- Strengthening trust across and within system stakeholder groups such as people with lived experience, business, philanthropy, government, providers and advocates
  - Supporting a funders collaborative and supporting a dedicated strategy to engage business and philanthropic partners

The business plan identifies the key roles a Partners Group could play including 4 key objectives (Advocacy/Communications, Shared Accountability/Improvement, Strategic Investments, Community Building), actions, and metrics. However, we understand and are open to thoughts on implementation and staffing particularly for years 1-3 that is flexible and based on the current situation and environment. We are open to organizations joining in partnerships to carry out the work, or submissions from individuals who believe they could build a network of partners to achieve the Partners Group goals. The current business plan recommends a budget of \$1.2M per year for administration and organizational costs when the organization is fully ramped up and in operation and approximately \$1-1.65M/year for systems infrastructure/investment costs. The business plan also assumed that the Partners Group would identify a budget for targeted campaigns (amounts and timeline TBD) once shorter-term goals are set. The business plan recommendations for budget should not be seen as a guarantee of confirmed budget support. However, the philanthropic and business partners who have been actively engaged are open to considering requests for 3 years that are aligned with the business plan recommendations.

**Letter of Interest:**

By September 25th or sooner, please submit a letter which includes your responses to the following questions:

- Why are you interested in this work?
- How does this project align with your organizational mission, vision, values?
- How would you approach implementing this work? What would your goals be for year 1? And for years 2-3? How would you staff the work and what activities would you prioritize?
- What strengths and existing capacity does your organization have to carry out this work? What would be new/added capacity?
- How do you use data to inform your work?
- Who would you partner with to carry out this work?
- How would you engage and center the voice of people with lived experience?
- What is your approach to public advocacy to carry out this work?
- What is your approach working with government to carry out this work?
- Does your organization have experience sub granting resources to achieve strategic outcomes?
- What do you think are the major risks in years 1-3? How would you mitigate against these risks?
- What support or Technical Assistance would be helpful to carry out this work?

**Qualified Applicants:**

- Need to be a 501c3, or have a fiscal sponsorship with an established 501c3
- Established non-discriminatory policies/practices, as well as a commitment to racial equity incorporated into your mission.

**Submission Details:**

Please include the following along with your Letter of Interest.

- Legal name of organization (DBA or fiscal sponsor if applicable)
- Tax Identification Number
- Mailing address
- Name, title, email and phone number for Executive Director, CEO or authorized agreement signer
- Name, title, email and phone number for person responsible for this proposal
- Information on how the organization proposes to track and report how funding is spent and used as designated, how organizational progress will be measured and reported; how information will be shared about progress on an annual basis

**Supporting Documents:**

- Proposed Project budget for 3 years
- Overall Organization operating budget
- If proposing a partnership, a letter explaining roles/responsibilities that is signed by all organizations.
- IRS letter proving the organization has tax-exempt status
- A list of board members and organization leadership

All Materials should be submitted to Dana Stoeckenius at, [dstoeck@campionadvocacyfund.org](mailto:dstoeck@campionadvocacyfund.org).

Questions may be directed to Emily Nolan at, [emilynolanconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:emilynolanconsulting@gmail.com), or 206-499-0596.

**Timeline and Process**

Aug. 28<sup>th</sup> - Letter of Interest Released

Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> - Interested Applicant Meeting (optional)

Meeting Details: 1:30-3:30pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84895690494>

Call In 1-253-21508782, access code 84895690494#

Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> - Letter of Interest Due

October 12<sup>h</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> – Applicant Interviews

October 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> - Final Selection