Question and Answer
Community Connectors at Food Banks Pilot Program

2017 Request for Qualification (RFQ)

	Question	Answer
1	Is serving the homeless population a priority?	No. See Guidelines and Application Section VI. D (pages 9-10) for "priority community."
2	The RFQ states that priority will be given to agencies that demonstrate a need for Community Connectors to work with their food bank clients on location and that such services are lacking within their overall agency operations. If an agency is providing some level of these types of services already, would that exclude the agency from meeting the eligibility criteria?	No.
3	What kind of space is needed for the work associated with the Community Connectors?	The proposed space should be included in the program model description. Confidential conversations should be held in private when possible. Selected agencies must provide each Community Connector with dedicated space for a work station, internet access, and access to privacy for client meetings if needed. See Guidelines and Application Section VI. B (page 9).
4	Can partners be organizations that do not provide food bank services? What about agencies that have participants in other program areas? Are those participants eligible?	No. Only current HSD funded food banks are eligible to apply. Partnerships are encouraged to provide effective services for the HSD funded food bank clients.
5	Will the staff serving as the Community Connector within the selected food banks be appointed or hired? Is the city proposing a salary range for the position? Should an agency budget cover 100% of the position?	It is up to agencies to hire their own Community Connector(s) based on need, capacity and hiring structure. It is up to the agency to propose a salary range and budget.
6	Food banks traditionally maintain a low barrier to access services. Will food banks participating in the Community Connectors pilot need to collect client level data at every interaction?	Data will be collected by Community Connectors. HSD will work with food banks to find a balance between the need for data and maintaining low barrier for accessing services.
7	Under the Service/Program Model, the RFQ states, "Funding requests for Community Connectors must reflect number of clients served..." Does this refer to the number of clients currently served or the number of clients an agency intends to serve if awarded the contract?	The RFQ asks for information on the number of clients served in 2016. In addition, HSD is looking for information on service levels that match the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) requested. If the proposal is for full-time staff, there must be documented need to match the FTE requested.
8	Is it acceptable to submit a budget for the Community Connectors pilot that is 100% is funded by HSD?	Yes. There is no budget match requirement.
9	How much flexibility is there in the program model (i.e., for food banks to partner and to connect with clients)?	There is flexibility. HSD requests applicants to submit their program and staffing models, including start-up and service ideas.
10	The timeline for executing contracts seems tight if agencies will be notified on July 26 and the work will begin August 1.	While the planned public award notification (i.e., posting on HSD's website) date is July 26, 2017, applicant notification letters will be sent

	Question	Answer
		earlier. Applicants are asked to include a timeline for staff hire, training, and program implementation. See Application Section III. Narrative Question A. Program Description (page 18).
11	Is it acceptable to hire multiple staff to do the work?	HSD is asking each applicant to propose the appropriate level of FTE to work best for their model.
12	Are start-up costs an allowable expense in the budget?	Yes. See Guidelines and Application Section VI. B (page 9).
13	Is there a range of the number of contracts that HSD is proposing to fund?	The applicant pool consists of current HSD funded food banks. All on-time, submitted applications will be reviewed by the rating committee.
14	Please elaborate on the type of database that will be used to track clients.	HSD is working on a customizable database that will track client data related to the milestones and performance commitments. Further, HSD seeks to gather data for program analysis.
15	Because this is an 18-month pilot, is there a possibility that funding will not be available after the pilot?	HSD intends to include the Community Connectors funding into the upcoming Food and Meals Request for Proposals (RFP). Additionally, future contracting is based on performance and funding availability.
16	Will a proposal be competitive if the agency is open for a relatively small number of hours per week?	Each applicant will be rated on the criteria provided in the RFQ application. The proposed program description should include the model and need for the applying food bank.
17	It may be difficult to capture surveys if we do not see our clients again.	In this pilot, HSD and the contracted agencies will learn how to effectively implement surveys and establish baseline numbers for how many surveys may be collected.
18	How would the milestones be tracked to meet HSD's racial equity goals?	Racial equity goals will be captured separately using the same database.
19	Is it acceptable to partner with non-city funded food banks for this RFQ?	See response to #4
20	Is it acceptable for more than one staff person to be working on the program and included in the budget?	See response to #11
21	Will the database be used only for the pilot? Is it a web-based database and has it been tested? Is the data connected or is it private among agencies?	The database is web-based and is currently being used with other HSD-funded programs. Details of how the database will function is still under development. There may be some connectivity among the agencies to reduce client duplication, for example.
22	Food bank clients often visit multiple food banks. Is it okay if one person received services at different locations?	Yes, but the database should capture if the client is signing up for the same service at different locations or going to different Community Connectors for different services.

	Question	Answer
23	Regarding the rating criteria and timeline, is it okay if the services currently exist within an agency and the proposal will build on existing services?	See response to #2
24	Could a plan be created by an agency that could serve as a model for other food banks, for example, a staffing plan?	It is possible a plan created from this pilot could serve as a model for other agencies.
25	The RFQ mentions, "Priority will be given to agencies that demonstrate a need for Community Connectors to work with their food bank clients on location and that such services are lacking within their overall agency operations." Some interpret this as HSD will not fund agencies that are already providing some of these services to their clients. There are a few agencies that began this work while waiting on the funding to be released and they're concerned that they would not be considered for funding because of their services are currently filling the need.	See response to #2
26	Will food banks be involved in creating the needs assessment tool? Some agencies feel that needs assessments are overly burdensome to clients and want to avoid these processes in their operations.	Yes. HSD will work with the contracted agencies to address the need for keeping services low barrier while collecting the needed data.
27	There is concern that the innovation intended in the budget ask is not reflected in the RFQ.	HSD would like for agencies to propose their model and start-up plan in the proposal.
28	Where and when will the minutes from the info session will be available? I'm also having trouble locating the page where agency questions concerning the pilot program will be made available.	The Q&A from the 4/24/17 Community Connectors at Food Banks Information Session plus any additional questions received via e-mail on 4/24/17 will be posted to the website by 4/28/17. The website address is: http://www.seattle.gov/humanservices/information-for-grantees/funding-opportunities. Click "here" at the end of the 2017 Community Connectors at Food Banks RFQ description.
29	Our team is exploring a few different service models. One of those models is a full-time position that would provide connector services during distribution hours AND follow-up services/support during the hours when we aren't open to the public. Would the follow-up social work fall within the guidelines for funding via the Connectors at Food Banks RFQ?	Yes. Please fully describe any service model in Narrative Section A, Program Description. FTE request must be justified by clients' and program's needs.
30	We are discussing a collaboration between Food Bank A and Food Bank B for the Community Connector funding. Food Bank B serves both Seattle and King County residents. If Food Bank B participates, will they be limited to only serving clients residing in the City of Seattle?	No. All city-funded food bank clients are eligible to receive Community Connector assistance. See Guidelines and Application Section VI. C (page 9). In addition, partnership proposals are encouraged, and will be prioritized when there is demonstrable need of broader client reach in a geographic region or council district. See Guidelines and Application

	Question	Answer
		Section VI. B (page 9). As a reminder, applicants must identify which food bank will serve as lead agency.
31	We are not a currently funded HSD food bank. However, we would like to be a community resource partner to an applicant who meets the funding criteria. Do you see that as a barrier to their application?	No. The applicant agency has the flexibility to propose a Community Connector program model that best meets client needs. See response to #9. Applicants must describe how the proposed project will collaborate with other agencies/programs to deliver services that support the Community Connector. For example, housing, job readiness, Apple Health, nutrition, child care, utility assistance, and other social service programs. See Application Section III. C. (page 19). Costs must be reasonable and appropriate given the nature of the service, the priority community(ies) and focus population(s), the proposed level of service, and the proposed outcomes. See Application Section III. E. (page 20).
32	Is it a problem if our proposal includes some staffing that does not have the professional background outlined in the RFQ as long as there is a supervisor (The Community Connector Lead) that meets the professional background and experience and is overseeing the work of the others?	See Guidelines and Application Section VI G. (page 11) for staffing requirements.
33	To build up internal capacity to better track and refer our food bank clients to other resources, we have been exploring bringing on a client-focused database of our own. Can some of the funding from this opportunity cover bringing on that database? (Understanding that we will still report out outcomes for this grant in the database the City selects?)	HSD requests applicants to submit their program models, including start-up and service ideas. Describe how these funds will be used to support the clients served by this program. See Application Section III E (page 20).
34	The RFQ states that we should be using the community connectors to connect our current food bank clients to services. It also encourages us to be open to serving clients of other food banks should they also be in our area. What happens if we do get clients of other food banks talking to our community connectors? That would be great but would they not count in our service totals if they are not specifically OUR food bank client but a neighboring one?	See response to question #22.