

Health Information Blueprint for Missouri

Request for Proposal for Consulting Services from the Midwest Health Initiative (MHI)

April 21, 2021

**PROPOSAL MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN
TIME: 5:00 PM CST || DATE: MAY 12, 2021**
For Information Contact:
Haley Becker at (314) 721-7800

This document constitutes a request for proposal (RFP) with prices from qualified organizations to furnish those services and/or items as described herein. One copy of the proposal must be e-mailed by Wednesday, May 12, 2021 to:
hbecker@stlbhc.org

Three printed and bound hard copies must also be mailed by Friday, May 14, 2021 to:
**Midwest Health Initiative
Attn: Haley Becker
8888 Ladue Road, Suite 250
St. Louis, Missouri 63124**

Anticipated award date for the proposal is on or before Tuesday, June 01, by 5:00 PM CST
The contract period will be from the award date through May 15, 2022.

This RFP and the response submitted will be incorporated into any subsequent contract between MHI and Consultant. The terms and conditions set forth in the RFP are binding and any exceptions set forth in a response will not be effective unless specifically accepted by MHI in writing.

The Consultant hereby agrees to provide the services and/or items at the prices quoted, pursuant to the requirements of this document. The Consultant represents that it has read and understands the terms and conditions set forth. By signing below, the Consultant represents and warrants that all representations made in the following document accurately reflect the Consultant's *current* service capabilities and agreement to terms.

Consultant's Name:		
Title:		
Consultant's Signature:		
Organization Name:		
Mailing Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Telephone:	Fax:	
Email address:	Website:	
Social Security or Federal Tax No:		

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION..... 3
 A. Project Overview..... 3
 B. Background on MHI..... 3

II. PERFORMANCE WORK STATEMENT (PWS)..... 4
 A. Scope of Services..... 4
 B. Consultant Requirements for Providing Services..... 7
 C. General Terms and Considerations..... 7
 D. Notifications..... 7

III. GENERAL CONSULTANT INFORMATION & QUESTIONNAIRE..... 9
 A. Consultant Overview..... 9
 B. Evidence of Ability to Perform..... 10
 C. Pricing Requirements..... 10
 D. Award Information..... 11
 E. References..... 11

I. INTRODUCTION

This request for proposal seeks to identify a qualified consulting firm to research, assess, analyze and lead a statewide collaborative effort to create a Health Information Blueprint (HIB) for an information-rich health care environment in Missouri. The Blueprint will identify the feasibility of an All-Payer Claims Database (APCD) for Missouri and provide important information to state leaders and other interested parties in understanding the shared interest, opportunities, and barriers related to a Missouri APCD.

A. Project Overview

WHY: A thoughtful and well-designed data infrastructure is needed to ensure the people, providers, and policy makers of Missouri have timely access to insights that inform health care decisions, support optimal health, and lead to the highest value health care for all Missourians.

Over half of other states have operationalized or are implementing data infrastructures to improve population health and the quality, affordability, and equity of health care. Vital to Missouri is timely and reliable access to health care information—specifically, the number of Missourians being treated for various conditions, the care that they receive, utilization trends, the equity of resource availability and allocation, and the cost of services. This information is essential to creating an environment that consistently delivers care that aligns with recognized quality standards, is responsive to patient needs, and is affordable.

Regions that lead in achieving safe, high-quality, and affordable health care will have the edge in attracting and maintaining jobs and sustaining a vibrant economy and quality of life.

WHO: This project is being facilitated by the Midwest Health Initiative (MHI) and is funded by Missouri Foundation for Health. It will be guided by a 16-member Thought Leadership Panel (TLP) and informed by a large number of constituents from across the state. The work will be undertaken by a knowledgeable and independent consultant.

HOW: By gathering the collective wisdom of Missouri's diverse health care stakeholders and by researching other state's efforts and soliciting input from those that have successfully created a health information infrastructure for community benefit.

- a. A survey will be used to collect input from a large audience with relevant knowledge, experience, and ideas to share.
- b. Individual interviews will be used to garner deeper insights from key leaders and about its current health information assets.
- c. Lessons learned will be solicited from leaders and users of other state-based health care data infrastructures.
- d. A Blueprint will be created to assess the feasibility and appetite for advancing Missouri's health care information infrastructure.

WHEN: The grant period is 16 months, starting February 15, 2021 and ending May 15, 2022. The period of performance is a one-time effort starting from the award date and lasting through the end of the grant period. Anticipated award date is approximately 21 days from the RFP due date.

B. Background on Midwest Health Initiative, the Project Facilitator

MHI brings together those who provide, pay for, and use health care to improve the quality, affordability, and experience of healthcare to work together to solve some of our region's most pressing health care challenges. Created as a nonprofit organization to advance transparency and a multi-stakeholder collaboration toward better health care value, MHI stewards the largest multi-payer commercial claims dataset for Missouri and its bordering communities. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid have designated MHI as a Qualified Entity, thus MHI is eligible to receive Medicare data. It is also a member of the Network for Regional Healthcare Improvement.

II. PERFORMANCE WORK STATEMENT (PWS)

A. Scope of Services

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is for the purpose of contracting with a Consultant to provide research and reporting services leading to a Health Information Blueprint (HIB) unique to Missouri. The Consultant will research existing APCDs and the ways other states have found success in their data infrastructures, assess Missouri's current health information assets via the input and recommendations of key leaders in the state through survey analysis and in-depth interviews, and provide education and meeting facilitation services to the project Thought Leadership Panel (TLP).

The Consultant will conduct research on the essential governance, structural, functional, financial, legal, and technical components of developing a shared claims data infrastructure for the state of Missouri, including both public and private insurance claims data. Attention will be focused on the information needed to reveal disparities resulting from social determinants; best practices in public reporting to inform patient decision making; and the information needs of policymakers, particularly if Missouri should decide to join other leading states launching collaborations to reduce the use of low-value care and adopt voluntary spending targets. The TLP will aid the consultant in translating findings of the data collection deliverables (outlined below) into recommendations and actions for the Blueprint. The Consultant will synthesize this research into a Blueprint for a shared claims data infrastructure for Missouri and finalize such after a public comment period.

The project consists of five main focus areas and deliverables, outline below:

1. Project Management

- a. Throughout the course of the HIB project period, the Consultant will meet with the MHI project coordinator and project management team for routine updates and planning. Additional incidental communications will be conducted as needed.
- b. Throughout the course of the HIB project period, the Consultant will be responsible for organizing and facilitating meetings with the Thought Leadership Panel (TLP), a group of public-private stakeholders that lead the success of the HIB project and oversee the Consultant's work.
- c. TLP meetings will include educational sessions to be organized by the Consultant and approved by MHI. The purpose of the educational sessions is to ensure that TLP decision making is informed with the most up-to-date and relevant information for creating an information-rich health care environment in Missouri.
- d. Other sessions will include Consultant reporting on the results of other HIB Project focus areas and deliverables, as outlined below in A.2-A.5.
- e. Key Deliverables:
 - i. Bi-weekly meetings with the MHI project coordinator and project management team.
 - ii. Six to eight, 90-minute meetings to be planned and facilitated by the Consultant.
- f. Key Objectives of Meetings:
 - i. Keep the MHI project coordinator and project management team apprised of all HIB project progress. Engage MHI in shaping overall project management.
 - ii. Educate the TLP on the challenges and successes in other states, future trends among more advanced regions, Missouri current data assets and the relevant thinking of key Missouri stakeholders.
 - iii. Engage the TLP in translating key findings from deliverables II.A.2-II.A.5, thus facilitating their shaping of the final Blueprint throughout the project period.

2. Broad-based Data Collection

- a. A survey has been drafted to collect input from a large, diverse audience of those with relevant knowledge, experience, and ideas to share. The audience will have been identified and contact information collected; this audience includes over 1000 individuals and represents stakeholders from Missouri's clinically robust health care delivery system,

many dedicated public health and advocacy organizations, elected officials, public and private employers, labor unions, and public at large.

- b. The Consultant will refine the survey tool, assimilate content, and then develop and execute an analysis plan for the results of the stakeholder survey.
- c. Key Deliverables:
 - i. Survey analysis of over 1000 participants and summarization of results for TLP.
 - ii. Key recommendations from survey results for TLP.
- d. Key Objectives of Survey Analysis:
 - i. Understand the feasibility and desirability of a shared data infrastructure.
 - ii. Assess respondents' prior experience or knowledge of shared data infrastructures.
 - iii. Sort and synthesize suggestions for the implementation, maintenance, governance, and use of a shared data infrastructure.
 - iv. Identify and rank-order barriers and facilitators for the implementation, maintenance, governance, and use of a shared data infrastructure.
 - v. Assess general interest in participation or use of the results from a shared data infrastructure.
 - vi. The consultant will use survey results to inform II.A.3. In-depth Targeted Data Collection.

3. **In-depth Targeted Data Collection**

- a. Individual interviews will be used to garner deeper knowledge about Missouri's current health information assets. MHI anticipates the Consultant will need to conduct 50-60 interviews to adequately ascertain input from all stakeholder groups.
- b. The Consultant will develop and execute a plan for conducting a series of structured, qualitative interviews of key stakeholders, ensuring appropriate privacy protections as requested.
- c. The Consultant will develop, in plain language, a plan for interview design, implementation, data collection, and response rate monitoring. The Consultant will recommend a process for optimizing response rate.
- d. An initial set of stakeholder groupings and participants will be identified by the TLP or individual survey responses. The consultant will be responsible for outreach and scheduling of targeted stakeholder interviews.
- e. Key Deliverables:
 - i. Fifty to sixty in-depth interviews of Missouri stakeholders.
 - ii. Interview analysis and summarization for TLP.
 - iii. Key recommendations from interview analysis for TLP.
- f. Key Objectives of Interview Analysis:
 - i. Gain a richer understanding of the key objectives from survey analysis through in-depth interviews of significant stakeholders.
 - ii. Further explore input from critical stakeholder groups.
 - iii. Inform Blueprint details with key findings.
 - iv. Ensure key leaders of the state's current health information infrastructure, all major health plans, health systems, Health Information Exchanges (HIEs), and relevant others are offered an in-depth interviews for the opportunity to provide richer input to the Blueprint.

4. **Current State Research**

- a. The Consultant will assess Missouri's current health information infrastructure, including but not limited to the three major HIEs in the state, Missouri Hospital Association's Hospital Industry Data Institute (HIDI), and the Midwest Health Initiative's data asset.
- b. The Consultant will research top performing states that have successfully created APCDs and harnessed their health information for community benefit.
- c. Consultant will present key learnings and case studies to the TLP in written comparative and presentational formats to include the following:

- i. Learn how other states have organized their APCDs, analytical arms, and other resources to create their information rich environments, including the various organizations involved.
- ii. Assess the roles; responsibilities; inter-organizational relationships; governance; and financial, structural, legal, and technical components of a functioning APCD.
- iii. Glean best-practices and lessons learned in securing and integrating data on social determinants from both health care claims data and health information exchange data to identify and address health disparities.
- d. Key Deliverables:
 - i. An overview of current health data infrastructures in Missouri and their alignment or integration with the HIB project.
 - ii. Provide TLP with key learnings from existing health information organizations in other states and provide case studies with a summary presentation.
- e. Key Objectives:
 - i. Understand the work of other states currently managing or implementing health data infrastructures and the relevance of their work to this project.
 - ii. Understand the foundational health data infrastructures that currently exist in our own state.

5. **Analysis Integration and Blueprint Development**

- a. The Consultant will create a comparison of respondents on key variables, conduct subset analyses of survey and interview responses, develop a format for Blueprint results, and a means of conducting real-time analyses for the results.
- b. The Consultant will synthesize the results into a Blueprint for implementing a rich, shared data infrastructure for the state of Missouri.
- c. The Consultant will provide a draft for TLP approval. Upon approval, the Consultant will circulate the draft for public commentary. Public comments will be summarized and reported to the TLP for key findings and recommendations.
- d. The Consultant will synthesize all previous deliverables from II.A.2-II.A4 and the public comment period to develop the final Blueprint for the HIB Project.
- e. Key Deliverables:
 - i. Draft Blueprint for TLP approval.
 - ii. Summary and key recommendations from public comment period.
 - iii. Final Blueprint document.
- f. Key Objectives of the Blueprint:
 - i. Specify how states with existing APCDs share knowledge across silos, standardize methodologies, establish benchmarks and measurable goals, and integrate data sources.
 - ii. Provide recommendations on the organizational roles; responsibilities; inter-organizational relationships; governance; and financial, structural, legal, and technical components of a Missouri APCD.
 - iii. Identify critical success factors, potential barriers, strengths, lessons learned, and a reasonable timeframe for the integrated data infrastructure's creation.
 - iv. The Blueprint must:
 - 1) Present clearly defined process, impact, and outcome objectives for implementation.
 - 2) Be simple, clear, comprehensive, and flexible.
 - 3) Establish standards for the implementation, maintenance, governance, and use of a shared data infrastructure.
 - 4) Be balanced, economical, and practical.

6. Summary of Major Deliverables

a. Key Issues for Consultant Research and Blueprint Content:

Through the targeted research described above, the Consultant will construct the Blueprint document, in it clearly defining key recommendations for:

- Structure; operations/management
- Governance
- Funding, including data sharing and use agreements
- Data collection to identify and understand disparities
- Alignment/integration with existing health information exchanges and Missouri’s data infrastructures

b. The Consultant shall provide the following deliverables/submittals within the time frames identified below:

Deliverable	Due Date	Method
Project Management	Ongoing throughout project period	Coordinate with project management team
Broad-based Data Collection	Negotiated upon contract award	Deliver to Haley Becker at hbecker@stlbhc.org
In-depth Targeted Data Collection		
Current State Research		
Analysis Integration and Draft Blueprint Development	December 2021	
Final Blueprint Document	February 2022	
Ad-hoc	MHI may request special reports over the course of the contract	

B. Consultant Attributes:

1. The successful Consultant will:
 - a. Possess outstanding skills for interviewing and facilitating public participation.
 - b. Hold knowledge and awareness of efforts in other states regarding the development and implementation of APCDs.
 - c. Be articulate and possess unusually strong oral, written, and presentational communication skills.
 - d. Engender trust and build strong relationships with all project stakeholders and partners so that the sharing of candid information is not threatened.
 - e. Adapt to and optimize unexpected challenges and present collaborative solutions.
 - f. Possess the ability to execute project responsibilities within the designated timeline.
 - g. Hold an impeccable reputation amongst clients and peers; must provide references (See Section III.E).

C. General Terms and Considerations:

1. By submitting a RFP, the Consultant acknowledges its RFP as the first step in the procurement process. If MHI accepts given terms or language set forth in the Consultant's proposed contract, the Consultant will not be able to further negotiate the specific terms, fees, or language from that which they proposed.
2. The Consultant, at its own expense, shall provide and maintain professional liability and other usual and customary employment insurance during the entire period of performance of this contract (See Section I.A). By completing this RFP, the Consultant represents and warrants that it has all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
3. Missouri law will be the law governing the relationship; if needed, any legal disputes will be resolved by binding arbitration in St. Louis County, Missouri.
4. After reviewing the project overview set forth in this Scope of Services and RFP, the Consultant assumes full responsibility for identifying any areas of concern and requesting additional clarifications that are needed to get to the appropriate level of detail required to respond to this RFP and, if chosen, provide the services set forth in this RFP response.

D. Notifications

1. MHI reserves the right to:
 - a. Reject any or all applications submitted.
 - b. Request additional information from any or all respondents.
 - c. Conduct discussions with respondents for the purpose of clarification to assure full understanding of and responsiveness to the solicitation requirements.
 - d. Approve subcontractors proposed to be utilized in carrying out the Scope of Services.
2. MHI will not reimburse a respondent for the cost of developing or presenting a proposal in response to this RFP.
3. All proposal documents shall be the property of MHI and retained by MHI, and therefore shall not be returned to the RFP respondents.
4. Presentations
 - a. All RFP respondents shall make their proposed key project personnel available on May 21, 2020 between 9am-11:30am CST for a potential finalist meeting shall their presence be requested.
 - b. MHI reserves the right to invite RFP respondents who are technically acceptable to conduct a presentation to MHI and the TLP on their proposed effort.
 - c. Please note that the format for all presentations will be via Zoom or other video conferencing with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, excepting the possibility of one in-person meeting later in the project period (pandemic permitting).
5. Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA)

The Consultant shall not release any sensitive, confidential, or proprietary information without prior written approval from MHI. At the time of award, the Awardee will be required to sign an NDA that lasts the period of performance and obligates the Consultant to maintain the confidentiality of information provided to them under terms of privacy, following the project completion.
6. Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCOI)

The Consultant, upon award, shall sign a statement confirming that it does not have and will prevent any organizational conflict of interest. If a conflict arises, the Consultant will immediately advise MHI.

7. Post Award Conference / Kickoff Meeting

Upon notice of award, MHI will coordinate an Award Kickoff Meeting within 10 days with the Awardee. Date, time, and location will be determined at the time of the award.

8. Documentation Requirements

a. Certifications, permits, licenses, insurance

The Awardee hereby assumes absolute responsibility and liability for any and all personal injuries or death and/or property damage or losses suffered due to negligence of the Consultant's personnel in the performance of the services required under this contract.

The Awardee, at its own expense, agrees to provide and maintain the requisite insurance in support of this contract for the entire duration, including option years, with the following minimum coverage:

Type of Insurance	Limits of Liability
General Liability	\$1,000,000

III. GENERAL CONSULTANT INFORMATION & QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is provided so that you may appropriately differentiate your competencies.

A. Consultant Overview

The Consultant shall provide personnel and any technology or equipment necessary to assure that the highest quality of service is provided. The Consultant shall have the capability to provide the services required, meet all deadlines, and submit reports in order for MHI to utilize this information in further development of its programs. All Consultant personnel providing services under this contract shall be fluent in English and meet the following requirements. All key personnel shall be available to start on the contract start date.

1. Organization Information :

Item	Details
Name of firm	
Ownership	
Years in business	
HQ location	
CEO	
Project Manager	
Account Manager	
Number of team members assigned to project	
Number total staff	
Professional insurance carrier and liability limits	
Federal Tax ID Number	

2. Provide a list of team members and bios for each, including a description of experience related to this project and number of years with the firm. Include the Project Manager and Account Manager listed in the table above.
3. Provide a brief description of the corporate structure. Fully disclose all entities with both direct and indirect rights of ownership and/or control of your firm.
4. Provide an overview of your organization’s history, including acquisitions and mergers and intended strategic business direction for the next 2 years. Include the number of years in business.
5. Please list any subcontractors to your research, data collection, analysis, and reporting services. If any of these services are conducted off-shore, please list the countries and cities for each.
6. Provide information about the markets/clients your organization serves.
7. Please disclose any recently settled or pending lawsuits or arbitrations your organization has experienced in the last 36 months or is currently undergoing.
8. Discuss major achievements and identify projects your firm has completed within the past 24 months that provide experience *relevant to this project*. Please identify three such instances at minimum.

B. Evidence of Ability to Perform

1. Describe how your clients achieved measurable results. Please provide 2-3 specific, relevant descriptions.
2. Please provide four of the most compelling, customer-driven performance guarantees your firm would be willing to offer to build confidence in your ability to perform.
3. It is the expectation of MHI that a performance guarantee will be included in the final contract between MHI and the Awardee.
 - a. The Consultant should describe and outline its procedures to ensure that the integrity of the information surveyed, researched, and collected remains contained and confidentiality protected.
 - b. The Consultant should describe and outline its procedures for engendering trust with interviewees, standards of professionalism, and privacy notices provided to interviewees.
4. For each of the key deliverables, provide a description of your experience and qualifications.
5. What are the 5 most common things that your clients would say differentiate you from your competitors?
6. Please describe your experience with conducting qualitative interviews. What types of clients did you serve and projects did you complete?
7. Please describe your experience with overseeing projects that include public participation or comment periods. What types of clients did you serve and projects did you complete?

C. Pricing Requirements

1. Bidding
An RFP respondent may bid on one, multiple, or all line items/deliverables of the Blueprint Project. If not bidding on a deliverable of the project, remove the line item from the table below in response.
2. Basis of Compensation to the Consultant / Firm Fixed Price (FFP) Contract
This is a Firm Fixed Price contract with all-in basis including all services, travel (for one potential in-person meeting in Missouri), technology, and incidentals. The Consultant shall design their mix of labor and other resources to complete the project on time. Any Consultant quality issues that result in the re-drafting of work or increased labor required to meet deliverables during the performance of the contract are the financial responsibility of the Consultant and re-work will be done at the Consultant’s expense.
3. The Consultant shall provide a pricing proposal for the following estimated requirements:

Line Item	Name of Service	Projected Hours	Fee
001	Project Management		
002	Broad-based Data Collection		
003	In-depth Targeted Data Collection		
004	Current State Research		
005	Analysis Integration and Blueprint Development		
		Total Project Fee	

- 4. Payment Schedule
Please propose a payment schedule, which holds 20% of the total fees until 30 days after the completion of the last deliverable and ties interim payments to follow key deliverables.
- 5. Billing and Payment Procedure
MHI prefers electronic means of invoicing. Invoices shall be provided to:
Melanie Watson // mwatson@stlbhc.org

D. Award Information

Award(s) will be made to the RFP respondent whose response demonstrates a solid understanding of the project and offers the best value. Competition is open to any size vendor.

E. References

Provide the following information for three clients currently using the services proposed here.

Reference 1	Name	
	Address	
	Period dates of performance	
	POC	
	POC title/email/phone number	
	Summary of work performed	
Reference 2	Name	
	Address	
	Period dates of performance	
	POC	
	POC title/email/phone number	
	Summary of work performed	
Reference 3	Name	
	Address	
	Period dates of performance	
	POC	
	POC title/email/phone number	
	Summary of work performed	