



SISTERS *of* CHARITY FOUNDATION  
OF CLEVELAND

**Evaluating the Cleveland Central Promise Neighborhood Ambassador Program  
September 11, 2020**

**Funder: Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland  
Proposals due *October 15, 2020***

**About the Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland**

Since 1996, the [Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland](#) has partnered with residents, nonprofits and community leaders to [change the trajectory of poverty](#) in Cuyahoga County. Its nearly \$100 million endowment includes the first health care conversion foundation and first foundation formed by a congregation of Catholic sisters in the United States. Through grantmaking, collaboration, advocacy and more, the foundation works to improve the lives of those most in need with special attention to families, women and children living in poverty. The foundation works to end homelessness in Cuyahoga County and to reduce health disparities and improve educational opportunities in Cleveland's Central Neighborhood. As a Catholic organization, the foundation extends the values of Jesus Christ through the mission of its founders – the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine – and also works to sustain the ministries of Catholic sisters. The foundation is a ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System – a family of Catholic health care, grantmaking and outreach ministries healing individuals, families and communities in Ohio and South Carolina.

**About the Cleveland Central Promise Neighborhood Ambassador Program**

Since 2010, the foundation has been the lead convenor of the Cleveland Central Promise Neighborhood Initiative (Promise). Promise, a collective impact initiative modeled similarly to Harlem Children's Zone, [works to improve outcomes](#) for children, families and community in three ways: engage resident voices, align organizations and employ a whole-family approach. Cleveland's Central Neighborhood faces significant challenges brought on by many factors, including a history of unjust and racist housing and economic policies and practices. However, with these challenges come opportunities, as Central residents who care about each other and their community have the power to become leaders and transform the neighborhood. Promise is recognized throughout Cleveland for making neighborhood residents valuable contributors and active, equitable stakeholders.

Promise was formed through a series of community conversations in 2010 and 2011. These conversations created opportunities for community stakeholders and leaders to learn about

local and national community engagement strategies to determine what might be best adapted for the Central neighborhood while building upon neighborhood strengths and assets. Together, these diverse stakeholders contributed to a community building strategy emphasizing the importance of strengthening social capital and growing genuine relationships and partnerships as forces for neighborhood change. Investing in people by developing resident leadership and capacity in these ways was viewed as vital to creating sustainable solutions within a neighborhood where investments in education, housing, political, and economic systems had not led to meaningful community change.

The Promise Ambassador Program represents the most significant tool developed by the initiative for strengthening social capital, mobilizing community members and aligning assets and resources to address the needs of those who work, live and worship in Central. Through the program, neighborhood advocates and supporters complete leadership and community organizing training. Promise Ambassadors and staff share an expectation that Ambassadors will assume decision-making positions throughout the neighborhood and commit to working directly with diverse stakeholders to improve the community's quality of life for residents. By investing in the personal and professional development of residents, Promise stands apart from other programs as a resident-led initiative. An overview of the Ambassador Program and current activities [may be found here](#).

### **About the Opportunity**

The foundation seeks a partner to conduct an evaluation of the Ambassador program. Recognizing the foundational role that resident voice and social capital have played in the evolution of the Promise Neighborhood Initiative, we seek an evaluator committed to a participatory approach in the design of the evaluation questions and plan and who recognizes the usefulness of findings to Ambassadors, neighborhood residents and foundation stakeholders. We prefer an evaluator local to Ohio or with significant lived experience in the Midwest legacy city region, as an understanding of the local context is critical. We also prefer a demonstrated background in engaging with issues of race, power, and privilege through previous work focused on racial equity.

### **Scope of Work**

#### *Timing of work:*

After ten years and the development of an active corps of approximately 80 Ambassadors, the foundation would like to know what has worked around the growth of neighborhood leadership and social capital, how Ambassadors have been impacted, and what adjustments should be made. The current COVID crisis amplifies the importance of this evaluation as the nature and sustainability of neighborhood social capital is simultaneously more critical and rapidly changing.

The foundation is interested in learning about these potential research questions, to be refined with stakeholders in partnership with the evaluator:

- Individual outcomes
  - How, if at all, are Ambassadors benefitting from participating?
  - To what extent has participating in the Ambassador Program made a difference in the leadership development and social capital of participants?
  - How do Ambassadors apply/use what they have learned related to leadership development and social capital?
- Program outcomes
  - How do program components contribute to individual outcomes?
- Community outcomes
  - What is the value added of the Ambassador Program to neighborhood leadership and social capital?
  - What is the value added of the Ambassador Program to neighborhood aspects and elements not originally anticipated or understood?

#### *Use of Findings*

- Ambassadors' understanding of personal and professional growth
- Future Ambassador Program curriculum and activity design
- Cleveland Central Promise Neighborhood collective impact partner recruitment
- Foundation understanding of how it meets its mission to improve the lives of those most in need

#### *Research design*

We expect a qualitative design given the small sample size of participants. We encourage participatory methods as well as storytelling approaches to share findings.

Possible stakeholder groups to include in environmental scans and evaluation design and implementation include:

- Ambassadors from all training cohorts
- Resident leaders who fit the profile of Ambassadors but have not completed training
- Neighborhood leaders and colleagues who engage with Promise Ambassadors personally or professionally
- Foundation and Promise staff

Christine Baker Mitton, director, knowledge and learning for the foundation, will serve as point of contact for the project. Richaun Bunton, Promise Neighborhood initiative manager, serves as the liaison between Promise and the foundation and works closely with Christine and the Promise staff. Richaun convenes the full Promise team every other Friday from 9:00am to 10:30am ET, and these meetings may serve as a space for communication and information sharing between the evaluator and the Promise staff.

#### *Deliverables*

- Final summary narrative that shares results on project's questions and methods and offers future recommendations; formats beyond written encouraged
- Sense-making session with current Ambassadors and residents
- Sense-making session with foundation staff and board

## **Budget**

The foundation anticipates a total budget of \$45,000. We assume work will be done remotely. We are committed to paying Ambassadors and neighborhood residents for their knowledge and contributions to the project, and stipends should be included in the budget.

## **Qualifications**

- Lived and professional experience in Midwest legacy city region, particularly in Ohio
- Lived and professional experience in Black, Indigenous, and communities of color
- Experience conducting evaluations using participatory approaches and methods
- Experience engaging with race, power and privilege and commitment to using lens of racial equity
- Understanding of collective impact model, social capital development models and/or leadership development programs
- Familiarity with remote research activities
- Previous experience with similar projects
- Previous experience or demonstrated interest in working with faith-based organizations

## **Proposal**

Please submit Proposal by October 15, 2020, to Christine Baker Mitton, director, knowledge and learning, [cmitton@socfcleveland.org](mailto:cmitton@socfcleveland.org).

Include the following:

- Proposal Narrative, not to exceed ten pages, single-spaced, 12 point font, 1" margins
  - Proposed approach
  - Challenges and concerns and how they might be addressed
  - Work plan, including tasks and timeline
  - Work products and deliverables
  - Key personnel or firm capacity, qualifications and relevant experience for proposed approach and scope of work
  - Brief biographies of key personnel identified for this project
- Budget including expenditures for personnel, project materials/supplies, participant stipends/compensation and indirect costs
- Two sample work products from similarly conducted evaluation projects, no page limit

- Three references for similarly contracted projects and services within the last 10 years, including name, address, phone number, email address, scope and length of services provided
- Resumes or CVs of key personnel identified for this project

### Timeline

Date	Event
Sept 11, 2020	RFP released
Oct 15, 2020	Proposals due by 5:00pm ET
Oct 26-30, 2020	Virtual meetings with finalists
Nov 6, 2020	Evaluation partner selected
Nov 2020 - June 2021	Estimated project duration
June 30, 2021	Summary narrative and sense-making sessions completed

### Questions

Christine Baker Mitton, director, knowledge and learning

Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland

[cmitton@socfcleveland.org](mailto:cmitton@socfcleveland.org) (preferred)

216-357-4468 (allow 48 hours for response due to remote work policy)