

Request For Proposals – NO/AIDS Task Force Community Health Center Transition

Thank you for taking the time to read over our Request For Proposals. You probably read a decent amount of these. We certainly do. Most of ours come from the federal government. They can be so dry and dull that we would rather read stereo instructions. So, we thought we'd inject a little levity into the process. Not just because it makes it more fun to read, but because this project is going to require some thinking outside of the box. Since we're going to ask you for some creative ideas, the least we can do is get a little creative ourselves.

So, without further ado . . .

Who is this NO/AIDS Task Force?



A PARTNERSHIP FOR LIFE

Well, that's our logo right up there, for starters. We were founded in 1983 in response to the early and devastating effects of the AIDS epidemic in New Orleans. To give you a little perspective, this disease wasn't even called AIDS until late 1982, so we've been around pretty much since the beginning. We started out as a hotline, which was really just an answering machine in someone's living room and a few dedicated volunteers. Today, we've grown to be one of the largest and oldest AIDS service organizations in the Gulf South.

This is our boilerplate, which should give you an idea of what we do:

For 29 years, NO/AIDS Task Force has been providing hope, care and compassion to thousands of men, women and families affected by HIV & AIDS in Southeast Louisiana. The Task Force acknowledges that the complications of HIV-disease are not just physical, but mental, emotional and social as well. That is why our agency offers a full spectrum of care at low to no cost, including services such as: an HIV medical clinic, food pantry, home delivered meals, housing, mental health, medications, and many others. NO/AIDS also remains committed to the health of our entire community and reaches over 20,000 people each year through HIV prevention education efforts. For more information, please visit www.noaidstaskforce.org or call 504-821-2601. (Make sure you check out our website it's got lots of info on what we do. If we listed all our programs and services, you'd get bored or overwhelmed about halfway through the list).

And here's our mission statement:

"To reduce the spread of HIV infection, provide services, advocate empowerment, safeguard the rights and dignity of HIV-affected individuals, and provide for an enlightened public."

So that's what we do in a nutshell. The question still remains, who are we?

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That's a little harder to answer, but here goes.

We're born and raised in New Orleans. There is no other NO/AIDS Task Force anywhere else. The organization was started by a bunch of brave, incredibly dedicated, unbelievably caring, and just a little bit scared New Orleanians. We're incredibly grassroots and while we've grown a lot, we still hold on to that "grassroots, we're all in the trenches together" attitude. It's one of the things that makes us unique, and it's something our clients, supporters, staff and volunteers love about us. We have staff and volunteers that have been with the agency for 15 or 20 + years. We're also a little bit edgy, but that just comes with the territory. We have conversations at lunch that would make a sailor blush. We are a microcosm of New Orleans. Our staff, clients, volunteers and supporters come from all walks of life and are representative of the rich cultural and ethnic tapestry that make up this great city we live in.

Most importantly, we are a family. If we've learned anything over the past 29 years, we know that families come in lots of shapes and sizes and aren't just a mom, dad, 2.5 kids and a dog. A family can be a group of friends who face the same adversity, carry each other through the hard times and as a result their bond is stronger than anything you've ever seen. Families can come apart in an instant when facing great loss, and they can form anew with those who rose to the occasion in a time of need. Families can be made up of people who after years of hard work, heartache and loss are still there, together, when the tide begins to turn and they realize the darkest days are finally behind them. NO/AIDS Task Force is made up of thousands of individuals whose lives have been touched by this epidemic, and as a result, have become intertwined. Volunteers, staff, clients, donors, and supporters have all leaned on one another through the years. Many individuals have worn all of those hats over time, sometimes simultaneously, and, have seen this organization and disease from every perspective. It is that more than anything that has helped us grow and continue to meet the ever-changing needs of our community.

THE CHALLENGE

Congress passed Healthcare Reform which is set to be implemented in 2014. As you might have heard, there's a slightly contentious, oh-so-cosmopolitan-European notion of government funded healthcare and insurance for all that's at the heart of the plan. Historically, HIV/AIDS care and services at many community-based organizations have been funded by the Ryan White Care Act, which is funded through dollars appropriated by, you guessed it – Congress. Some people have started speculating that once Healthcare Reform goes into effect Ryan White dollars will begin to disappear and eventually cease to exist.

We have some smart, forward thinking people here at NO/AIDS on staff and on our board, who don't want to wait around and see what happens. We want to be ahead of the curve. Healthcare Reform has money set aside to beef up the numbers of Federally Qualified Health Centers, also known as Community Health Centers. These are specially-designated entities by the government that are designed by and for the people they serve. And these organizations have to treat anyone who walks in the door, from birth to death, regardless of their ability to pay. And we're not talking about just some doctors and nurses who do everything from school shots to prescribe Aunt Bessie her blood pressure

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medication. In addition to being a traditional medical clinic, the government really stresses that these organizations have what they call wrap-around services, things like a food program, housing services, disease prevention education, behavioral health . . . do you see where this is going yet? (If not, read our boilerplate again . . . go ahead, we'll wait.)

NO/AIDS Task Force wants to become a Community Health Center. Let's rephrase that. **NO/AIDS Task Force is planning to become a Community Health Center.** Let that sink in for a moment. This not-so-little AIDS Service Organization is going to go from treating and caring for people living with and affected by HIV-disease (about 2200 clients a year + nearly 20,000 reached through prevention/education) to caring for anyone and everyone who walks through our doors, like parents, expecting parents, little kids, your grandmother, that nice old man down the street, waiters, busboys, musicians, poor people, middle class people, maybe even some rich folks who just know good healthcare when they see it.

And that's one thing we definitely do well – we provide exceptional care and services to our clients and the community. That's why we're perfectly poised to make this transition. Over the past 29 years, we've developed a really great continuum of care for a very specialized population. We already have almost all of those supportive, wrap-around services in place. We just need to expand their reach. We've been educating the community about HIV and AIDS and how to protect yourself for almost 30 years. There's no reason why we can't add educational programs about heart disease, diabetes, and smoking cessation (actually, we have already done that last one, so we can cross that off the list). The other important thing to know, is that as people with HIV continue to live longer and longer, they are facing the same health problems that uninfected people face. We've actually been caring for people with HIV and conditions like diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and high blood pressure for quite a while now. We're in the ideal place to expand and offer services and our expertise to the entire community.

And you know what, we're going to do it. We know we are because we have yet to back down from a challenge over the past 29 years. We've met them head on, and succeeded every single time. We are some seriously dedicated people who make things happen. Just ask the City of New Orleans who throws a lot of the tough projects our way, or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who keep awarding us very competitive grants. Just last year, the head of the White House Office of AIDS Policy came and visited our agency and we presented our plans/vision for the future of the agency to him. His exact words to us were, "You're way ahead of the curve." That, coupled with the fact that the Health Resources & Services Administration awarded us with a planning grant to help us become a Community Health Center, tells us we are doing something right. (Not to toot our own horns, but we were one of two organizations in the state to get one, and one of only five AIDS organizations nationally to receive a planning grant.)

So now that you just read all of that, we're gonna break it down in bullet points for you:

- NO/AIDS Task Force is a grassroots, New Orleans born and bred, community organization with a rich, family history that includes our staff, volunteers, clients, donors, supporters and partners.
- We want to retain as much of what makes us unique as possible and transition into this larger, community-wide health center.

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- We know this is going to involve mission, name, and logo change, but we still want to retain some of our brand identity, but also use this as an opportunity to reduce stigma.
- We need to bring our current base of support and key stakeholders with us as we expand, and walk a fine line to encourage the community that they can and should receive health care from what was an AIDS organization.
- To make it a bit easier, we're not taking the entire city by storm (yet). We're focusing on specific neighborhoods as our target service area. Namely: the French Quarter, Tremé/7th Ward, Marigny, Bywater and Mid City.
- You know and we know it: Change is a dirty word. We need to communicate that we aren't changing, rather we are expanding and growing to meet the evolving needs of the community while ensuring that we continue to provide services for our original population.

THE OBJECTIVE:

- Transition from where we are (NO/AIDS Task Force) to a new organization with expanded mission while experiencing minimal loss of our current base of support and clients. We expect this to be a 2 to 3 year project.
- To grow our identity to care for the community and not lose our identity in caring for those with HIV and AIDS.
- To craft a new marketing plan for the new organization that allows us to not only develop new marketing initiatives and fundraisers, but retain our current fundraising events: Dining Out For Life, The NO/AIDS Walk and Art Against AIDS.
- To create a master brand strategy for the new organization that allows the NO/AIDS brand to be retained as a program of the new organization.
- To create a strategic and effective audience segmentation & communication plan for the new organization.
- To become immediately recognized as a provider of quality healthcare to every member of the family and the community.

What Are We Going To Do To Help?

We got a planning grant that's helping us put all the building blocks in place for this process, such as:

- We've developed a needs assessment with the Louisiana Public Health Institute (LPHI) and we're using the surveys and interviews in our target communities to determine what the new organization should look like in terms of services offered and board composition, which must be representative of the population served. Basically, we're getting feedback from ya momma and 'dem
- We are also receiving pro-bono legal advice from a group in Washington DC to help determine what the legal/tax/corporate structure of the organization could and should look like.
- We are also surveying the agency's current staff and clients about their expectations and fears as well as their wishes and needs for this transition.

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- The best part is that we should have all of that data compiled and interpreted by the time we select a partner for this project.
- We've already got a great project manager on board with lots of experience and a committee made up of the staff leadership team and agency consumers, that does awesome work.

What Do We Want From You?

This RFP is an invitation to prospective proponents to submit a proposal to help NO/AIDS Task Force successfully transition into a new, expanded organization that capitalizes on our current strengths and preserves the unique characteristics that have been instrumental to our previous success. It will address how to preserve existing key stakeholders and supporters while recruiting additional stakeholders for the new organization.

The main thing we want is creativity. We're looking for a campaign that makes us stick out (in a good way). Yes, we are a healthcare organization and healthcare can be serious business. But it doesn't have to be serious all of the time. People shouldn't think that when they go see their doctor it should be for serious or scary reason. Remember when you were a kid, and after seeing the doctor, they'd give you a sucker? Remember how that was the best part about going to the doctor? Well, that and finding all the hidden items in the Highlights magazine? That feeling also has a place in healthcare. Since our goal is to become a community health center that's an amazing resource for the community, for the good and the bad, we hope you'll mix it up a little and think outside the box.

The selected firm will provide full advertising and communications strategy development services over an anticipated 1 to 2 year period. Once the transition is complete, we seek to keep the firm on retainer for a mutually agreeable period of time to monitor the transition and ensure that the new brand "sticks."

To help you craft a proposal, here's a list of our pre-existing communication tools/outlets:

Quarterly Newsletter (*Newsline*),

Annual Report

Email Newsletter and Eblasts

Agency website: www.noaidstaskforce.org

Twitter: [@noaids](https://twitter.com/noaids) [@noaidsCAN](https://twitter.com/noaidsCAN)

Facebook: [noaidsCAN](https://www.facebook.com/noaidsCAN)

Direct mail appeals – approximately 4 a year

Planned giving brochure and mailings

Special Event Materials

Dining Out For Life – posters, bill inserts, postcards

NO/AIDS Walk – brochures, posters, door hangers, t-shirts, fundraising incentives, www.noaidswalk.com

Art Against AIDS – invitation, event program

Patron Party – invitation

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Advertising

Event program ads (gay carnival balls, Human Rights Campaign program, etc.)

Ambush Ads – contracted in 2012 for 1 ½ page black & white ad in every issue

Event advertising includes Times Pic, New Orleans Magazine, Gambit, Where Y’at, Nola.com, Ambush

So What’s The Magic Number?

Ah yes, the budget. There’s no faster way to make a night or relationship go sour than to quibble about money. So we’re not going to. Honestly, we’ve never taken on a project quite like this before, but we know that we want it done right. So, let’s make a deal. . . . We’ll both be honest and fair with one another when it comes to money.

We’re asking you to suggest a fair budget for a project of this scope, with a breakdown of how you think money should be spent. We’re also asking for you to keep in mind that we’re a nonprofit and maybe get a little creative with budgeting (We hear interns can be great for shaving off a few dollars here and there.)

We also promise to keep in mind that you are a business with operating costs like electricity and ink and paper and coffee and salaries -- salaries for people who are good at their jobs. And we’re pretty sure we’ll have to get a little creative when it comes to funding this project, so we’ll both have put in a little extra effort on this one.

How Do You Get In On The Action?

So you decided you want to take a stab at this and maybe get to work with a swell bunch of people. Here’s how you do it:

To be considered, proposals must be received by NATF no later than 5p.m. EST, on Friday, May 18, 2012. Interested parties need to submit 3 copies of the proposal and an electronic version (.pdf format – attachments do not need to be included in electronic version) to:

CHC Planning Committee
NO/AIDS Task Force
2601 Tulane Ave. Suite 500
New Orleans, LA 70119
Attn: T. J. Rogers

The technical proposal should include description of your agency, approach & methodology, budget and budget narrative, experience with similar clients, key staff qualifications and total number of team members that will be assigned to work on this project, samples of prior work and a client list with references (at least one reference should be a nonprofit). Please also include a no more than one page statement about your agency’s experience working with nonprofits.

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All questions pertaining to this proposal needs to be submitted to T. J. Rogers, Communications Manager at 504-821-2601 ext. 218 or by email at tjr@noaidstf.org

Please feel free to call T.J. Rogers with any questions concerning this proposal or questions about NO/AIDS Task Force at (504) 821-2601 ext. 218.

The Legal Stuff

This RFP does not commit NO/AIDS Task Force (NATF) in any way to select a preferred proponent, or to proceed to negotiations for an agreement, or to award any agreement, and NATF reserves the complete right to, at any time reject all Proposals, and to terminate this RFP process. This RFP is not intended to create, and should not be construed as creating, contractual relations between NATF and any proponent.

By submitting their proposals all agencies are deemed to certify that they are not currently barred from submitting bids/proposals on contracts by any agency of the state of Louisiana.

Wherein NO/AIDS Task Force Chooses an Ideal Suitor

This whole RFP process is kind of like dating, if you lived in the time of Jane Austen. NO/AIDS has announced its availability, and now potential suitors (that'd be you) have to declare their intent. After careful review, one will be chosen as the ideal suitor. It's kind of an appropriate metaphor, since at the end of this process, we'll basically have given birth – to a new organization.

So how will we judge you? First off, wearing a smart-looking ascot, won't help you in anyway. (We bet you're really thankful we're not going to just run with that Jane Austen idea, aren't you?)

Here's our basic timeline and how we'll score proposals:

Schedule:

RFP Announcement	April 13, 2012
Question Period	By April 27, 2012
Submission Deadline	May 18, 2012
Board & Committee Review	By May 30, 2012
Presentations	June 4, 2012
Selection & Notification	Week of June 11, 2012

(Note: Schedule subject to change)

Scoring

Proposed Budget	15
Experience & Qualifications	30
Method & Approach	25
Creativity	30