

Request for Proposals

# Unaccompanied Youth Research Consultant



Bennington County Regional Commission  
210 South Street #6,  
Bennington, VT 05201



Greater Bennington Interfaith Community  
Services, Inc  
121 Depot St, Bennington, VT 05201

**Issue Date**

May 9, 2022

**Proposal Deadline**

June 3, 2022

**Project Lead**

Bill Colvin

Bennington County Regional Commission  
Sustainable Community Development Program Director

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## **Project Overview**

Work with BCRC and GBICS to develop an assessment for the needs of Unaccompanied Youth living in and around Bennington, Vermont; and assist with the development of recommendations to address those needs that have implementable solutions.

## **Project Area**

Bennington County, Vermont with a particular emphasis in the southern half of the county (south shire) and the Town of Bennington.

## **Project Background**

In 2021 the Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services (GBICS) identified an increase in the number of 15–18-year-old youth experiencing homelessness who lack parental, foster, or institutional care. Local intakes of youth increased to 18 from August 2021-December 2021 compared to 8 during the entirety of last full academic year (August 2020-June 2021)

In order to assess the true extent of the problem, and what possible interventions might be needed to address the issue, GBICS partnered with BCRC to find funding and develop an Unaccompanied Youth Needs Assessment. Funding for the work was found through a Homeless Health Equity Capacity Building Grant opportunity provided by the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) and a Rural Health Equity grant from the CDC. The Unaccompanied Youth Needs Assessment and this work is a subset of a larger Homeless Health Equity Capacity Building Grant.

A steering committee to oversee the Homeless Health Equity Capacity Building Grant consists of representatives from GBICS, Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union, Vermont Department of Health, Pathways VT, BCRC, the Town of Bennington and is seeking to include additional stakeholders.

## **About BCRC**

The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) was created, pursuant Vermont state law to provide direct planning and community development assistance to seventeen towns and villages in southwestern Vermont. BCRC works on behalf of those municipalities to build strong, resilient, and sustainable communities, to foster economic prosperity, and to promote a high quality of life for residents of the region.

BCRC works cooperatively with local governments and community stakeholders to establish and advance regional cohesiveness, actively advocate for adherence to adopted regional policies, and facilitate effective communication between local, state, and federal levels of government.

BCRC will provide project management support, including assistance with data collection, coordination with various parties, and assistance with public outreach on this project.

### **About GBICS**

Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services (GBICS) is a community-based, non-profit organization. GBICS works with people who live in or near poverty in Bennington County, Vermont. GBICS mission is to advance the health of our neighbors by helping them meet their basic human needs including access to food, shelter, and healthcare.

GBICS provides direct services with the philosophy that "Moving up and out of poverty requires more than a stream of income. It requires a reservoir of personal and community assets too." In addition to providing direct care, GBICS is always working to better understand the issues of poverty and dedicates resources to learning about the culture of poverty.

### **Project Tasks**

1. Assist BCRC staff to develop a survey of local institutions and community stakeholders to identify key needs for the unaccompanied youth population in the project area.
2. Implement survey, conduct interviews, and/or perform outreach with no fewer than twelve (12) community stakeholders; emergency shelter providers, nonprofit affordable housing organizations, designated mental health agencies, specialized housing and service providers, and continuum of care providers including but not limited to GBICS, Southwestern Vermont Supervisory Union, Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless, Shires Housing, Sunrise Family Resource Center and the Town of Bennington.
3. Assist BCRC staff to analyze and summarize survey results and identify key needs for the unaccompanied youth population in the project area.
4. Work with BCRC staff to research findings and actions/solutions that have been implemented to address homeless youth health needs in similar communities and identify their potential applicability to the project area.
5. Assist BCRC Staff to develop a final report and a presentation on key findings including:
  - a. an assessment of needs in the project area, including but not limited to:
    - Barriers to accessing health care services
    - rates of disparate health outcomes,
    - gaps in service provision
    - capacity to increase services
  - b. identification of potential project interventions to address those needs with recommendations for implementation.

6. Attend monthly Project Steering Committee meetings to report on the progress of the work and participate in decision making, as needed.
7. Co-host with BCRC a presentation of the final report targeted to municipal leaders and the Bennington County Continuum of Care group

### **Project Deliverables**

1. A final report on key findings including:
  - An executive summary
  - A report on survey methodology
  - An assessment of needs in the project area
  - Findings on actions/solutions that have been implemented to address unaccompanied youth health needs in similar communities
  - Potential project interventions to address needs in the project area
  - Recommendations for implementation of key projects in the project area
2. A report appendix with completed survey and copies of associated survey data
3. Materials for a presentation outlining the final report findings targeted to municipal leaders and the Bennington County Continuum of Care group
4. A draft press release outlining the final report findings targeted to local media

### **Project Timeline**

A final report and a presentation to be submitted in draft form to Project Steering Committee by October 1, 2022 with a final report and other deliverables expected by November 1, 2022.

## **RFP Timeline**

May 9, 2022:

RFP issued

Begin open period for written questions. Submit to:

Bill Colvin, [bcolvin@brcvt.org](mailto:bcolvin@brcvt.org)

May 27, 2022:

End of period for questions from RFP bidders.

June 3, 2022:

Electronically submit by end of business day proposal to:

Bill Colvin, [bcolvin@brcvt.org](mailto:bcolvin@brcvt.org)

June 8, 2022:

BCRC to begin follow up with applicants.

## **Proposal Format**

Proposals are to be submitted by email in .pdf format to Bill Colvin, [bcolvin@brcvt.org](mailto:bcolvin@brcvt.org) with the subject line "Unaccompanied Youth Research Consultant."

Proposals must include the following information:

- A description of the approach to be used to accomplish the activities outlined above.
- A brief narrative describing your understanding of the problem proposed by this RFP.
- A brief description of the experience, qualifications, and responsibilities for all contributing personnel.
- A proposed project timeline.
- An all-inclusive maximum proposed price to perform the desired work. Price breakdown should outline include direct and indirect costs, usual and customary expenses, and time estimates for contributing personnel. The maximum available funding is twenty-four thousand dollars (\$24,000.00). Proposals with a maximum guaranteed cost above this amount cannot be considered.
- The names of three references from past clients or associates, including a description of the relationship to reference, email address, and telephone number for each.

- Two writing samples, and/or project samples from previous work experience.

### **Evaluation of Proposals**

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Qualifications and experience of the project team
2. A demonstrated understanding of the scope of work
3. Capacity to perform work within project timeline
4. Billing rates
5. Writing samples and references
6. Professionalism and presentation of the proposal submission

### **Selection Process**

BCRC and GBICS will jointly evaluate proposals. The highest evaluated proposers may be invited to discuss their proposals and qualifications prior to awarding the contract. BCRC and GBICS expect to make a final selection by June 17, 2022.