



DESERT HEALTHCARE
DISTRICT & FOUNDATION

Date: March 22, 2022
To: Board of Directors
Subject: SCAQMD: Partnerships for Air Quality Community Training in Rural Communities in the Eastern Coachella Valley- Request For Qualifications (RFQ)

Staff Recommendation:
Informational item only

Background: In response to the US Environmental Protection Agency State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Programs: Request For Applications, a collaborative project between the South Coast Air Quality Management District, Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, Health Assessment and Research for Communities, and the Desert Healthcare District & Foundation were submitted, approved, and funded in the amount of \$200,000. This project establishes an Air Quality Academy to provide resources and training that will improve environmental literacy and air quality data. The Academy will include community health workers and other community members and provide training on how to use the data to help make informed decisions. The three objectives for this project are:

1. *Air Quality Training:* Provide training on the Air Quality Index, and actions to reduce exposures to indoor and outdoor air pollution.
2. *Air Pollution Sensors Training:* Provide training about air pollution measurement, and how to get local air quality information from a blended AQI map, which uses both regulatory monitoring and sensor data.
3. *Community Environmental Health Report:* Publish a report on environmental health metrics in the Eastern Coachella Valley, including statistics on environmental hazards, social vulnerabilities, and public health metrics.

Our role in the partnership: DHCD/F staff will provide information on the health effects of air pollution and ways to reduce exposures to indoor and outdoor air pollutants. The Desert Healthcare District and Foundation will receive \$27,000 and match \$27,000 totaling \$54,000 of which \$40,000 will be awarded to a local community-based organization with a proven track record of environmental health. The selection process will be through a Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

Fiscal Impact:
\$27,000 matching funds to be allocated from the Avery Trust Fund



Request for Qualifications

Request for Qualifications #: 2022-001

Release Date: March 23, 2022

Project: Partnerships for Air Quality Community Training in Rural Communities of the Eastern Coachella Valley (ECV)

Award amount: \$40,000

Projected Start Date: May 1, 2022

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SECTION I – SUMMARY

The Desert Healthcare District and Foundation (“District”) seek to establish a partnership with a community-based organization focused on environmental health to engage and train community members on the importance and impact of air quality. The District seeks a qualified 501(c)(3) community-based organization(s) to provide the following services:

- Participate in the development and translation (Spanish/Purepecha) of training modules and educational materials.
- Support the recruitment of community members to participate in the Air Quality Academy.
- Conduct community-based outreach, presentations, and education
- Participate in the development of a Community Environmental Health Report

The District may select one or more qualified organizations to provide the services sought in this Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) to support ongoing efforts to improve air quality in the Eastern Coachella Valley.

To respond to this RFQ, an interested organization should submit one (1) electronic copy (in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format) of its statement of qualifications to:

Alejandro Espinoza, Chief of Community Engagement
Desert Healthcare District and Foundation
41-550 Eclectic Way., Palm Desert, CA 92260
aespinoza@dhcd.org

**Statements of qualifications must be submitted and received by
5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 15, 2022 (“deadline”).
Late submissions will not be considered.**

Statements of qualifications must address all information requested in this RFQ. A statement may add information not requested in this RFQ, but the information should be in addition to, not instead of, the requested information and format. **Any questions regarding this RFQ should be submitted through email to Alejandro Espinoza, Chief of Community Engagement aespinoza@dhcd.org**

SECTION II – BACKGROUND

A. Overview

In response to the US Environmental Protection Agency State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Programs: Request For Applications, a collaborative project between the South Coast Air Quality Management District, Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, Health Assessment and Research for Communities, and the Desert Healthcare District & Foundation were submitted, approved, and funded. This project establishes an Air Quality Academy to provide resources and training that will improve environmental literacy and air quality data. The Academy will include community health workers and other community members and provide training on how to use the data to help make informed decisions. The three objectives for this project are:

1. **Air Quality Training:** Develop training materials and provide training on the Air Quality Index, and actions to reduce exposures to indoor and outdoor air pollution.
2. **Air Pollution Sensors Training:** Develop training materials and provide training about air pollution measurement, and how to get local air quality information from a blended AQI map, which uses both regulatory monitoring and sensor data.
3. **Community Environmental Health Report:** Publish a report on environmental health metrics in the Eastern Coachella Valley, including statistics on environmental hazards, social vulnerabilities, and public health metrics.

Communities in the rural Eastern Coachella Valley experience impacts from many sources of indoor and outdoor air pollution, including substandard housing, agricultural burning, illegal fires, and the exposed Salton Sea playa. This collaborative project establishes an Air Quality Academy to provide resources and training that will improve environmental literacy and air quality data in this community. The Academy will include community health workers and other community members and provide training on how to use the data to help make informed decisions.

Through the ongoing community engagement efforts, residents have expressed concern about the impacts of air pollution on asthma and other health conditions. Regional monitoring networks do not provide the granularity of data that would be useful for residents to understand PM impacts that could be relatively localized, such as smoke from smaller illegal burns.

SECTION III – GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

A. Services Needed

The selected organization(s) will have the experience and the capacity and resources to provide the following services to support the District’s ongoing efforts to monitor and improve air quality in the Eastern Coachella Valley.

Timeframe	Task
Months 0-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Health Workers/Staff will participate in the development and translation (Spanish/Purepecha) of the training modules and educational materials. • Support the recruitment of community members to participate in the Air Quality Academy. • Community Health Workers/Staff will attend the Air Quality Academy and receive training on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outdoor air quality basics ○ Outdoor air quality policy ○ Indoor air quality basics ○ Health effects of air pollution ○ Exposure reduction ○ Air pollution sensors (installation and data collection) • Provide monthly outreach logs • Participate in monthly update meetings with Desert Healthcare District staff
Months 7-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Health Workers/Staff will conduct community-based outreach, presentations, and education on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health effects of indoor and outdoor air pollution ○ Ways to mitigate exposures ○ How to check outdoor air quality ○ Data interpretation ○ Air pollution sensors • Provide monthly outreach logs • Participate in monthly update meetings with Desert Healthcare District staff
Months 17-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Health Workers/Staff will participate in the development of the Community Environmental Health Report by sharing their experiences and perspectives as community members, and their experiences in the training program. • Provide monthly outreach logs • Participate in monthly update meetings with Desert Healthcare District staff

B. Desired Qualifications:

1. Proven experience utilizing the Community Health Worker (Promotora) model in community engagement activities and/or projects.
2. Track record of working with organizations and community members that strongly support diversity and equitable practices, policies, and procedures.

3. Demonstrated current experience working with organizations and community members to implement initiatives and/or policies intended to improve environmental health, specifically, air quality.
4. Work experience in, or extensive knowledge of the Eastern Coachella Valley and environmental health and/or environmental justice.

SECTION IV – SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. General

1. All statements of qualifications must be made in accordance with the conditions of this RFQ. Failure to address any of the requirements is grounds for rejection of this submission
2. All information should be complete, specific, and as concise as possible.
3. Statements of qualifications should include any additional information that the respondent deems pertinent to the understanding and evaluation of the bid.
4. The District may modify the RFQ or issue supplementary information or guidelines during the submission preparation period before the deadline. If changes are made, you will be notified via email.
5. The District reserves the right to reject any and all submissions.
6. All questions must be in written form and submitted via email no later than **4:00 p.m. on Monday, April 11, 2022**. Organizations will not be able to submit questions after this time. All questions will be answered in writing via email by **noon on Wednesday, April 13, 2022**.
7. The cost for developing the statement of qualifications is the responsibility of the responding firm and shall not be chargeable to the District.

B. Submittal of Statements of Qualifications

All statements of qualifications must be submitted according to the specifications outlined in Section V (A) – Contents of Statement of Qualifications, and this section. Failure to adhere to these specifications may be cause for the rejection of the submission.

1. **Deadline** – All statements of qualifications are due no later than **5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 15, 2022**, and should be submitted via email to:

Alejandro Espinoza, Chief of Community Engagement
Desert Healthcare District and Foundation
41-550 Eclectic Way., Palm Desert, CA 92260
aespinoza@dhcd.org

2. Uploading large documents may take significant time, depending on the size of the file(s) and Internet connection speed. Bidders should plan sufficient time before the deadline to finalize their submissions and to complete the uploading process. Bidders

will not be able to submit documents after the deadline. Statements of qualifications received after the deadline will not be considered.

3. Signature – All statements of qualifications should be signed by an authorized representative of the responding organization.
4. Submittal – Submit one (1) electronic copy (in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format). Electronic submissions submitted will be acknowledged with a confirmation email receipt. Late proposals will not be accepted. Any correction or re-submission of proposals will not extend the submittal deadline.
5. Grounds for Rejection – A statement of qualifications may be immediately rejected at any time if it arrives after the deadline, is not in the prescribed format, or is not signed by an individual authorized to represent the organization.
6. Disposition of the Submissions – All responses to this RFQ become the property of the District and will be kept confidential until a recommendation for the award of a contract has been announced. Thereafter, submittals are subject to public inspection and disclosure under the California Public Records Act. If a respondent believes that any portion of its submittal is exempt from public disclosure, it may mark that portion “confidential.” The District will use reasonable means to ensure that such confidential information is safeguarded, but will not be held liable for inadvertent disclosure of the information.

By submitting a statement of qualifications with portions marked “confidential,” a respondent represents it has a good faith belief that such portions are exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act and agrees to reimburse the District for, and to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the District, its officers, employees, and agents, from and against any and all claims, damages, losses, liabilities, suits, judgments, fines, penalties, costs, and expenses, including without limitation, attorneys’ fees, expenses, and court costs of any nature whatsoever, arising from or relating to the District’s non-disclosure of any such designated portions of a statement of qualifications.

7. Modification – Once submitted, statements of qualifications may be altered up until the deadline. Statements of qualifications may not be modified after the deadline.

SECTION V – SUBMISSION CONTENTS

A. Contents of Statement of Qualifications

Submitted statements of qualifications should follow the format outlined below and include all requested information. Please number your responses exactly as the items are presented here, except work samples, which should be included in a separate appendix.

1. Experience, Structure, Personnel
 - a. Contact Information – Provide the following information about the organization:
 - Address and telephone number of the organization
 - Name of organization’s representative designated as the contact and email address
 - Name of project manager, if different from the individual designated as the contact

- b. Organization History – Provide a history of your organization’s experience in working on environmental health, specifically on air quality similar to those sought through this RFQ. Include any experience working with organizations that strongly support diversity and equitable practices, policies, and procedures. Provide references for any similar projects listed, including contact name, title, and telephone number. Describe the technical capabilities of the organization in all areas relevant to the services sought through this RFQ.
- c. Assigned Personnel – List all key personnel who would be assigned to the District projects by name and role. Provide descriptions of education and training, along with a summary of experience in providing services similar to those sought through this RFQ.
- d. Work Samples – Provide at least two (2), but no more than five (5) samples of projects that the organization has completed in the areas of environmental health, environmental justice, air quality, and community engagement using the Community Health Worker (Promotora) model.
- e. Subcontractors – List any subcontractors that will be used and the work to be performed by them.
- f. Conflict of Interest – Address possible conflicts of interest or appearance of impropriety regarding other clients of the firm that could be created by providing services to the District. Describe procedures to be followed to detect and resolve any conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety. The District reserves the right to consider the nature and extent of such work in evaluating the statement of qualifications.
- g. Additional Information – Provide any other information that the organization wishes the District to consider in evaluating the submission.

2. Budget

The budget must be submitted using the [budget template](#) from the Desert Healthcare District and Foundation. Program/project budgets must include each line item for which support is being requested. Be sure to complete all three worksheets of the budget template.

A detailed narrative of project expenses must be included; a section of the spreadsheet was created for the budget narrative. For each line item in the budget, please provide a detailed description of how the requested funds will be used.

Please note: Line items may not be added or changed without a grant amendment and prior authorization is required for transferring funds (<10%) between existing line items.

- a. Operational Costs
 - *Total Staffing Costs:* All employees’ salaries and professional services/consultants allocated to the program/project.
 - *Equipment:* Include all equipment purchases. Itemize each item purchased and its cost. (Capital expenses are on hold.)
 - *Supplies:* Include the cost of all supplies, including office supplies, related to the program/project.

- *Printing/Duplication:* Include such items as printing, copying, and publication services.
- *Mailing/Postage:* Any mailing and postage expenses, related to the program/project.
- *Travel/Mileage:* Include any travel expenses associated with the grant. The mileage rate is based on the current IRS mileage rate.
- *Education/Training:* Specific to the program/project and workforce development to increase the capacity of the organization.
- *Office/Rent/Mortgage:* Include line items for facility costs incurred by the program/project.
- *Telephone/Facsimile/Internet:* Include phone, fax, and electronic communications, incurred by the program.
- *Utilities:* Include line items for the cost of utilities incurred by the facility(ies) used by the program/project.
- *Insurance:* List any insurance needs for the implementation of the program/project.
- *Other facility costs:* Account for any other facility costs not already listed.
- *Other program costs:* Account for any other program costs not already listed.

b. Labor Costs

- *Employee Position/Title:* Identify each employee position/title, annual salary, percentage of time allocated to the program/project (i.e., 1.0 FTE, 0.5 FTE), and actual salary. **(Please describe in detail the scope of work and duties for each employee in the budget narrative)**
- *Employee Benefits:* Include a total percentage and amount of all related benefits for ALL previously listed employees. **(Please describe in detail the employee benefits including the percentage and salary used for calculation in the budget narrative)**

Professional Services/ Consultants:* Provide the company and staff title, along with the hourly, hours/week worked, and/or monthly fees for any professional service or consultants. **(Please describe in detail the scope of work for each professional service/consultant in the budget narrative.*

SECTION VI – QUALIFICATIONS EVALUATION

District staff will evaluate all statements of qualifications. The staff will recommend the selection of one or more organizations to the Chief Executive Officer, who will, in turn, make a recommendation to the Board of Directors. The District Board of Directors may be required to approve the contract(s) to carry out the work described in this RFQ.

In evaluating statements of qualifications submitted according to this RFQ, the District places high value on the following factors, not necessarily in order of importance:

- Approaches in methodology concerning the anticipated scope of services that demonstrate maximum comprehension of environmental health, environmental justice, and the Community Health Worker (Promotora) model.

- Experience of the organization and employees to be assigned to this project in general.
- Experience of the organization working with organizations and community members that strongly support diversity and equitable practices, policies, and procedures.
- Quality and diversity of work product as demonstrated through submitted work samples.
- Demonstrated knowledge and expertise in improving community engagement.
- Innovative or outstanding work by the organization that demonstrates the organization's unique, creative qualifications to raise awareness of environmental health, specifically, air quality.
- Selected organization's staff ability, availability, and facility for working with District directors, officers, and staff.
- Conformity with applicable District policies as noted in the RFQ.
- Proposed fee structure relating to services the organization would provide.

The District reserves the right to reject any and all statements of qualifications submitted and/or request additional information.

SECTION VII – TIMELINE

Date	Activity
March 23, 2022	Request for Proposals Released
April 15, 2022	Proposal packages due to the Desert Healthcare District via electronic submission to aespinoza@dhcd.org by 5:00pm.
April 26, 2022	Board of Directors approves contract at the April 2022 Board Meeting.
May 1, 2022	The contract period begins.