

THE
KRESGE
FOUNDATION

Detroit Program

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: Evaluation of Kresge Innovative
Projects: Detroit Initiative**

Issue Date: December 6, 2018

Due Date: January 18, 2019

Submit proposals to: evaluation@kresge.org

Attn: Anna Cruz, Strategic Learning and Evaluation Officer

Questions accepted through December 21, 2018

BACKGROUND

The Kresge Foundation seeks an evaluation partner or team of partners for the summative evaluation of the Kresge Innovative Projects: Detroit (KIP:D) Initiative. We seek proposals from evaluation teams that are made up of skilled evaluators with a solid track record summative impact outcomes and impact evaluation and who have demonstrated a commitment to improving the lives of people who live in diverse, low-income communities. The successful evaluation partner will have a track record of working with philanthropic and/or nonprofit organizations from the design through the dissemination of the evaluation findings and be adept at engaging stakeholders effectively across a wide range of audiences (community residents, organizational leaders, etc.). The ideal partner will bring an equity lens to evaluative thinking and will have a working knowledge place-based community and neighborhood development. Applications are due January 10, 2019 and the selected evaluation team will begin its work in February 2018. The budget for this phase of work is up to \$150,000.

About us

The Kresge Foundation is a private, national foundation that works to expand opportunities in America's cities through grantmaking and social investing in arts and culture, education, environment, health, human services and community development in Detroit. In collaboration with our nonprofit, public, private and philanthropic partners, we help create pathways for people with low income to improve their life circumstances and join the economic mainstream.

The Foundation's way of working emphasizes cross-sectoral, high-engagement philanthropy that encompasses not only grantmaking and social investments, but also strategic communications, policy and advocacy, and field-building activities. For more general information about the Foundation, please visit our website at kresge.org/who-we-are.

Strategic Learning and Evaluation

The Kresge Foundation is committed to internal and external strategic learning and knowledge sharing. We operationalize principles of [equitable evaluation](#) across our practice, and, as such, we hold that production, consumption, and management of this evaluation has a responsibility to advance equity. We monitor our work's context, track expected and unexpected results, and make necessary mid-course corrections to maximize our effectiveness. We use a wide range of information, analyses, and evaluative approaches to help us understand how to invest our resources to their highest and best purposes in line with our program strategies and organizational mission. We dedicate the necessary time and resources to evaluation, reflection, and learning activities, and we share our learning with our colleagues, board of trustees, grantees, partners and the public.

ABOUT THE DETROIT PROGRAM

Since 2006, Kresge's Detroit Program Team has evolved its grantmaking and investments from capital investments to strategic grantmaking. During that time, Kresge's Detroit team made investments that supported Detroit during a tumultuous time and responded to the city's changing context and needs. Kresge's arc of investments since 2006 was consistent with the arc of investment of other cities and their leading foundations, where revitalization efforts tended to begin with a focus on an economic core – in the case of Detroit, this was downtown, the riverfront, and Midtown.

To decide where to go next, the team reflected on what it had learned from its previous decade of grantmaking in the city, and where it was able to leverage its assets as a funder to achieve the greatest success. The Detroit team's refreshed strategy is not a dramatic shift from its previous grantmaking; rather, it is reflective of "doubling-down" in areas where it has gained traction – for example, with the arts & culture and early childhood systems – and gradually phasing out investments that were intended as short-term support to help a struggling city get back on its feet. This entails a shift to neighborhoods throughout the city, supporting community development through authentic resident engagement. These investments focus on improving quality of life in Detroit's neighborhoods, and ensuring that revitalization efforts reflect resident priorities and needs residents and also elevate their voices.

Kresge Innovative Projects: Detroit (KIP:D)

The Kresge Innovative Projects: Detroit (KIP:D) initiative is an important part of the Foundation's commitment to Detroit's neighborhoods. KIP:D began in 2014 with the expressed purpose of responding to community priorities by providing resources for projects that are not necessarily "new," but that support the vision and creativity of Detroit's residents to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. From 2014-2017, the first three rounds of the program awarded grants in each of the Detroit's seven city council districts and closely aligned with community priorities expressed in the [Detroit Future City Framework](#). Projects were to be completed within 12 to 18 months from grant award.

KIP:D grantees must show an inclusive, collaborative process for design, development and implementation that extended benefits to a broad set of stakeholders and community residents. Projects are also evaluated on their demonstrated ability to build community connectivity and improve quality of life, and on their long-term sustainability.

The following links provide more information about the types of organizations who were awarded grants in the first three rounds:

1. [Round One](#)
2. [Round Two](#)
3. [Round Three](#)

The Detroit Program prioritized groups that are located within the communities they serve and were explicit about giving preference to organizations or projects led by people who reflect the community being served.

EVALUATION SCOPE

The Kresge Foundation is seeking an evaluation partner or team of partners to design and implement a robust summative evaluation of the KIP:D initiative through its first three years of implementation. Kresge seeks to learn lessons from these first three cohorts to inform future rounds of KIP:D, as well as its community development investments more broadly. The Foundation expects these lessons to be shared internally and externally with grantees, the broader Detroit community, and other place-based funders. Kresge's Detroit Program believes that evaluation and research are useful tools for understanding how and in what ways our efforts are contributing to our goal of building pathways of opportunity for Detroit residents

We expect to work with the evaluation partner or team of partners to clarify and refine the guiding questions, review the data collection approaches, timeline, and expected products as well as make any refinements along the way of the evaluation as needed. The Kresge Foundation supports robust and innovative approaches to data collection as they dovetail with the guiding questions and evaluation scope.

Evaluation Objectives & Guiding Questions

This evaluation is guided by the following objectives:

1. Evaluate to what extent KIP:D projects have increased community connectivity and improved the quality of life in Detroit's neighborhoods;
2. Assess the efficacy of implementation strategies (project execution, project management, community engagement, etc.) used by grantees and identify a set of best practices to inform future rounds of KIP:D;
3. Understand to what extent capacity and technical assistance were provided to grantees to implement their projects, and how grantee support could be improved in future rounds.
4. Illuminate how KIP:D investments fit within other community development strategies in neighborhoods and the extent to which KIP:D investments catalyze other community development investments in neighborhoods.

The team has several guiding questions that focus on three areas: *impact*, *implementation strategies*, and *capacity building*. While we understand the extent to which we will be able to answer concretely each of these questions will vary – and we recognize resources and timeline can play a role in that – we are seeking a partner who can help us best tackle these questions.

Guiding questions

IMPACT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What has been the role of KIP:D projects in improving community connectivity, quality of life and residents’ perception of their neighborhoods? What types of projects and which projects change residents’ perceptions of quality of life? To what extent are these areas of impact aligned with resident desires? 2. Are KIP:D projects accessible to neighborhood residents – not just certain demographics, but the community at large? 3. What perceptions do grantees, stakeholders, and – to some extent – residents have about how KIP:D projects have advanced the vision and priorities of neighborhood residents?
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. To what extent have these projects aligned with community priorities? How have community members and stakeholders been involved in the project planning and implementation? What methods were most effective in ensuring community priorities are incorporated? 5. What strategies were most effective in ensuring authentic, inclusive engagement with a broad set of stakeholders? 6. What are some characteristics of project execution, management and implementation shared across the most impactful projects?
CAPACITY BUILDING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. To what extent is the work of KIP:D grantees catalytic? What elements of the funding approach help or hinder KIP:D organizations to be catalytic in their community and the field? What have been the key challenges, successes, and missed opportunities in the implementation of this initiative? 8. In what ways are these organizations especially effective at addressing racial equity within the organization and within the broader community they serve? To what extent do KIP:D projects support or hinder these efforts? What can we learn about what it takes to advance racial equity in this sector?

Key Responsibilities and Deliverables

The selected evaluation team will work closely with members of the Detroit Program as well as members of the Strategic Learning, Research, and Evaluation team throughout the duration of the evaluation.

Key responsibilities will include:

- Development of an evaluation plan with detailed data collection, analysis and dissemination approaches
- Data collection and implementation of evaluation plan
- Development of 2-3 key deliverables that highlight findings of the evaluation (see below)

- Ongoing engagement with the Kresge team and overall project management of the evaluation
- Two in person meetings in Metro Detroit (launch and dissemination of findings) with the Kresge Detroit and Strategic Learning, Research, and Evaluation team
- Develop and carry out a grantee workshop to share back findings

The evaluation partner will develop the following deliverables:

- Evaluation plan
- Data collection tools
- Detailed designed external report summarizing key findings and lessons learned
- Internal memo or brief for Kresge
- Slide deck or other necessary materials for the grantee workshop

The findings of this summative evaluation will be used to inform the continuation or expansion of this initiative, as well as future initiatives, implemented by the Detroit team. It is our goal that this evaluation will help us refine and strengthen our strategies, advance the work of our partners, provide us a way to what we learn with local stakeholders.

Desired Skills, Qualities, and Attributes

Members of The Kresge Foundation's Detroit team its and Strategic Learning, Research, and Evaluation team, in accordance with organizational processes, will review each evaluation proposal. The teams seek a single firm or team to support this project. We seek an evaluation partner that would be excited to partner with us on this evaluation and that possesses the following skills, qualities, and attributes:

- Employs established and innovative evaluation approaches.
- Holds robust portfolio of similar evaluation projects for nonprofit and/or philanthropic organizations.
- Prioritizes social justice and equity in evaluative thinking and is familiar with organizations that have a focus on poverty and racial equity.
- Has experience conducting independent summative evaluations.
- Can support facilitated learning processes with teams and neighborhood organizations.
- Is familiar with the community development sector including topic areas such as resident engagement, quality of life, and transformational impact.
- Demonstrates excellent project management and client communications and engagement capabilities.
- Communicates well to a variety of stakeholders, including having graphic design capabilities to produce reports.
- Experience working in Detroit is preferred, but not required.

Anticipated Budget and Timeline

The Kresge Foundation will be issuing a contract for a period of 12 months, February 2019 to January 2020. The evaluation budget is not to exceed \$150,000.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Your proposal should be no more than seven pages of narrative (single-spaced) plus appendices.

Your proposal should include the following elements:

Relevant Experience and Expertise

- Provide a background summary of your evaluation organization/team, including years of experience or operations. Indicate if you are a 501(c)3 organization.
- Describe relevant evaluation experiences, including the year of the activity, scope, and deliverables, including any experience in or with Detroit.

Approach

- Describe the approach you will use to conduct the evaluation.
- Provide a description of methods you might use (or have used) to gather time-sensitive evaluation data, report results, and engage key players.
- Discuss ways in which you plan to work with the Detroit team, with our grantee partners, and the communities that they serve.
- Provide a list of any additional evaluation questions you think might be important to address, in addition to those listed above.
- Proposed evaluation products and deliverables.

Project Team / Roles & Responsibilities

- Describe the persons or team who will be working with this project, including a summary of their professional experience (*please provide this information as a biographical sketch of each member that will be involved in the activities; bios should be an attachment*). Identify who will be the principal or lead or who will otherwise provide project oversight, and how much time each person will devote to the effort.

Budget

- Provide a detailed budget (this can be an appendix)

References

- Provide two references who can provide insights into your relevant previous work (this can be an appendix)

Work Samples

- *Provide two work samples that speak to your experience, expertise, or approach.*

KEY ACTIVITIES AND DATES

Date	Activity
December 6, 2018	RFP issued
December 6-21, 2018	Questions accepted
January 18, 2019	Proposals Due
January 28-31, 2019	Video Interviews of Selected Teams
January 31, 2019	Notification of Selected Team
February 2019	Contract Begins
Mid-to-late February	Kickoff Meeting
Mid-March, 2019	Draft Evaluation Plan due