

Reentry Solutions Grant Fund for Community Engagement

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Office of Reentry Partnerships (ORP), in the City of Philadelphia's Managing Director's Office, was formed in August 2019 with the goal of empowering returning residents, partner organizations, and the public to interrupt cycles of harm and build thriving communities.

Working in close collaboration with Philadelphia's Adult Probation and Parole Department (APPD), City Council, the Office of Criminal Justice, members of Philadelphia's Criminal Justice Advisory Board, and other partners, ORP is leading Philadelphia's Neighborhood Resource Centers (NRC) Initiative, a transformative model of justice designed to improve outcomes for justice-involved individuals and their neighborhoods.

NRCs will be a network of community centers where people on county probation and parole report to their probation officer in or near their own neighborhood and access services and resources alongside family members and neighbors. NRCs aim to reduce probation/parole violations, enable people on probation to thrive, and benefit neighbors by removing obstacles, meeting people where they are, and delivering critical programs in welcoming community-centered spaces.

Although physical plans for the opening of the first neighborhood resource center have been significantly delayed because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the City remains committed to engaging with justice-involved individuals to:

- Better understand how people who are and were under county supervision can best be supported and connected to services (e.g. job placement, health & wellness services; legal assistance, education & training, etc.), while the first physical NRC site opening has been postponed, and
- Solicit input from justice-involved individuals to inform how the City of Philadelphia can build a more effective reentry services system.

ORP has engaged HR&A Advisors—a public policy advisory firm that advances projects and policies to make cities more vibrant and equitable—to administer grants to community-based organizations to help the City and NRC partners understand how to better support people under county supervision and build a more effective reentry services system. HR&A Advisors will award \$60,000 in grants to be distributed in 2020. Individual grants will range from \$5,000 to \$30,000. Grant funds must be partially be used to compensate community members for leading and/or participating in the community engagement, and proposals from organizations led by people who are directly impacted by the criminal justice system will receive preferential treatment in the selection process.

Organizations will propose and implement their own strategies to engage Philadelphians who are or have recently been under county supervision and/or have recently returned from incarceration

in prison or jail in conversations that answer key questions related to ORP's goals. These include:

1. What resources and services are most important for reentry and/or the well-being and success of people on county probation?
2. What types of social services (e.g. job placement, health & wellness services; legal assistance, education & training, etc.) do you use? How do you currently access these services? What would make it easier for you to do so?
3. What organizations provide services in your community that are beneficial to you, or others who are on county probation and parole and/or returning from incarceration? How can service delivery be improved between and within these organizations?
4. What types of services or resources that would benefit returning residents and people on county probation or parole are currently missing or hard to access from existing organizations?
5. What are the biggest obstacles to accessing the services and support that returning residents or people on county probation or parole need?
6. What are the main challenges that residents returning from incarceration or people under county supervision face while in the community under county supervision?
7. How have those challenges changed since the Covid-19 pandemic?
8. What vision do returning residents or people on probation or parole have for reentry and referral services in the future?
9. What would a reentry system that responds to and prioritizes the needs of people of color in Philadelphia look like?

While proposals may differ in approach, depending on knowledge about the most effective platforms to engage people on probation under county supervision or returning from incarceration, we expect engagement to use some or all the following tools for engagement:

- **Virtual Community Open House:** Organize and host meeting(s) open to the public to gather feedback on community needs, guided by the questions above. Given the limitations of in-person gatherings, this option will likely require more sophisticated logistical and technology coordination.
- **Stakeholder Focus Groups:** Seek more in-depth feedback from those directly affected by the criminal legal system, and their families, through (virtual or COVID-safe) focus groups.
- **Digital Surveys:** Advertise and conduct online surveys to collect community feedback.

The target audience for engagement are community members who are currently or were recently on county probation or parole and/or returning from incarceration. Organizations may also

propose engaging specific communities who have those experiences, such as young adults, people who identify as women, LGBTQAI individuals, people with mental illness, substance use disorder, or co-occurring disorders, or those experiencing homelessness.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for a grant, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Applicants with a valid 501(c)(3) nonprofit status or that partner with a nonprofit organization that can serve as a fiscal sponsor will be prioritized in the selection process. We also encourage justice-involved individuals and groups serving justice-involved populations without a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status to apply. Applicants that do not have valid 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, or that do not partner with a nonprofit organization that can serve as a fiscal sponsor, will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Applicants have the capacity to meet the requirements around communication and reporting to HR&A Advisors if awarded the grant.

REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS WITH HR&A ADVISORS

Grantee organizations will agree to provide at least 5 days-notice to the Office of Reentry Partnerships, and HR&A Advisors in advance of any program or event, and announce occurrence to community stakeholders (including political representatives) with enough time in advance, ensuring that participants have access to technology and internet to participate. ORP and HR&A Advisors also must be able to participate if desired.

After any event, meeting or other outreach activity, the grantee organization will provide a summary that includes: attendance, summary of engagement activities, data collected (if applicable), and key takeaways. The summary should note both the individuals or communities engaged (i.e. people on county probation, people returning to communities from county jails) and their level of county supervision or interaction with the criminal justice system (i.e. individual returning to community after being incarcerated for X length of time, individual with a technical violation on probation or parole) in order to contextualize the feedback received.

The grantee organization will work with HR&A Advisors to ensure the confidentiality of individuals engaged and feedback received during this process.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

October 15, 2020	Proposals due. The HR&A will review all applications received by this deadline.
November 1, 2020	If necessary, applicant organizations will be contacted to provide additional information needed to support the request and clarify any questions about the proposal.
November 23, 2020	Applicants will be notified regarding whether or not they are receiving a grant.
January 22, 2020	Projects completed and all materials submitted to HR&A Advisors.

All applications will be reviewed by the HR&A Advisors team. HR&A Advisors will work with City

and community partners to evaluate applications (while addressing possible conflicts of interest) and make recommendations to the Office of Reentry Partnerships and the Managing Director's Office, who will determine final funding decisions. HR&A Advisors will serve as the fiscal agent for this community granting fund.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following questions:

1. Does the proposed engagement advance ORP's goals of better supporting people under county supervision and building a more effective reentry services system and deliver insights on how to improve the delivery of reentry services in Philadelphia?
2. Does the proposal identify targeted stakeholders and explain why feedback from these communities is relevant to ORP's goals?
3. Does the applicant demonstrate partnerships with justice-impacted populations, an understanding of the neighborhood(s) where they are conducting the engagement, and the population(s) they are targeting?
4. Does the applicant agree to compensating directly impacted individuals for leading, staffing, and/or engaging or participating?
5. Does the proposal recommend strategies for reporting feedback?
6. Does the application's approach demonstrate a bold vision for reentry, centered in racial equity?
7. Does the applicant demonstrate an understanding of the neighborhood(s) where they are conducting the engagement and the population(s) they are targeting?
8. Is the proposal from an organization led by people who are directly impacted by the criminal justice system?

Proposals from organizations led by people who are directly impacted by the criminal justice system will receive preferential treatment in the selection process.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Proposals **MUST** be no more than 4 pages and emailed as a PDF document with attachments to reentryengagementphl@hraadvisors.com. **Applications are due by 5:00pm ET on October 15, 2020.**

Please be sure to include the following information:

1. Legal name of applicant organization (or [fiscal sponsor](#))
2. Contact name & title
3. Contact email address & phone number
4. Project name, if applicable
5. Philadelphia neighborhood(s) served
6. Annual organizational [budget](#) and major funding sources

7. Description of proposed engagement activities:
 - Detailed explanation of how the organization will conduct outreach and gather input
 - Description of who the organization plans to engage, how many individuals or groups are expected to be engaged, what communities they represent, and why feedback from these communities is relevant to ORP's goals of better supporting people under county supervision and building a more effective reentry services system
 - List any partnerships or relevant stakeholders and their roles in engagement
 - Describe how the proposed plan compensates people who are directly impacted by reentry and probation issues (for leading, staffing, engaging, and/or participating).
8. Description of applicant organization's history and capacity to successfully implement the project:
 - Description of relevant experience in community engagement, specifically how they have previously obtained information, data, and input from community members
 - Demonstration of organization's commitment to racial equity and justice and relevant experience in advancing racial equity in their work
9. Agreement to meeting communication and reporting requirements with HR&A Advisors, including providing advance notice of engagement activities, producing summaries and key takeaways following engagement activities, and ensuring the confidentiality of individuals engaged
10. Project Budget: Amount requested and explanation of how grant funds will be used
11. Optional: Collateral or supporting information (i.e. press coverage, letters of support, testimonials, videos, etc.) that you feel helps to explain your proposed project and/or organizational mission or capacity

QUESTIONS

For questions regarding the Reentry Solutions Grant Fund for Neighborhood Engagement, please contact reentryengagementphl@hraadvisors.com.