



SUPPORTING LEADERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TRIBAL FINANCIAL SYSTEMS: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Request for proposals deadline extended and budget criteria modified to attract a larger pool of applicants and give more time for partnerships to solidify.

Purpose

The Bush Foundation seeks a partner to design a leadership cohort program to inspire, equip and connect tribal leaders to develop stronger tribal government financial systems.

About the Bush Foundation

The Bush Foundation invests in great ideas and the people who power them in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and the 23 Native nations that share the same geography. Established in 1953 by 3M Executive Archibald Bush and his wife Edyth, the Foundation supports organizations and people to think bigger and think differently about what is possible in their communities. We work to inspire and support creative problem solving – within and across sectors – to make our region better for everyone.

Project Background

The Bush Foundation supports Native self-determination and Native nation building in our region. Our Native Nation Building strategy is rooted in the research of the Native Nations Institute and the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development. The findings suggest there are five core principles of Native nation building, including:

- **Sovereignty:** Willing and able to assert self-governing power.
- **Capable Governing Institutions:** Use effective, non-politicized dispute-resolution mechanisms and build capable bureaucracies.
- **Cultural Match:** Build and innovate upon Indigenous conceptions of authority.
- **Strategic Orientation:** Approach development not as a quick fix for poverty, but as a means of building a society that works.
- **Leadership:** Recognize the need for fundamental change in the way things are done and work to bring the community along in building that future.

The Bush Foundation was inspired by the Casey Family Programs Indian Child Welfare Program. This program works on initiatives that aim to strengthen tribal nations' capacity to keep children healthy, safe and connected with their families, communities and cultures. Their staff work directly with tribes and offer a unique vantage point on tribes' efforts to exercise self-determination. Their insights into the leadership and capacity of tribal government financial systems, intersected with our Native Nation Building strategy goals. We engaged in conversations and conducted research (see attached summary) to understand and analyze the prospects and challenges for the tribes in our region. Through interviews with elected tribal leaders, finance officers and others, we discovered the need to support leaders to develop and improve financial systems, maximize funding streams and effectively lead change.

Project

The Bush Foundation is seeking a partner to develop and implement a leadership cohort program to inspire, equip and connect tribal leaders to develop stronger tribal government financial systems. Participants may include elected officials, department heads, finance officers or others responsible for financial management and leadership, who come from or work within the 23 Native nations in the Bush Foundation region.

The leadership program should:

- Inspire more people to improve tribal financial systems and help them think bigger and think differently about the impact they can have.
- Equip people with the skills and resources they need to effectively improve tribal financial systems.
- Connect and strengthen networks of people to support each other in improving tribal financial systems.

As part of the project, an evaluation of the training program will need to be conducted. The Foundation is particularly interested in how the program inspires, equips and connects cohort participants.

Scope of Work:

The partner will be responsible for designing the overall program which should include the following components, based on research and conversations with community members:

- An adult learning cohort model that fosters development and delivers content knowledge across a continuum of experiences.
- Training related to building effective and efficient management of tribal government financial systems.
- Training related to leadership skills in creating equitable financial systems.
- A series of training sessions offered periodically over one year, with a minimum of 2.5 in-person training days per session.
- Opportunities for additional learning experiences, tailored to individual needs that arise during cohort conversations or collective learnings (e.g. specialized conferences, trainings, coaching).

Phase 1: Program Design and Development, up to \$100,000 budget

The design and development of a cohort learning model is anticipated to take six to nine months and should be completed by the end of 2020 or early 2021. During this phase, the partner will review the research conducted by the Bush Foundation and consultants, conduct any additional research needed, and design a leadership cohort program to inspire, equip and connect tribal leaders to develop stronger tribal government financial systems. This will include, but not be limited to, defining:

- The open and competitive process the partner will use to recruit and select participants.
- The structure and duration of the learning opportunities.
- The way participants will be able to access customized support, if available.

The partner is expected to provide cohort-specific training or curriculum and additional opportunities such as conferences or coaching. The partner is also expected to select participants representing an equitable mix of the 23 Native nations, genders and positional authorities. The partner may choose to establish and manage an advisory committee. The partner should bring a learning mentality to incorporate learnings from cohort to cohort.

This phase also includes the development of an evaluation plan. The Bush Foundation recommends that approximately 5% of the program implementation costs be dedicated to evaluating the impact of the training using the inspire, equip and connect framework. The evaluation should be based on participant experiences.

During this phase the partner will be in monthly communication with the Bush Foundation to ensure agreement and final approval of the program design and implementation prior to phase 2 investment. Budget negotiations are possible.

Phase 2: Program Implementation, up to \$900,000 budget

While some details will be determined by what's learned in Phase 1, it is anticipated that there will be four cohorts (approximately 25 participants each cohort) between January 2021 and December 2024.

The budget for Phase 2, the operation of the program, covers all participant costs including, but not limited to, program costs (facilitators, trainers, materials, etc.), participant costs (travel, lodging, food, etc.), other learning opportunities (additional trainings, conferences, coaching, etc.) and program administration (including program evaluation) and logistics. It is expected that the trainings will be conducted in ways that accommodate a person of any physical ability. Budget negotiations are possible.

Eligibility

- Proposals will be accepted from 501(c)(3) public charities and government entities (including colleges and universities).
- Organizations must have relevant experience in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota or one of the 23 Native nations that share the same geography. While it's not required, special consideration will be given to organizations located in our region.

Selection Criteria

Decisions will be made based on how well an organization or partnership fits our selection criteria. To what degree does the organization or partnership demonstrate:

- Content expertise in finance education, tribal governmental finance systems and transformational leadership development.
- Knowledge and understanding of the Bush Foundation region, specifically the 23 Native nations.
- Strength in ability to work well with a partner.
- Values that align with the Bush Foundation's operating values (<http://bfdn.org/Values>).
- Experience building leadership learning cohorts.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals should outline the following (10 pages max):

- **Mission/Values.** Include your organizational mission and values.
- **Why you are interested in leading this work.**
- **Examples of similar work or processes you've led in the past.**
- **Why you think you are the right organization for this opportunity.**
- **Cultural competency.**
 - Provide evidence of your ability to work respectfully and effectively with communities of color, particularly Native American communities.
 - Provide experience working with people from the Bush Foundation region.
 - Provide evidence of your ability to work respectfully and effectively with tribal governments and/or tribal government professionals.
- **Tribal governmental finance systems.** Outline your expertise with tribal governmental finance systems and their management.
- **Financial Education.** Outline your expertise in tailored financial education.

- **Leadership Development.** Outline your expertise in transformational leadership development.
- **Learning cohorts and networks.**
 - Outline your experience building and supporting learning cohorts and networks, including both successes and challenges.
 - Outline your experience in adult learning that fosters development, in addition to delivering the content knowledge across a continuum of experiences.
- **Evaluation plan.** Provide initial ideas for an evaluation plan.
- **Key staff or partners.**
 - Identify key staff or partners. Include their relevant experience and what their involvement will be in this project, including who will be the project lead.
 - If applying as a partnership, identify the primary partner (the organization under agreement with the Bush Foundation) and outline the roles and responsibilities of each partner. Please also provide information regarding the partners' experience working together previously and why they are the right partners to collaborate on this project. Partnerships may be with other non-profits, government entities or businesses.
- **References.** Provide three references who can speak to your experience providing this type of training and experience.
- **Timeline.** Outline key milestones and when you anticipate they will be met.
- **Budget.** Provide a budget for the proposed work. This should be broken out by the two phases described above, including evaluation.

In all of the above areas, we want to hear the approach to doing this work that would work best. We are open to your ideas and creativity in all areas, including partners and budget.

How to Apply

- Submit your proposal with contact information by email to Eileen Briggs at ebriggs@bushfoundation.org by **EOD Thursday, April 16, 2020**.
- Proposals should be no more than ten pages.
- Fill out and include a Vendor Demographic Form with your proposal (the final pages of this PDF).
- If you have any questions, contact Eileen Briggs at 651-379-2253 or ebriggs@bushfoundaton.org, or you can schedule a call with Eileen.

Selection and Timing

- Bush Foundation staff will review all proposals and select finalists. In early-May all applicants will be notified by email whether or not they're moving forward in the process.
- Bush Foundation staff will schedule calls and meetings with finalists to learn more about their proposal, conduct reference calls and complete additional due diligence.
- Finalists will be notified in mid-June whether or not they've been selected as a partner.
- It is anticipated that work may begin in August-September 2020.

The Bush Foundation

Supporting Leaders Responsible for Financial Systems

RFP: RESEARCH ADDENDUM

January 2020

Purpose of this research addendum

- ▶ **Provide access to non-confidential research conducted by The Bush Foundation to support RFP response development**
- ▶ **Provide direction on content, audience, and format based on research conducted by The Bush Foundation**
- ▶ **Enhance organizations' understanding of the region that The Bush Foundation serves**

Table of Contents

Overview of tribal financial systems

Overview of tribal finance education landscape

Insights from conversations with leaders and professionals

Based on conversations with tribal leaders, the following components comprise a tribal financial system

1	Financial Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crafting policies with your Constitution, Bylaws, and Ordinances• Transparency (published financial reports, roundtables, townhalls)• Auditing (policies for modifying and evaluating policies)• Understanding external financial policies (e.g., OMB, GASB)
2	Budgeting and Financial Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic and long-term planning (e.g., forecasting, developing a strategic plan)• Fund balance (net position of governmental funds, a measure of financial resources available)• Budget process: capital budgeting, personnel budgeting, performance management,
3	Accounting and Financial Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Auditing (internal audit function, audit committees)• Accounting• Internal controls• Financial reporting: targets, guidelines, financial statement preparation
4	Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Risk management• Role of finance officer and leadership• Operations and performance management• Grants management
5	Treasury and Investment Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treasury operations• Banking and merchant services• Cash management• Investing
6	Pension and Benefit Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pension policy, governance and management (e.g., reporting, investments, funding)• Benefit and contribution plans• Actuarial services• Healthcare
7	Capital Planning / Infrastructure/Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic development strategies and capital planning• Asset/infrastructure management• Private equity• Real estate
8	Debt Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financing instruments and debt issuance• Use of advisors• Debt management (e.g., post-issue compliance, disclosure)
9	Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service providers• Tools and resources (e.g., technology)• Negotiation

Table of Contents

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Insights from conversations with leaders and professionals

23 organizations with ~80 offerings were studied to understand the landscape

Overview of organizations studied

	Number of Organizations Studied	Number of Offerings ¹ available
Non-Profit Organization	4	21
Tribe-Specific	5	6
State-Level	5	6
Educational Institution	4	5
Private Company	5	42
Total	23	80

Organizations with formal finance-related programs



Broad overview of insights

1	Lack of coverage with most programs focusing on accounting and financial reporting
2	Marketing is largely through word of mouth or through existing email member lists
3	One third of the organizations studied have developed some content (e.g., curriculum, publications)
4	Program pricing is fairly similar across the various offerings (\$1,000-\$2,500)
5	On average, 60 people per program class with highest enrollment months during the summer
6	Lack of formal gatherings (e.g., conferences) to convene tribal leadership on finance-related topics
7	Majority of existing offerings are tailored to individuals looking to improve personal financial acumen, not to tribes

¹ Offerings includes, online (e.g., materials for download) and offline (e.g., appointments with professionals) resources. Few organizations offer formal programs

Table of Contents

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Insights from conversations with leaders and professionals

9 discussions with 11 leaders and professionals provided valuable insights

On instructors... “The most effective instructors are those who have practical experience” “Lots of continuing education is important and academic brands (e.g., Wharton) are valued” “Many tribes have been successful and those tribes can support the advancement of other tribes”	On format... “There is a need for educational sessions that cover specific topics and these sessions could be combined with existing Native gatherings” “Face-to-face communication is incredibly important” “Knowledge sharing is important for long-term success and sustainability”
On audience... “There is a significant need to educate tribal council members on key financial topics” “Citizens need to be equipped with basic knowledge when it comes to finance. This allows them to engage appropriately – asking the right questions and holding people accountable to the right standards”	On content... “There are “blind spots” [in financial knowledge] that tribes may not recognize. There is a natural inclination to avoid admitting that we may not know everything” “Content needs to be tailored to specific audiences” “Diversification from casino is important”
On outcomes... “Stable leadership and better management of money leads to better health and education outcomes in a Native community” “Employing tribal members for financial responsibilities within a tribe builds internal capacity and ensures sustainability”	On other things to note... “Tribes value privacy and may not be willing to share financial details” “Turnover within tribes creates a problem” “In addition to knowledge, access and management of the right resources and relationships is very important”

Note: Some of the above phrases are exact quotations and others are paraphrased insights taken from conversations