



Homeless Investments Request for Proposal Project Application – Emergency Services (Day and Overnight Shelter, Day Center, Hygiene Services)

(30 points total)

12 pages maximum – Enter answers directly into this document

Emergency Services projects provide immediate and low barrier access through a Housing First approach. Emergency services will be provided through basic and enhanced overnight and daytime shelter (including up to 24-hour shelter), basic day centers, and basic hygiene services. Enhanced hours can be provided through a single-site project operated by one agency, or through two projects (such as an overnight shelter and daytime shelter) operated by one agency or operated jointly by two agencies in a partnership. Emergency services should be housing-focused and are not intended to provide a long-term living situation. Services can be provided through either a basic or enhanced model, and more detail can be found below. Please review the Emergency Services program model in Appendix D prior to completing this application.

1. Select what service level your agency is applying for (for more information on “basic” and “enhanced” services, see the Emergency Services program model in Appendix D):

Basic Services: The primary goal of Basic Services is to meet the basic needs of people experiencing homelessness.

Enhanced Services: The primary goal of Enhanced Services is to provide a pathway for rapid exit to permanent housing.

2. Select what projects your agency is applying for (*check all that apply*):

Day Center (provides daytime supports *without access to* shelter beds/sleeping quarters)

Day Shelter (provides daytime supports *with access to* shelter beds/sleeping quarters)

Hygiene Services

Overnight Shelter

A. PROJECT OVERVIEW AND POPULATION (UNSCORED)

1. Provide a general description of your emergency services project, including the general layout of the facility, (including number and layout of sleeping areas, on-site storage for participant belongings, on-site capacity for participant pets, or other features), description of any hygiene facilities (restrooms, showers, laundry, etc.), and whether your program offers meals. If meals

are offered please list the number of days per week and the number of meals per day that are offered.

The WHEEL low-barrier Women's Shelter was established in the year 2000 at the request of the City of Seattle. At that time, no severe weather shelter in Seattle served women specifically. News had just broken that a serial killer had been preying on homeless women in the Pioneer Square neighborhood and in the Jungle. Not having a low-barrier, severe weather shelter for women was a serious risk and hardship for the homeless women's community, not just because of predators, but also in life-threatening inclement weather.

In partnership with the City and First United Methodist Church, the Women's Housing, Equality and Enhancement League (WHEEL, a grassroots homeless women's organizing effort) started this program as a staffed Severe Weather Shelter for Women in October, 2000. In 2001, at the invitation of Catholic Community Service's Frye Apartments, the shelter moved to the Frye Apartments community room.

After several years of successful operations, the City invited WHEEL to operate this shelter as an All-Winter Women's Shelter. In 2015, thanks to WHEEL advocacy, collaboration, new partnerships, and with willingness and financial support from the City, the shelter expanded to year-round operations.

The WHEEL Women's Shelter is a model of effective organizing, advocacy, flexibility, portability, and loving, low-barrier operations, for and by homeless and formerly homeless women. At several key junctures during our 17 years of operations--because a move or expansion were imminent, or we were severely over-capacity, or other women's shelters were closing or changing--WHEEL convened and facilitated Women's Shelter Roundtables to coordinate, collaborate, share information, and establish new partnerships.

We've operated in eight different locations since our founding, and every new site and host agreement was secured through the skilled and effective advocacy and site-search work of homeless women themselves. To date we have operated at Drury Hall of First United Methodist Church, the Frye Apartments, DESC's Connections, Plymouth Congregational Church, Mary's Place Day Center, Sacred Heart Hall, St. James Cathedral Hall, and Trinity Episcopal Parish. Our current Trinity Episcopal Parish host site was established on October 1, 2016.

Our low-barrier, loving, come-as-you-are model make this shelter a unique and critically-needed nighttime resource for homeless women, designed to keep women safe, and to establish relationships of trust over time with women who are in crisis or who have multiple vulnerabilities.

At Trinity Episcopal Parish, we use a fellowship hall for sleeping accommodations. There is a restroom adjacent to the sleeping space, with three toilets and two sinks. Accommodations are mats on the floor, with blankets provided by our organization. Coffee is available every morning, and occasional snacks are offered, but there is no meal service, showers or storage. We've just established a working relationship with elders at the nearby Skyline Retirement Community, who have started a donation brigade to our shelter, providing books, clothing, and breakfast cookie donations on a weekly basis.

Our contracted capacity is 40 women, although our longstanding policy is never to turn a woman away unless there is a solid referral resource. For that reason, our current average capacity is 50 women nightly. At EVERY ONE of our eight locations, we have averaged more participants than stated capacity - we just won't turn women away if there's no place to take them.

Open hours currently are 8pm to 7:30am Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, and 8pm to 6:30am Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. This shelter shares space with Northwest Harvest Food Bank, and their Sandwich Brigade uses the space starting at 7am Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Each participant receives two bus tickets per night, and while pets are not allowed, service animals are welcome.

SPECIAL NOTE: This shelter is a model of effective advocacy, grassroots organizing, partnerships, and low-barrier operations. The arc of its 17 years of operations is the story of crisis response. In 2016, for example, this shelter was forced to move twice, from Sacred Heart Hall, to St James Cathedral Hall, to our current location, Trinity Episcopal Parish.

We now know we are safe and secure in our current host location, Trinity Episcopal Parish, for more than a year, at least through early 2019. This is the first time in our 17-year history that we've been a year-round shelter with stable and supportive hosting! We are poised to expand our vision and our operations, adding skilled voluntary outreach workers and case management (with our partners, Catholic Community Services), other amenities and volunteer opportunities. For this vision to come to fruition, we need the continued partnership of the City of Seattle.

In many ways, the WHEEL Women's Shelter will become a brand-new program in 2018. We've laid the foundation for the continuation of this vital survival resource for women, and have partnerships at-the-ready to broaden our operations and become all that we can be!

- a. If your project has the capacity to expand for severe weather and other emergencies, how much additional capacity can be created?

Yes. As stated, we expand to the extent that there are women in need with no other solid referral resource.

2. Describe how many people will be served each year and what percent of those will meet project outcomes.

We estimate that we serve more than 600 unique, unduplicated women per year. The WHEEL shelter is the first point of entry to a continuum of care for many of the women we serve. A valuable outcome of our program is establishing relationships of trust so women are more willing or able to seek other services and housing when they're available. Often these relationships of trust—particularly for women who've been homeless a long time, who have profound mental illness, or who have a history of having been abused—take time to build.

The precariousness and isolation of life outdoors make survival and creating relationships of trust our top priorities. It's hard to move on when you need to keep one eye on survival, without shelter. With the scarcity of low-cost and supportive housing in Seattle, having survival support and emotional support for as long as it takes to navigate the system and capture this scarce housing is critical. We know from painful personal experience that not everybody in the homeless community is going to get housing quickly, because affordable housing is much too scarce. We know that whatever opportunities do come up for our women, they will have the support and love they need to gain it, hand in hand with staff they trust.

WHEEL's values include speaking the truth and keeping our word. A 40% exit-to-permanent housing rate across programs is a painful impossibility considering the lack of affordable housing in Seattle. Demanding it forces competition, false promises, and a practice commonly called "creaming"—programs rejecting hard-to-serve folks to gain better housing outcomes.

Starting in 2018, with site and program stability, the WHEEL Women's Shelter will be adding a professional outreach and case management component to our shelter. This addition will help us capture scarce housing opportunities for women within our program. The foundation has long been laid in the relationships we've built over time with vulnerable women.

We have no point of reference for housing outcome percentages, since survival and love have always been our primary focuses. We will strive for a 5-10% exit-to-housing rate in 2018.

1. Where is this project located? Provide exact addresses of all office type locations where participants will be served. If services will be co-located within facilities not managed by your agency please identify them as co-located.

This project is co-located at Trinity Episcopal Parish, 609 8th Avenue, Seattle. The entrance to the shelter, located in the Fellowship Hall, is on Cherry Street between 8th and 7th Avenues.

The WHEEL Office, which takes shelter queries and provides organizing, oversight and meeting space for the shelter, is located in the basement of the Josephinum (1902 Second Avenue; alley between 3rd and 2nd Avenues, co-located).

In 2018, we will provide on-site Case Management through a new partnership with Catholic Community Services. Some followup appointments may thus be scheduled at CCS HQ (the Randolph Carter Center, 100-23rd Avenue S) or other CCS locations.

3. What household types are eligible for this project?

You may check more than one box.

- Couples
- Families with children
- Seniors (60+)
- Single females
- Single males
- Young adults (18-24)
- Youth (under 18)

4. What specific populations, if any, is this project designed to serve?

You may check more than one box.

- All populations
- LGBTQ
- People living with disabling health conditions
- People living with drug or alcohol addictions
- People living with mental illness
- Seniors (60+)
- Veterans and/or their families
- Young adults (18-24)
- Youth (under 18)
- Cultural/ethnic communities (please list)

2. PROJECT DESIGN DESCRIPTION (22 POINTS)

Commitment to Housing First and Low Barrier (8 Points)

1. What criteria must participants meet before receiving services?

None. We welcome all homeless women, in any condition, at any time of night.

2. What would cause your agency to deny someone entry into this project?

Women are only denied entry or barred if they exhibit violent behavior or are actively endangering the shelter community. We're low-barrier, and barring women happens infrequently and only as a last resort.

3. Why would someone experiencing homelessness want to participate in your project?

First and foremost, women choose our shelter because without shelter, people die. Second, women choose our shelter because of its open, loving, come-as-you-are operations. Our shelter remains unique in Seattle in offering this model to women. Women whose work schedules are atypical, who become homeless "after hours," who appreciate our no-questions-asked atmosphere, whose mental health issues demand our come-as-you-are approach all desperately need our shelter. It is a rare pleasure, in the context of the crisis of homelessness in King County, for us to be able to say to ALL women who need shelter: "Yes, come to us. We will definitely make room for you, and you WILL get shelter tonight."

Finally, women who need and choose to stay with us will have the loving, trust-building experience of skilled, professional CCS outreach and case management starting in 2018.

4. What project rules must participants follow, and what happens if a participant does not follow the rules?

Our shelter rules are minimal, designed specifically to welcome women of all conditions and abilities. Women are barred as a last resort, and only for exhibited behavior of violence or endangerment. Sobriety is NOT required.

Except in exigent (violent) circumstances, women are offered referrals to other shelter providers. The founding vision of this shelter - lived out to this day - was to accommodate women of all abilities, since we know that to bar women means sending them out into the night, at risk to predators and weather.

5. What criteria must participants meet before your agency works with them to start their housing search?

None

6. If someone is asked to leave the program, what steps does your project take to make sure they do not exit to homelessness? Can a household who has been asked to leave return to this project at another time?

Except in exigent (violent) circumstances, women who are asked to leave are offered referrals to other shelter providers. In addition, all women who are barred have the right and opportunity to appeal their bar to the WHEEL group through our strictly adhered-to grievance process. Bars can be overturned, or their duration shortened, through this appeal process.

Rating Criteria – A strong application meets all the criteria listed below:

1. Individuals accepted into emergency shelter and services should fit the HUD definition of ‘literally homeless’. Homeless includes individuals sleeping outside or in a place not meant for human habitation, and individuals fleeing domestic violence. Programs should serve 100% or a very high percentage of people entering from an unsheltered situation.
2. Project does not deny entry into the program due to sobriety, mental health needs, disability, physical health needs, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, criminal background, poor credit or rental history, or participation in services.
3. Applicant provides several concrete reasons why their project would be appealing to individuals experiencing homelessness, including how informal barriers to accessing shelter and day services are minimized.
4. Project has minimal rules. Rules that do exist are designed to promote the physical and emotional safety of participants and staff in the least restrictive manner possible. When rules are not followed, project has systems in place to offer participants additional support to adjust their behavior and be successful in the program. Project does not have requirements regarding participation in services. Participants right to self-determination is upheld.
5. For projects focused on exits to permanent housing, all participants are considered ‘housing ready’ upon project entry. No requirements must be met before housing search is started.
6. Applicant presents thorough plan to avoid exiting any household into homelessness when the household is asked to leave the program. Project has policies or procedures in place to allow households to re-enter services at a later time.

Commitment to Racial Equity Goals (6 Points)

1. How will your agency make sure that your project meets the racial equity goals listed in Section V.B. of the Guidelines and Application Instructions? Please provide specific examples.

WHEEL is a City leader in providing culturally competent shelter and organizing, and for being reflective and responsive in our work with diverse constituencies. The culture of the homeless community IS our organization, since we are a non-hierarchical, peer-led, grassroots homeless organizing effort made up of homeless/formerly homeless women. Our diverse membership is reflected in our staffing, since our staff all have been hired from the homeless community.

Women of color, especially African Americans and Native Americans, are most likely to become homeless, least likely to find shelter, and least likely to make it from shelter to housing. The low-

barrier nature of our shelter and its outreach-based, grassroots community organizing model increase access and assure appropriateness for women who have historically been edged out.

Our staff of formerly homeless women is racially diverse, which helps establish a welcoming environment and bring women who have felt isolated into community. Any woman can look up and see a staff member who looks like her. This is the basis on which the addition of a case manager can be most productive for achieving housing outcomes for participants.

Rating Criteria – A strong application meets all the criteria listed below:

1. Project demonstrates an understanding of the racial equity goals for this RFP and gives specific examples of what they will do to meet the goals.

Commitment to Housing-Focused Services (8 Points)

1. Describe the staffing model for your project.
 - a. What supportive services are offered and when?

WHEEL believes safe, stable, peer-organized shelter is the first step in people creating their own pathway home, especially considering the crisis-level lack of affordable housing in Seattle. Staff--two per night--at the WHEEL shelter provide loving, non-judgmental support, keep the peace among participants, notify shelter and referral partners of shelter openings, physically set up the shelter each night and clean up in the morning, intervene in crisis situations, and do a lot of informal information- and resource-sharing based on their own lived experience of these resources. Participants rely heavily on WHEEL staff for basic information about services like day centers, meals, and other support mechanisms.

Starting in 2018, in partnership with Catholic Community Services, WHEEL will offer housing-focused case management to our participants on-site at our shelter in the evenings, with weekday follow-up and drop-in appointments. Case managers will develop relationships of mutual trust and respect with participants who are willing to engage, providing them with access to a full range of resources and services. Housing search will be a top priority, especially given the scarcity of affordable units both with and without onsite services.

Case managers also will use person-focused strategies--based on individual strengths, preference and needs-- to provide referrals to medical, mental health and behavioral health resources, treatment, financial support services, and to help with the acquisition of veterans or disability benefits, employment, ID, and legal support.

Case managers will perform a number of tasks to help WHEEL participants secure permanent housing. These tasks include housing referrals and assessments, assistance with applications, debt abatement, assistance with securing deposit and application funding, interview coaching, and follow-up once housing is secured.

b. What is the ratio of staff to participants?

There are two line staff members per shift, so the ratio is one staff person per 20-25 participants.

One skilled, long-term WHEEL Community Organizer--who has more than 30 years' experience--is assigned to this shelter and its operations, and facilitates staff scheduling, supervision, and oversight. The Organizer also is charged with establishing and maintaining host agreements, assuring good neighborhood relations, facilitating volunteer opportunities, and facilitating the staff and shelter grievance processes.

Starting in 2018, we will add one FTE CCS case manager, whose caseload will include all women willing to engage; we estimate this to be 2/3 of our constituency, so a caseload of roughly 20 women at a time.

c. What responsibilities and/or tasks do project staff have during housing search and application?

Site staff always have informally facilitated resource-sharing and referral services, and have lived experience with most resources in Seattle. Starting in 2018, we will have on-site Case Management, provided by Catholic Community Services (CCS). CCS case managers will perform a number of tasks to help WHEEL participants secure permanent housing, including housing referrals and assessments, assistance with applications, debt abatement, assistance with securing deposit and application funding, interview coaching, and follow-up once housing is secured.

2. What qualifications or qualities are most important to your agency when hiring direct-service staff? How do these prepare staff to serve your participants?

Our main hiring value for line staff is personal experience with homelessness and personal experience with leadership in the homeless community. We hire from our own community of formerly homeless participants. This gives staffpeople legitimacy with participants, and lived experience to best provide resource advice and referral. After that, our hiring values are patience, skill at intervention and conflict resolution, reliability, ability to maintain sobriety, collegiality, and initiative.

3. *For Enhanced Services Only (Day and Night):* How does your project support participants to exit to and/or stay in permanent housing and meet the performance measures shown in Appendix E?

N/A

4. How does your project ask for and incorporate participant feedback about your services into your project design, policies, and/or procedures? Please provide examples.

This shelter was founded on the vision of homeless women themselves. The basic rules were created and approved by homeless women themselves. At every turning point for this shelter - expansion, relocation, additional service provision - homeless women themselves led the way by leveraging resources and creating and approving the new procedures and policies. Many shelter participants also participate in the grassroots organizing activities of WHEEL.

Rating Criteria – A strong application meets all the criteria listed below:

1. Project’s staffing model supports the core components of emergency services including addressing participants’ basic health and safety needs, connecting participants to housing and other resources, and assisting with document readiness.
 - a. Services are focused on addressing participants’ health, safety, and housing needs. Services are offered at times and locations tailored to meet the diverse needs of participants.
 - b. The ratio of direct-service staff to participants supports housing-focused services such as assisting participants in gathering documentation, removing barriers to housing, and negotiating with landlords as needed to support successful housing placements. Project staff tailor services to meet the unique needs of each participant.
 - c. Project staff take on a greater or lesser role in housing search based on each participant’s unique set of strengths and barriers. Specific examples are provided.
2. Applicant is intentional about what qualifications they look for in potential direct-service staff, and how those qualities translate to high-quality, culturally relevant services that meet the needs of participants. Specific details are provided.
3. *For Enhanced Services Only (Day and Night):* Description of services demonstrates how participants are supported to achieve and maintain a rapid exit to permanent housing. Services should be voluntary and tailored to the individual needs of each household.
4. Applicant provides detailed information about the strategies it will use to solicit and incorporate participant feedback into ongoing project design. Strategies consider factors such as language access, and confidentiality.

BUDGET (8 POINTS)

1. Complete the attached budget proposal sheets. The costs in this budget should be for the project only, not your total agency budget.
2. In a budget narrative below, explain how these funds will be used and identify other resources and amounts that will be used to support the participants served by this Project. For each line item listed with a dollar figure (except totals) provide a brief narrative detailing: how the item relates to the proposed service; and the method used to determine the cost.

The WHEEL shelter budget was derived from our 17+ years actual experience of providing this shelter, and were determined by review of financial statements for prior years’ operations.

Staffing: Two line staff per shift are necessary for safety and coordination. Our staff—as a matter of egalitarian philosophy and necessity—make minimum wage, but receive excellent health and dental benefits. They also receive ORCA cards as a benefit of employment.

A skilled and experienced community Organizer facilitates operations of the shelter and maintenance of host and neighborhood relations. Half of her time is attributed to this shelter.

Our .5 FTE data enterer makes a slightly higher wage, based on the going rate for these services.

Our 1 FTE case manager also will make a higher wage, based on going rate for these services.

Operating Supplies: Our shelter requires cleaning and hygiene supplies such as toilet paper, paper towels, cleaning solutions and supplies, food service supplies, and repair supplies and materials.

Other Professional Services: We use ADP as our payroll service, have an independent bookkeeping contract, and pay an independent CPA annually to conduct our financial review.

We provide a cell phones and coverage to this site on an agency plan.

We use company vehicles (most donated) to facilitate delivery and pickup of blankets, supplies and materials to the shelter, and occasionally to transport participants to events and meetings. These vehicles require fuel, insurance, and repairs.

Participants need bus tickets to get to and from this shelter location daily/nightly, and to attend meetings and events.

Photocopying is necessary for meeting materials, copies of shelter intake packets, rules and contracts, and for communication purposes.

Insurance is necessary for the host location, the organization as a whole, and for our vehicles.

We lease a small office in the Josephinum, necessary for conducting organizational business, shelter screenings, and meetings to support our locations and organization.

Repair and maintenance costs sometimes must be borne by WHEEL, since the host congregation is strapped financially and needs financial support to conduct their ministry of shelter in partnership with us.

Client assistance (a function of case management, for person-centered support) will be offered in 2018.

This shelter—for its 17-year history at the request of and in partnership with the City of Seattle—has always been completely funded by the City.

But, WHEEL receives incalculable (but invaluable) in-kind donations of space (from our host community), volunteer support, and amenities provided by the host congregation, and other communities and neighbors.

Rating Criteria – A strong application meets all the criteria listed below:

1. Budget forms are complete and reflect projectonly.
2. Costs are reasonable and appropriate given project, people to be served, and proposed outcomes. Applicant includes a budget narrative which identifies and justifies how funds will be used.