

Project Manager, Native American Asset Building

Request for Consultancy

Supporting Small Businesses in Native American Communities

The Asset Funders Network (AFN) is the leading national membership organization engaging philanthropy to advance equitable wealth building and economic mobility.

Deliverables and Services

Reporting directly to the Southwest Program Officer, the Project Manager, will have both internal and external facing responsibilities. The Southwest Program Officer is responsible for overall performance evaluation.

The Asset Funders Network seeks a consultant to support our organization in understanding Native American small business and solo entrepreneurship development and growth to inform, increase, and sustain philanthropic investment in Native American communities.

The consultant will be the lead on and collaborate with our AFN staff to:

1. create a scoping review of literature focused on Native American small business and entrepreneurship and environmental census that identifies Native-led organizations and initiatives in the sector within the last five years;
2. in response to the findings from the literature review, design and support AFN to hand host a series (two to three) virtual roundtable discussions of funders and Native-led organizations focused on small business development and support; and
3. develop a short summary document outlining responsive recommendations for philanthropy.

AFN requires evidence of COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of engagement and will request proof prior to an acceptance of the offer. Travel to meetings consistent with the position will be required.

Background

AFN seeks to convene funders around the question: what would it take for leaders in asset building philanthropy to increase and sustain support to Native American-led initiatives, programs, and people supporting Native American wealth building through small business development?

We know that the U.S. economic system disenfranchises Native Americans who face historic, embedded systemic discrimination, which creates and sustains wealth inequality. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated this inequality with many tribal governments, which were mostly underfunded before the pandemic, facing incredible strain due to lockdowns and stay-at-home orders that cut off critical revenue streams.

Additionally, small businesses and solo-entrepreneurship in Native communities is an informal but essential part of the Native American economy. Many of these informal businesses have real promise to support their local communities, but they lack the infrastructure, tools, and resources to develop beyond a subsistence level.” There is both opportunity and imperative for philanthropy to intentionally support these small businesses and solo-entrepreneurs in culturally responsive ways.

Finally, most of the data we have on Native American wealth is minimal and outdated. As funders, we need to collectively expand our knowledge and cultural understanding of responsive, supportive ways to invest in and build relationships with Native American communities to support business ownership and growth.

Responsibilities

To inform, increase, and sustain our individual and collective philanthropic investment in Native American small business and solo entrepreneurship development and growth, the Asset Funders Network (AFN) is seeking a consultant to support a series of activities that will explore:

1. The current ecosystem of support for Native American small business and entrepreneurs (what exists today);
2. What funders need to learn and change within our grantmaking practices in order to authentically support Native American small business and entrepreneurs;
3. What can we learn from how funders have already adopted culturally responsive policies and practices that center the needs of Native American small business support organizations, initiatives, and leaders; and
4. Directly hear from Native American leaders in this sector to better understand and adopt culturally responsive strategies to help rebuild a more inclusive economy that intentionally supports Native American small businesses and entrepreneurs.

This proposal provides actionable opportunities to both learn AND invest alongside Native-led organizations and communities.

- Develop a scoping review of literature focused on Native American small business and entrepreneurship and environmental census that will identify the ecosystem of Native-led and Native small business supporting organizations and initiatives in the sector within the last five years.
- Informed by the scoping review, design and host a series (2-3) of virtual roundtable discussions of funders and Native-led organizations focused on small business development and support. The conversations will build upon questions surfaced as part of the scoping review and focus on how philanthropy can work with Native-led organizations to invest in small business and entrepreneurs in Native communities.
- Drawing on the roundtable discussions and the scoping review develop a short (no more than 6 pages) document that provides reflections, resources, and recommendations for funders.
- Write a short summary document outlining responsive recommendations informed by the above activities for philanthropy. Present summary to AFN members via webinar.

AFN’s overall goal for this work is to educate and inform our network about the issues, including increasing grantmaker awareness and understanding about culturally relevant strategies; create a sense

of excitement and urgency about taking action; and to provide concrete and actionable recommendations for philanthropy to make innovative, sustainable, and thoughtful investments in Native American small business and solo-entrepreneurs; as well as giving funders the opportunity to learn while doing, through active grantmaking with Native-led initiatives and organizations focused on family economic stability.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Essential Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Full COVID-19 vaccination is required.

- At least five years experience working with Native-led nonprofits with a focus on entrepreneurship and/or small business support, initiatives, tribal governments OR as a funder with lived experience focused on grantmaking in Native American communities
- Demonstrated track record of leading work that centers Native people and culture in wealth building, and most specifically small business development
- Knowledgeable of current opportunities, challenges, and trends in philanthropy
- Excellent writing and presentation skills, with significant experience conducting research and literature reviews
- Experience developing participatory programming, such as dialogues, roundtables, panels; special consideration given to candidates with experience designing and/or facilitating dynamic online meetings

The Most Successful Candidate:

- Agrees with and has commitment to AFN's mission and values.
- Experience and comfort working independently, with remote colleagues
- Experience and comfort facilitating groups, managing events, and leading meetings
- History working with philanthropy and/or nonprofits to advance social and/or asset building strategies
- Excels at creating and holding themselves accountable to self directed project timelines and has successful time management strategies already in use.
- Welcomes feedback and is able to process constructive feedback for continuous improvement.

Location for Work

The Project Manager would work remotely from his/her/their home or leveraged office space with the ability to travel to meetings as needed throughout the country.

Compensation

A negotiated hourly rate reflecting experience and deliverables. AFN has budgeted between \$35,000 and \$40,000 for this scope of work, which we estimate to be between 300 - 330 hours of work.

Term

This contract will take place during a 12 month period - starting in Sept. 2022 and ending Aug. 2023.

Maximum Hours of Work

This contract for services, estimated to average 25 - 27 hours per month over 12 months (commensurate with experience and the agenda of activities) anticipating that some months will have greater or lesser hourly requirements to meet deadlines or perform the required work.

About AFN

The Asset Funders Network (AFN) is:

- the leading national non-profit membership organization that engages philanthropy (public, private, financial institutions, non-profit and corporate) to advance equitable wealth building and economic mobility
- a membership organization for funders. To achieve its mission, AFN informs, fosters connections across networks, influences grant giving strategy, and builds momentum for system change
- committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion internally and externally.
- staffed by committed, collaborative and experienced professionals located across the country to advance the AFN mission

How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit their resume, budget, brief proposal including approximate hours required per month to fulfill the responsibilities described, and two work samples (reports, articles, research) on a rolling basis with priority given to candidates who apply on or before **August 19th, 2022** to employment@assetfunders.org. **Please reference <Project Manager, Native American Asset Building: [YOUR NAME]> in the subject line of email. Candidates will be reviewed on a rolling basis.**