BEXAR COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE
Backbone Organization Request for Proposals

We are seeking an entity to serve as a backbone organization that will coordinate and support a long-term, county-wide children and youth-focused behavioral health, systems change initiative. The ideal entity will be able to convene, align and support initiative stakeholders, manage and track the implementation and performance of strategies and identify and coordinate advocacy efforts that advance our community towards our collective goal.

1. DESCRIPTION OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT INITIATIVE

A 2019 report that assessed Bexar County’s local capacity to support children and youth with behavioral health needs identified new opportunities for our community to improve our local systems. Since February 2019, multi-sector stakeholders have been working to identify indicators and pursue strategies that will transform our local systems so that we can reach all children and youth with behavioral health concerns as early as possible with effective and responsive services. What we know:

- At least 1 in 5 children and youth under 18 experience a mental health issue before the age of 14.
- The average age of first substance use in Bexar County is 13.
- The majority of children and youth with behavioral health symptoms have not been treated and the average delay between the onset of their symptoms and intervention is 8-10 years.

We have adopted Results Based Accountability and Collective Impact to collaborate and to implement a county-wide action plan that will address our local challenges, align current, effective practices and guide innovative strategies.

2. BACKBONE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This role requires significant, long-term commitment. Prospective applicants are encouraged to consider the following roles and responsibilities carefully before deciding to apply. Key backbone roles and responsibilities are as follows:

1. Provide overall project **strategic coherence, process documentation, coordination and alignment**, supporting and organizing both the steering committee and all working groups through their work using a range of project management tools and processes to ensure effective and efficient work.

2. Serve as a **neutral convener** and facilitate effective dialogues while mediating any conflict among stakeholders. Lead as an honest broker working on behalf of the group, rather than promoting a single viewpoint.
3. Manage **data partnerships, development, collection and analysis**, and utilize measurement as a tool for ongoing learning. **Manage the tracking and evaluation** of the initiative’s strategies.

4. **Engage community** by identifying all necessary stakeholders and partners, building key relationships, fostering buy-in and ownership and involving community voices across the initiative.

5. Provide **culturally proficient leadership** respectfully working with a variety of stakeholders.

6. Develop effective **advocacy and strategy** agendas that create a sense of urgency for change among participants, policymakers, funders, and the public.

7. **Manage and sustain continuous communication** across all stakeholders engaged in the initiative.

8. **Maintain a full-time presence in** Bexar County (and surrounding areas). Identifying and managing the appropriate staff and budget to fully sustain and support the work of the initiative, based on the roles and responsibilities and the deliverables detailed in this scope of work.

9. **Be able to fundraise to support this backbone function, long-term.** These funds may come from the backbone entity itself and/or through external fundraising in conjunction with fundraising for the broader Collective Impact effort, but the Backbone should possess the capacity to raise a significant share of the required resources.

10. **Create and maintain the necessary infrastructure** to adequately support stakeholder and staff needs.

Additionally, the ideal entity will demonstrate **expertise in the following key areas:**

1. **Topical expertise** in behavioral health i.e. (systems, clinical, legislative, programs), preferably focused on upstream and prevention efforts focused on children and youth.

2. **Functional expertise** in collective impact, strategy development, group facilitation, data analysis, advocacy and communication.

3. **Cross-sector expertise** of the behavioral health landscape in Bexar County, including awareness or involvement in behavioral health work, relationships and partnerships with relevant multi-sector stakeholders (e.g. school districts, City of San Antonio, community-based providers, funders, faith-leaders, congregations, military/veterans, Bx. County judicial system, special needs etc.).

4. **Regional expertise** of Bexar County, demonstrating a deep awareness, sensitivity and understanding of the unique needs, politics, demographics, and characteristics of different communities across the County

**3. BACKBONE TYPE**

Applications from single, non-profit organizations, teams of individuals/consultants or a collaborating/shared service model/joint application across multiple non-profit organizations and/or individual/consultants are welcome. For those submitting a collaborative proposal, please submit one application under the partner that will be the fiscal agent.
4. KEY DELIVERABLES
The backbone organization, with the leadership of the initiative’s steering committee, will be responsible for the following deliverables (see Appendix A).

5. PROCESS TIMELINE
1. RFP Re-open – Monday, January 20th
2. Proposals due – Monday, February 20th – 8.00am
3. Finalist interviews – Last week of February
4. Backbone selection – Late February/Early March

6. SHORT RESPONSE QUESTIONS FOR APPLICANTS
Interested applicants should submit responses to the questions below. An ideal proposal should address the applicant’s approach to founding, operating, and sustaining a backbone organization that fulfills the roles and responsibilities and key deliverables described in Section 2 and 4.

Aggregate responses (excluding the budget) should not exceed 2,500 words.

1. Why do you want to serve as the backbone for this effort? How does this fit with your existing work or mission?
   a. Detail past performance that uniquely positions your team or organization(s) to apply for and implement this work.
   b. Share experience convening stakeholders to collectively deliver impact while increasing the reputation of their work.

2. How would you plan to staff, launch and sustain a backbone organization?
   a. Detail your proposed backbone infrastructure. Visuals are welcome. If possible, share which staff will assume specific roles and responsibilities for the deliverables. For those submitting a collaborative proposal, please share which role(s) each partnering entity will assume, respective of their expertise, in your proposed backbone infrastructure.
   b. Please include a time estimate for how soon you could appropriately staff the effort and begin work, if selected.
   c. What resources would you need, as a potential backbone organization, to successfully sustain these efforts starting in 2020 through 2025? Please include a narrative and a separately attached budget (detailing expenses and revenues), organized by year. For those submitting a collaborative proposal, please indicate which resources and expenses will be allocated to each respective entity.

3. Please detail your expertise in the following key areas, see section 2 for more details. If it is a collaborative application, please list partners under each relevant expertise:
a. *Topical expertise*

b. *Functional expertise*

c. *Cross-sector expertise*

d. *Regional expertise*

4. How would you establish an identity as a neutral convener? What challenges might you have to address/resolve to be perceived in such a way?

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**7. SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

All submissions should be emailed to *mlugaliahollon@kronkosky.org* no later than Monday, February 10th, 2020 at 8.00am.

All applicants will receive an email acknowledging receipt of your proposal.

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**8. SELECTION PROCESS & CRITERIA**

Each applicant will be evaluated using consistent criteria developed from the roles and responsibilities and key deliverables of a backbone outlined in Section 2 and 4, as well as each applicant's responses to the questions in Section 6. Following initial review by members of the initiative, a subset of applicants will be chosen as finalists. Finalists will be invited to interview with initiative members at a mutually convenient time. The initiative stakeholders will select the winning backbone applicant by early March 2020.

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**9. QUESTIONS**

All questions regarding this RFP may be emailed to *mlugaliahollon@kronkosky.org*.

Applicants may find the following, four-part blog series in Stanford Social Innovation Review – *Understanding the Value of Backbone Organizations in Collective Impact* and the following document – to be useful in understanding the backbone expectations and experiences of other backbone organizations involved in similar efforts.
Appendix A: Detailed Backbone Duties

Legend:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Activities:</th>
<th>Activities that involve strategic oversight, external communication, research and evaluation, or policy.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Logistical/Tactical Activities:</td>
<td>Activities that involve logistical support, internal communication, note-taking and dissemination, and scheduling</td>
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1. Maintain Strategic Coherence of the Effort

A. Accountability, Evaluation, & Guidance

I. Analyze and monitor progress (including Working Group progress) against specific strategies and goals identified by Working Groups

II. Continue to develop outcome indicators and performance measures to evaluate progress and to inform system improvement

III. Begin to collect indicators and develop data collection processes

IV. Encourage sharing of best practices among the Steering Committee members and the Working Groups

V. Monitor outcome indicators and performance measures related to Working Group to evaluate progress and to inform system improvement

B. Knowledge Sharing, Overall Logistical Support

I. Foster one-on-one relationships with Steering Committee members and other key stakeholders

II. Coordinate research and other activities currently underway by participants in the initiative

III. Encourage sharing of best practices among the Steering Committee members and the Working Groups

IV. Identify potential "quick wins" where Steering Committee can act quickly to advance a particular issue

V. Monitor and enable easy dissemination of Common Agenda and/or Blueprint for Implementation (if developed)

VI. Provide overall logistical support for meetings
2. Help Coordinate through the Steering Committee

A. Management and Facilitation

   I. Identify and raise issues/concerns with the Steering Committee
   II. Assist development of agendas for Steering Committee meetings and other meetings as necessary
   III. Create decks and materials for Steering Committee meetings and other meetings as necessary
   IV. Maintain a high-level perspective to guide and participate in Steering Committee meetings as necessary
   V. Follow up and manage next steps that come out of Steering Committee and Working Group meetings, as necessary
   VI. Manage meeting logistics (e.g., dial-in, attendance, cancellations, etc.)
   VII. Consolidate Working Group updates for Steering Committee
   VIII. Summarize meeting notes and next steps

3. Support Fundraising and Outreach

A. Coordination, Communication & Policy

   I. Engage with and/or facilitate community engagement with a broader audience, as appropriate, to build buy-in from additional stakeholders
   II. Facilitate communication between the Steering Committee and Working Groups to understand challenges at the Working Group level and strategic coherence at the Steering Committee level
   III. Develop external communications materials and a comprehensive community engagement and communications plan
   IV. Coordinate with other major initiatives in the community, as appropriate, to minimize redundancies and align strategies and actions
   V. Note potential legislative agenda, policy, and funding recommendations with guidance of Working Groups and Steering Committee and serve as a go-between among the initiative and other partners advocating for particular policies
   VI. Respond to requests for information by community partners and allies as appropriate, in coordination with Working Groups and Steering Committee
   VII. Develop a plan for on-going funding for the initiative’s work
4. Establish and Support Working Groups

A. Establish Working Groups

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Work with Steering Committee to develop a list of priority Working Group members and Co-Chairs</td>
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<td>II.</td>
<td>Invite Working Group members through letter, calls, and 1-on-1 meetings</td>
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<td>III.</td>
<td>Orient Working Group Co-chairs and members to their roles</td>
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<td>IV.</td>
<td>Establish Working Group goals with the Steering Committee, and refine with Working Group Co-Chairs</td>
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B. Project Management, Facilitation, and Support

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<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Guide Working Groups to develop specific goals, metrics, and implementation strategies based on the Common Agenda</td>
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<td>II.</td>
<td>Assist development of meeting agendas (i.e. provide draft agenda)</td>
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<td>III.</td>
<td>Assist co-chairs/develop meeting materials including presentation</td>
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<td>IV.</td>
<td>Research topics relevant to strategy development</td>
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<td>V.</td>
<td>Develop talking points for Working Group co-chairs</td>
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<td>VI.</td>
<td>Assist Working Group co-chairs with completing report-back to groups</td>
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<td>VII.</td>
<td>Help Working Group co-chairs incorporate Steering Committee feedback on goals, metrics, and strategies</td>
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<td>VIII.</td>
<td>Follow up and manage next steps that come out of Working Group meetings</td>
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<td>IX.</td>
<td>Plan and schedule Working Group meetings</td>
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<td>X.</td>
<td>Support Working Group co-chairs to facilitate meetings</td>
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<td>XI.</td>
<td>Ensure attendee lists are up to date</td>
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<td>XII.</td>
<td>Manage meeting logistics (e.g., video conferencing, attendance, lunch, cancellations, send final lists to admin staff etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>XIII.</td>
<td>Print meeting materials and talking points</td>
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