

Request for Proposals

Impact Strategy & Evaluation Consultant



Lehigh Valley Community Foundation (LVCF) invites qualified consultants to submit an Interest Short Form by **Wednesday, October 14, 2026** to help LVCF assess its current grant and community leadership impact strategies and build a long-term impact strategy and measurement framework. The engagement budget is **\$40,000–\$60,000**, with all deliverables completed by **August 2027**.

About the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation's Current Impact

At the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation, we connect donors who care with causes that matter. A leader in charitable giving in the Lehigh Valley for more than 58 years, we receive support from donors, manage funds to grow over time, and make impactful grants to strengthen local nonprofits.

Over the last ten years, the Community Foundation has grown significantly to become one of the largest funders in the Lehigh Valley with over \$140 million in charitable assets under management. As the Community Foundation has grown, so has our impact. LVCF distributes over \$9 million in grants annually to over 400 nonprofit organizations. Historically, the grantmaking that LVCF directs through unrestricted funds is around \$1.3 million annually. Through LVCF's unrestricted funds, our proactive grantmaking and community engagement areas have been early childhood, nonprofit capacity building, and significant leadership and community-building activities, while we have also provided significant responsive grantmaking and staff time to support food access. The Community Foundation also runs several grant cycles throughout the year to support a variety of issue areas.

Purpose of the Engagement

LVCF seeks a consultant to help strengthen its ability to advance and measure meaningful community outcomes. The result should be a practical impact strategy and measurement framework that staff, board, donors, and partners can understand and act on. At this stage in LVCF's growth, we are preparing to make deeper and wider impact, therefore are seeking consultant support that will help build a long-term impact strategy and measurement framework for our grantmaking and community engagement work.

To guide this process, LVCF has formed an Impact Strategy Committee (ISC). The ISC brings together current and former LVCF board members, fundholders, nonprofit leaders, evaluation professionals, and community members. The ISC will review submissions, select the consultant, and serve as a thought partner throughout the engagement.

We want a partner who will push our thinking. We welcome new and unexpected ideas, not only confirmation of what we already do. While LVCF is open to refining or changing its current grantmaking areas of focus, early childhood will remain a priority.

These are the key questions related to the foundation's grantmaking and community engagement efforts that LVCF's leadership aims to explore through this process:

1. **Focus and role:** What is the overarching goal (vision, mission) that connects LVCF's work, and where is LVCF best poised to make an impact to demonstrate our value-add? How do we balance deep, long-term change in priority areas with meeting immediate needs?
2. **Alignment:** How can LVCF align all of its tools (i.e. impact investing, fundholder and nonprofit trusted relationships, expertise in community-building, convening power) behind that overarching goal, with the staffing and governance to carry it out?
3. **Measurement and story:** How will we know we are making a difference, and how do we tell that story in a way that keeps community at the center and moves donors and partners to act?

Scope of Work and Deliverables

The engagement covers five areas of work:

1. **Assessment of Current Impact Approach:** Review existing strategic plans, program materials, and reports; assess strengths, gaps, relevant frameworks (e.g. [CF Leads](#) Framework of Community Leadership) and opportunities in LVCF's current impact strategies and practices.
2. **Stakeholder and Community Engagement:** Facilitate structured input from staff, board members, community partners, and grantees; conduct one or more community input sessions or focus groups; summary of themes from stakeholder engagement highlighting opportunities for new or refined community impact and leadership.
3. **Development of a Long-Term Impact Strategy:** Facilitate strategy discussions with staff and leadership to clarify priority impact areas, including the role of early childhood as a continuing priority, and desired outcomes; develop an impact framework; align grantmaking, partnerships, and initiatives with defined impact goals; connect to an overarching vision/mission of impact; provide recommendations on rolling out impact strategy.
4. **Impact Measurement Framework:** Recommend indicators and metrics for tracking progress; identify approaches for measuring LVCF's contribution to community change; provide guidance on data collection, evaluation practices, and internal learning; mechanisms for capturing stories for impact.

Deliverables

Deliverable	Description
Current-state assessment	Summary of LVCF's current impact strategy
Impact Strategy Framework	Draft and final versions
Impact Measurement Framework	Recommended key metrics, indicators, and data collection approaches
Partnership map	Key relationships to amplify and achieve impact
Final presentation	Findings and recommendations to foundation leadership and/or the board

What LVCF Will Provide

- A designated staff lead and coordination support throughout the engagement
- Access to existing strategic plans, program materials, grant data, evaluation reports, and prior leadership-initiative data
- Help scheduling interviews, focus groups, and community input sessions, including introductions to partners and grantees
- Regular check-ins with the Impact Strategy Committee at key milestones

Work location: LVCF welcomes a hybrid approach. Some in-person facilitation in the Lehigh Valley is expected, particularly for community input sessions and board or leadership meetings. A minimum of three (3) in-person engagements is expected.

Budget

The total budget for this engagement is **\$40,000–\$60,000**. Cost proposals should be all-inclusive, covering consultant fees, travel, materials, and overhead. Please break out costs by phase or area of work so the ISC can understand how resources are allocated.

Timeline

Selection timeline

Milestone	Date
RFP released	September 30, 2026
Interest Short Form due	October 14, 2026
Finalists notified and full proposal issued	October 21, 2026
Full proposal due	November 16, 2026
Finalist interviews	November 30 - December 4, 2026
Consultant selected and contracted	December 2026

Engagement timeline

Phase	Timing
Project kickoff and discovery	January 2027
Assessment and stakeholder engagement	February – March 2027
Draft impact strategy development	April – May 2027
Measurement framework and strategy refinement	June 2027
Final deliverables and presentation	July – August 2027

Submission Process

LVCF is using a two-stage process so that interested consultants don't have to invest in a full proposal up front.

Stage 1: Interest Short Form (short form; all interested consultants)

Complete the Interest Short Form by 11:59 p.m. ET on October 14, 2026. The Interest Short Form should be submitted through Microsoft Forms, with responses within character limits. The Interest Short Form asks for:

- Firm or consultant overview and proposed lead
- Experience engaging in strategic and/or evaluative processes with community foundations
- Relevant experience developing impact frameworks and/or theories of change
- Experience assessing opportunities for new issue areas of grantmaking focus
- Method and experience with impact measurement, especially in complex areas such as social cohesion or large sets of data for early childhood long-term change
- Alignment with LVCF's impact values, including transparency, a community-centered lens, a genuine partnership approach with nonprofit organizations, and minimizing burden on grantees
- Facilitation experience with boards, staff, and community stakeholders
- Confirmation that the work fits the timeline (through August 2027) and budget (\$40,000–\$60,000)
- Confirmation of the ability to meet a minimum of three (3) in-person engagements
- Disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest, including current or recent (within five years) financial relationships with LVCF, its board or staff, or its grantees

The ISC will review Letters of Interest and invite up to three finalists to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Full Proposal (long form; finalists only)

Finalists will receive the full proposal (long form) on October 21, 2026, with proposals due by 11:59 p.m. ET on November 16, 2026. Full proposals should be submitted through Microsoft Forms, with responses within character limits, excluding work samples and bios which can be uploaded. Full proposals will include:

- Proposed methodology and work plan aligned with the five areas of work and the key questions that LVCF leadership aims to explore
- Project timeline with key milestones
- Team bios and roles
- Detailed cost proposal, broken out by phase or area of work, with any optional services priced separately
- Two to three references from comparable engagements
- One or two relevant work samples

Finalists may be asked to present to the ISC between November 30–December 4, 2026.

Evaluation Criteria

The ISC will evaluate submissions on the following criteria. Letters of Interest will be screened primarily on the first five criteria and on feasibility; finalists' full proposals will be evaluated on all criteria, including references, work samples, and the quality of the proposed methodology.

- **Industry experience:** demonstrated experience working on strategic and/or evaluation projects within the community foundation industry.
- **Impact framework experience:** demonstrated experience helping foundations or nonprofits, ideally community foundations, develop impact frameworks or theories of change
- **Trust-based and community-centered practice:** alignment with trust-based philanthropy principles, including flexibility, minimizing burden on grantees and community partners, transparency, and a genuine practice of soliciting and acting on feedback; experience engaging diverse communities through culturally responsive practice
- **Measurement expertise:** experience designing practical measurement frameworks, including indicators, metrics, and data collection approaches; experience measuring hard-to-measure outcomes in complex or emerging areas such as equity, social cohesion, and community bridging
- **Facilitation:** strong skills engaging boards, staff, and diverse community stakeholders through focus groups and input sessions
- **Geographic/Issue area expertise:** Familiarity with regional context, expertise in early childhood and/or food access focus is a plus but not required.
- **Clear communication:** ability to translate research and data into clear, actionable recommendations and a story donors and partners can act on
- **Feasibility:** ability to deliver within the timeline and budget, including a minimum of three (3) in-person engagements
- **References:** strong references from comparable engagements

Questions and General Terms

Questions: Direct questions about this RFP to Robyn Weaver, Program Officer of Capacity Building, at robyn@lvcfoundation.org. LVCF will share answers with all prospective consultants through the posting of an FAQ on our website on October 8, 2026. Please submit all questions by close of business, Wednesday, October 7, 2026.

How to submit: Fill out the Interest Short Form at [LVCF Impact Strategy & Evaluation Consultant: Interest Short Form \(Stage 1\) – Fill out form](#). Finalists will receive instructions for submitting the full proposal.

General terms

- Submitting a Letter of Interest or full proposal does not obligate LVCF to award a contract.
- LVCF may modify the timeline, request additional information, or decline all submissions.
- Costs of preparing a Letter of Interest or full proposal are the responsibility of the consultant.

- The selected consultant will enter into a contract with LVCF defining scope, deliverables, and payment schedule.
- All final deliverables and materials produced for this engagement will become the property of LVCF.
- Submissions will be kept confidential and shared only with LVCF staff and the Impact Strategy Committee.

Commitment to diversity

LVCF values diverse perspectives and encourages submissions from consultants and firms owned or led by people of color, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, and others from communities historically underrepresented in philanthropy.