



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Planning for the Future of the Nourishing Power Network

Term of Service: December 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025 || Maximum Bid: \$4,000

BACKGROUND

Cleveland's food system can produce justice and sovereignty within historically redlined neighborhoods. The [Nourishing Power Network](#) seeks to make this happen. Established in July 2022, the Nourishing Power Network launched as a community action research project testing ways to transform food systems by bridging community power with organizational power to spark and expand food justice initiatives led by the community. This systems-change intervention includes four components: a community led Advisory Council, a funding arm called the Nutrition Equity Fund, an idea incubator entitled the Nourishing Power Fellowship, and a broad networking component. The end goal is to root and grow a local food system that promotes freedom, hope and dignity in food traditions resulting in holistic health for Black, Latino/a/x, Asian, and Indigenous communities. Phase 1 of this research, led by the Mary Ann Swetland Center for Environmental Health in partnership with Neighborhood Connections and the Nourishing Power Network Leadership Team, will end in June 2025. A key legacy of the Nourishing Power Network is the development of Nutrition Equity Zones as a novel strategy for transforming the outcomes of our local food system. The goal in this RFP is to develop a 12-month strategic plan to strengthen opportunities to root and grow nutrition equity zones in Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

What is a Nutrition Equity Zone (NEZ)*? **A concept developed by the Nourishing Power Network Advisory Council.*

- An area within a community intentionally developed to realize a vibrant and fair food system that is powered by community engagement, collaboration, and partnerships. Within a NEZ, community presence is alive, serving as the driving force behind its initiatives. Residents within NEZs are active agents of change, deeply invested in the collective effort to flip the food system to fairness.
- NEZs have many pathways for residents to get fresh, healthy, and culturally relevant foods through community-run markets, cooperative grocery stores, or urban agriculture initiatives. They are also hubs of education and empowerment. Holistic health workshops, cooking classes, and gardening events led by residents are a few examples of the diverse capacity building opportunities available within NEZs.
- A hallmark of NEZs is the presence of local growing initiatives. Community gardens and urban farms are common, providing residents with opportunities to actively engage in food production and cultivation. These are linked to pathways for residents to activate their skills and resources to generate economic opportunities within their community. Whether through small-scale food production, value-added food processing, or entrepreneurship ventures, NEZs empower residents to create and sustain local economies that lead to healthy people and communities.
- With a focus on sustainability, NEZs across the city are connected for advocacy and activism. Community organizers and grassroots leaders from different NEZs link together to strategize and mobilize around issues related to food justice and equity. Through collaborative partnerships with residents, organizations, and institutions, NEZs leverage their collective power to mobilize systemic changes to transform the food system so that it works for all.

CURRENT REQUEST

The Nourishing Power Network is seeking a consultant to develop a 12-month strategic plan to support its targeted and tailored networking approach to grow momentum for Nutrition Equity Zones in Cuyahoga County. The 12-month strategic plan will focus on the timeframe after Phase 1 of the community action research ends in June 2025. Work performed in this agreement must be completed from December 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025. The following deliverables are expected as a part of this agreement.

<p>Deliverable 1</p> <p><u>Completed by</u> February 7, 2025</p>	<p>Community Engagement to Inform Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Tasks to support deliverable 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attend kick off meeting with NPN Leadership before December 18, 2024. ○ Facilitate at least 2 listening and feedback sessions with members of Nourishing Power Network and other similar groups in Greater Cleveland to prioritize actions for the strategic plan. <p>*All logistics for the listening sessions will be coordinated by NPN, including payment for food and space required.</p>
<p>Deliverable 2</p> <p><u>Completed by</u> March 30, 2025</p>	<p>Develop 12-month Action Plan.</p> <p><i>Develop a detailed and actionable 12-month strategic plan for the Nourishing Power Network focused on implementing targeted and tailored networking efforts to grow momentum for Nutrition Equity Zones in Cuyahoga County. The goal is to include networking that is focused on relationship building, skill building, and policy development. This plan should span from July 2025 to June 2026 and include information such as the leadership model, coordination needed, topics to cover, structure of networking events, key partners to engage, proposed budget, evaluation approach, etc.</i></p> <p>Tasks to support deliverable 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Present preliminary strategic plan to the NPN Leadership Team by March 7, 2025. ○ Submit final strategic plan by NPN Leadership Team by March 30, 2025.
<p>Deliverable 3</p> <p><u>Completed by</u> March 30, 2025</p>	<p>Outline Sustainability Recommendations for NPN’s Future Networking Strategy.</p> <p>Tasks to support deliverable 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify potential funders to sustain the networking approach beyond June 2026. ○ Explore shared leadership model to sustain the networking approach by leveraging existing resources.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Nourishing Power Network is seeking a consultant with demonstrated experience in at least three of the following areas:

- Growing membership of a network or professional group.
- Working with local players involved in the food justice landscape in Cuyahoga County.
- Facilitating engagement from different partners and unifying feedback in alignment with project goals.
- Creating actionable strategic plans for use by community groups.

Preference will be given to a consultant with lived and/or work experience in Cuyahoga County.

PROPOSAL DETAILS (to be completed by vendor)

1. Firm overview
2. Service offerings
3. Strategic planning philosophy
4. Case studies of similar work (at least 2)
5. Alignment between firm and the goals of the Nourishing Power Network
6. Professional Services References (at least 2)
7. Proposal
 - a. Solution Overview
 - b. Description of how each deliverable will be achieved.
 - c. Project Team, including roles and responsibilities
 - d. Project Timeline including confirmation that deliverables will be met on time
 - e. Pricing Model including breakdown by each deliverable

TIMELINE OF REVIEW

- Applications are due to mxp800@case.edu on October 31, 2024 by 11:59pm
- If needed, Interviews will be held during the weeks of November 4th and November 11th.
- Final selection of the consultant will be announced no later than Tuesday, November 19, 2024 via email.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- Contractor will be required to sign a contract with E 66th Street Services, Inc. (DBA Neighborhood Connections) to receive payment.
- Invoices will be submitted through an online portal to E 66th St. Services, Inc. (DBA Neighborhood Connections) and checks will be available for pick up, delivery, or mail.

Estimated Timeline:

December 2024 to March 2025

Total Budget for All Deliverables:

Up to \$4,000 (Estimated cost must include a quote per deliverable of RFP, including estimated labor).

Submit information by October 31, 2024 at 11:59pm EST to mxp800@case.edu.

Please reach out to mxp800@case.edu if you have questions.