

THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS

HOWARD HEINZ ENDOWMENT - VIRA I. HEINZ ENDOWMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Analysis of structural barriers to racial equity in Pittsburgh

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

In 2007 The Heinz Endowments began a multi-year commitment to identify and increase the educational, economic, social and leadership opportunities for African American men and boys in the Pittsburgh region. We see the strengths and challenges of African American men and boys as being intricately related to structural racism, i.e., a history of racial oppression, a culture of negative images and ideas regarding their capacities, and a network of institutions that reinforce and perpetuate racial disparities. Despite the challenges, there are countless examples of African American men and boys experiencing a high quality of life and making contributions that improve our collective society. However, we recognize that without an examination and response to how disparities are created our grantmaking agenda will miss an opportunity to raise larger questions facing our region.

With the participation of members of Pittsburgh's African American community and guidance from an advisory committee composed of local and national leaders, the Endowments focused its grant making in three priority areas: identity, gender and character; education; and economic opportunity. The bulk of grants made in the first five years of the task force focused on programs that assisted youth through educational mentoring, classes in financial literacy and Rites of Passage programming.

Heinz Endowments staff and the African American Men and Boys Advisory Committee wish to broaden our grantmaking to combat structural racism and the barriers it presents to racial equity in the Pittsburgh region. To improve the likelihood of success, we must first better understand the nature of these structural barriers and how they function in the Pittsburgh context. We are seeking proposals to accomplish three research objectives:

1. Establish a set of indicators that gives us a baseline understanding of the degree of racial inequality in the region. To maintain a manageable scope for this project, these indicators will be focused on this issue of access to economic opportunity. Specifically, we seek to identify barriers to employment, entrepreneurship opportunities, and financial services for African American men with at least a high school diploma.
2. Using these indicators, and in consultation with the AAMB advisory committee, conduct research identifying specific structural barriers and understanding how they operate in Pittsburgh.
3. Develop a set of recommendations that can guide our grantmaking toward eliminating these barriers to racial equity in Pittsburgh.

The desire for this research stems from a belief that our AAMB work presents a new opportunity in Pittsburgh to deal with long-standing structural barriers. By better understanding even a limited set of these structural barriers and how they operate specifically in our region, we hope to invest in promising strategies to dismantle them. Because of the many connections among our three focus areas, we anticipate that work focused on one of them will also broaden our understanding of structural barriers that affect the others.

DELIVERABLES

Phase I: Establish a set of racial inequality indicators for the Pittsburgh Region concerning access to economic opportunity.

- A reasonably comprehensive set of indicators based on data disseminated regularly enough to allow for frequent updating. Consultants are encouraged to review existing work of this type completed by the University of Pittsburgh Institute on Race and Social Problems and incorporate where appropriate. (<http://www.crsp.pitt.edu/publications/pittsburghdemo.php>)
- Indicators should be produced in a format that allows them to be shared with the Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System (PNCIS). Doing so will ensure adherence to appropriate data standards and improve the timeliness and quality of future updates.

Phase II: Identify structural barriers and develop an understanding of how they operate in the Pittsburgh Region

- An in-depth consultation with the AAMB Advisory Board to review phase one deliverables and begin the work of identifying and understanding structural barriers to economic opportunity in Pittsburgh. The consultation should include a dialogue with the Advisory Board on consultant's framework for understanding and explaining structural racism and structural barriers, so the group is using the terms in similar ways.
- An interim report identifying structural barriers to racial equality with specific attention to how they operate in the Pittsburgh region. This could include, but is not limited to, specific institutions or agencies that enforce barriers and local or regional cultural and spatial dynamics that reinforce barriers.
- A second consultation with the AAMB Advisory Board to review the content of the interim report and set the stage for phase three.

Phase III: Recommendations for eliminating identified barriers

- A final report encompassing material from phases one and two and providing a menu of recommendations for eliminating identified structural barriers. While a broad set of recommendations is desired, some focus must be placed on actions The Endowments can take both through grant making and thought leadership.

TIMETABLE/BUDGET

- Payments will be made in three equal installments: at project commencement, after completion of phase two and at project completion.
- Phase one should be completed within 2 months of contract execution.
- Phases two and three should be completed and all deliverable should be received within 6 months of contract execution.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

- Statement of the project's purpose
- Detailed presentation of methods for completing each phase of the work; with an emphasis on how the identification of structural barriers and proposed solutions for eliminating them will relate specifically to the regional context of Pittsburgh
- Specific qualifications of the applicant(s) to conduct the requested work, including a clear demonstration of relevant content knowledge
- Project work plan and detailed budget
- All submissions must be made electronically. Please send to: estoller@heinz.org
- Submission deadline: June 28, 2013

BACKGROUND ON THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN AND BOYS TASK FORCE

The African American Men and Boys Task Force was created in 2007 to guide the Endowments work in this space. Its mission uses an asset-based approach in working with the African American community to create improved life outcomes for this population. The task force is under the leadership of Carmen A. Anderson, senior program officer in the Children, Youth and Families Program. Additionally, the team is comprised of staff from all of The Endowments program areas as well as the Communications Department. The current priority areas that guide the task force's grant making are: access to economic opportunity; educational opportunity; identity, gender and character development; communications and evaluation.

The task force has made the following Context Statement:

The condition of Pittsburgh's African American men and boys is a consequence of both historical and current injustices, including enslavement, structural racism and a narrow definition of Black manhood. We respect the historical context and scope of the task, as we move to support the African American community in its continuing effort to address the challenges for men and boys.

We recognize that the needed change will require active participation and support on the part of a significant number of individuals and institutions in the Pittsburgh region.