



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### Overview:

The Community Kitchen, Inc. seeks a skilled consultant or consulting team to facilitate our organization in identifying a strategic framework to guide our future work, assessing our organizational structures and culture, outlining a plan for reaching goals and benchmarks, and developing a communications plan and a fundraising plan.

All communications can be directed to Sarah Harpster, [tckadvocacy@gmail.com](mailto:tckadvocacy@gmail.com), 603-903-2202.

- Intent to apply notices submitted by close of business on Friday, January 14, 2022 are appreciated, but not required to submit a proposal. Please include your name and contact information so that we can keep you updated with any addenda and answers to frequently asked questions.
- Questions can be submitted through January 18 and will be answered within 2 business days.
- Project proposals are due by 5 PM EDT, Friday, January 28, 2022. Submit proposals as a PDF via email to [tckadvocacy@gmail.com](mailto:tckadvocacy@gmail.com). Please include the names and contact information of three references. Please clearly identify roles and expertise of each individual consultant if you are submitting a team proposal.

Interviews will be held in February, 2022. The award of the contract is expected to be made by the end of February, 2022.

Work on the project is expected to begin by the end of April, 2022, with a targeted completion date by the end of August, 2022. The anticipated budget for this project is \$20,000-\$25,000.

### Purpose and Goals of the Project:

The Community Kitchen is entering a new phase of program expansion with the launch of the Advocacy Program and the development of the Monadnock Mobile Food Pantry. We are also keenly aware of the dynamic conditions that impact the charitable food industry, the food system, and the context of global systems beyond that. With the right internal systems in place, The Community Kitchen will serve as a valuable regional partner in efforts to establish and maintain food security for all residents of Southwestern New Hampshire even as the economic, ecological, and political environment continues to

evolve. We seek the support of a consultant to help us navigate a transitional period for our organization as well as for our industry. As a result of this project, we will be prepared to use our organizational assets to provide the highest quality of food charity service to every person who requires it in our community while collaborating with residents and organizational partners to ensure enduring food security within our organization's impact area.

We seek the services of a consultant to guide the Board and staff in developing a shared understanding of the changing needs in the charitable food world and in aligning our program expansion to best support our community needs. The consultant will guide us in revisiting our mission, vision, and values, clarifying our shared understanding of its implications, potentially updating it, and strengthening buy-in across the organization and the community beyond. The consultant will develop an analysis of The Community Kitchen's role in achieving a hunger-free region within the context of our community, helping to identify what support and leadership we could bring to the table along with other existing partners, local businesses, funders, and residents. They will also help us identify other key political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental dynamics that currently influence our work and help us plan how to continually monitor these dynamics in order to remain nimble and continually meet our mission in a changing world.

The consultant will facilitate an organizational assessment and redevelopment process that will include the potential redefinition of job descriptions, identification of needed new positions, a redefinition of reporting structures, and identifying a plan for any necessary training and for aligning staff compensation with organizational values. The consultant will also help identify goals for strengthening organizational culture, internal communications, accountability, and workflows. The Community Kitchen has a seasoned staff with deep experience within the organization. The consultant will engage with each staff member to identify professional goals and opportunities for career development that align within the overall organizational development plan.

The consultant will facilitate and advise the Board of Directors in creating a plan for clarifying Board roles and responsibilities, defining the new Board member on-boarding process, potentially including new Board member trainings such as those offered by the NH Center for Nonprofits, and priorities for new Board member recruitment. Finally, the consultant will guide the Board and staff in identifying the organization's development needs, including financial and communications components, associated with meeting the goals identified in other portions of the planning process. They will help the organization define a balanced and achievable income portfolio, help assign responsibilities for fundraising, and identify any remaining needs for training and/or capacity building to meet our financial goals. They will also identify key improvements to the organization's communications strategy, including marketing, advertising, public relations, press releases, and social media, etc., to enhance the success of other aspects of the plan.

#### Project Background:

The Community Kitchen, established in 1983, is the largest hot meals and pantry program serving the mostly rural Monadnock region in southwestern NH. From its early days of volunteer-driven rotating free dinners in church halls and non-perishable food drives off the backs of pickup trucks, The Community Kitchen settled into its current facility in the heart of downtown Keene in 1998, offering its hot meals and pantry programs. We offer six hot meals a week to 500 (approximately 100 unique) community members and provide a full-service weekly pantry for 250-300 families. In all, we served

over 345,000 meals in 2020. Our 16,000 square foot facility boasts a commercial kitchen, 1,200 square feet of cold storage space, and a 150-panel solar array. The dedicated and seasoned staff represents an array of well-developed skill sets in logistics, management, volunteer development, network building, and culinary production. In 2021, The Community Kitchen launched an advocacy program and explored a mobile food pantry program that it plans to test in 2022 and launch in 2023.

According to our organization's bylaws, The Community Kitchen's specific purposes are to provide food to people in need, lead our community to eliminate hunger, educate and raise awareness of hunger and malnourishment in the Monadnock region, and uphold and promote the inherent worth and dignity of each person we serve.

Like many charitable food agencies, our services have professionalized over the years and evolved to better meet community needs for safe, quality foods offered with dignity and respect. Despite the development of a massive and efficient charitable food industry over the past 50 years, food insecurity in the United States remains a chronic challenge, with almost 50 million people experiencing limitations in accessing adequate food prior to the pandemic. In recent decades, the industry has been challenging assumptions about how we can better accomplish our mutual goal of achieving lasting food security for all. Charitable food agencies offer a useful lens and skillset to help address these challenges with our experience in managing food logistics and in building strong relationships with community members and volunteers, especially with people who experience food insecurity in their own lives.

Over the past year and a half, the pandemic has focused national attention on the systemic issues that make it too difficult for many people to meet their basic needs. For our organization, the ongoing conversation about the systemic root causes of hunger, along with the greater focus of the pandemic, has framed our need to undertake a strategic planning process that will allow us to most effectively bring our assets to bear on affecting lasting change in our community's experience of food insecurity. In 2021, our new Advocacy program was added to our existing Hot Meals program and Pantry program. In 2022, we will pilot another new program, a mobile food pantry. As we undergo this exciting period of growth, aware of the changes in our industry and the world around us, a solid strategic framework will help us define and achieve our goals and values. This will move in alignment with our dynamic context and create an organizational development plan that better positions us to achieve our goals.

#### Scope of Work:

- Interview most staff members
- Interview a representative sample of Board members
- Interview additional stakeholders, including pantry guests, volunteers, and community partners
- Evaluate the landscape of food pantry programming best practices and impact opportunities
- Evaluate existing capacities of The Community Kitchen and potential for growth
- May utilize techniques such as group workshops and surveys to identify priorities or develop consensus around some project questions

- Apply expertise in organizational development to advise on best practices around strengthening organizational culture, practices, and operations.

#### Deliverables:

A strategic framework that includes an analysis of the organization's current conditions, assets, and opportunities to impact food security within the region. Additionally, they will write up a plan for next steps in organizational development around organizational flow chart and staff development, organizational culture, Board development, communications plan, and financial development.

#### Skills and Qualifications:

We seek a consultant or consultant team with the following skill areas:

- Understanding of rural New England, especially the Monadnock Region of NH
- Understanding of food systems, especially charitable food systems and best practices in addressing the root causes of hunger
- Understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice work within service organizations
- Understanding of organizational assessment and change management
- Experience in building effective fundraising programs

#### Evaluation Criteria:

A successful proposal will demonstrate:

- The consultant or consultant team has demonstrated expertise in non-profit strategic positioning, organizational development, and financial plan development.
- The proposal demonstrates a clear understanding of The Community Kitchen's position and articulates a clear process to help us reach our goals.
- The consultant or consultant team offers a full range of the skill sets outlined in this RFP.