

Invitation for Statements of Qualifications

Evaluation Partner for the Changemaker Fund

Connecticut Urban Opportunity Collaborative (CUOC)

Submission Deadline: November 25, 2025 by 5pm EST

Contact: Liany E. Arroyo, Director, CT Urban Opportunity Collaborative

Email: larroyo@hfpfg.org

I. Background

The Connecticut Urban Opportunity Collaborative (CUOC)—a partnership between Fairfield County’s Community Foundation, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven – seeks a qualified evaluation partner to conduct a qualitative evaluation of the Changemaker Fund, a three-year direct cash assistance pilot serving 120 residents across Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven.

The Changemaker Fund provides \$12,600 over three years to each participant, offering unconditional cash assistance to low-income individuals and families. This initiative aims to understand how direct cash support affects participants’ financial stability, well-being, and social connectedness, and to generate insights that can inform policy and systems change in Connecticut.

CUOC partners with UpTogether, a national organization that supports and learns from people experiencing financial hardship. UpTogether collects survey-based data on participant well-being and self-investment. CUOC now seeks to complement this with qualitative inquiry that deepens understanding of lived experiences, explores community-level impacts, and identifies policy implications.

II. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this evaluation is to document and interpret the impact of direct cash assistance on participants’ lives and on broader community conditions, through a culturally responsive, community-informed approach. The evaluation should build off the quantitative evaluation conducted by UpTogether to identify themes in the data that could benefit from further exploration. This can include:

- Effects of cash assistance on social determinants of health, including:
 - Economic stability
 - Employment
 - Housing
 - Education
 - Food security
- How individuals navigate public benefits systems while pursuing economic mobility
- How people build collective power to influence change in their communities
- Implementation successes and challenges from both participant and organizational perspectives
- Policy lessons to inform future cash assistance programs in Connecticut

III. Anticipated Activities and Deliverables

CUOC anticipates a primarily qualitative evaluation incorporating participatory and community-based methods. Activities and deliverables are expected to include:

- Evaluation work plan: jointly developed with CUOC and partners, outlining research questions, methodology, roles, and timeline.
- Data collection: focus groups, interviews, and other qualitative methods with participants and stakeholders.
- Data analysis and synthesis of findings.
- Interim summary: key themes and preliminary findings at the conclusion of Year 2.
- Final report and communication materials: accessible summaries, infographics, or presentations designed for community, policy, and public audiences.

IV. Desired Qualifications

- Community-based research expertise: experience conducting participatory or community-informed research and authentically engaging residents throughout evaluation processes.
- Experience with target populations: demonstrated experience working with low-income and racially diverse communities, especially in urban Connecticut settings.
- Evaluation and research skills: strength in qualitative methods and mixed-method integration.
- Policy and communication capacity: ability to translate research into actionable, audience-appropriate policy recommendations.
- Cultural and linguistic competence: capacity to engage participants in their preferred language; at least one-quarter of participants prefer Spanish.
- Knowledge of Connecticut's social and economic policy landscape related to poverty, housing, and social services.

Preference will be given to Connecticut-based teams and to those with lived or professional experience in the communities served by CUOC.

V. Statement of Qualifications Content

Limit the Statement of Qualifications to no more than five (5) pages, single-spaced, excluding attachments. Include:

- Organization and Contact Information – organization name, address, website (if applicable), and primary contact (name, title, phone, and email).
- Relevant Experience – summary of qualifications and prior work related to community-based evaluation, cash or guaranteed income pilots, or social policy research.
- Approach to Equity – description of how equity, particularly racial and economic equity, informs your evaluation philosophy and practice.
- Estimated Budget Range – provide expected cost parameters and hourly rates (a detailed budget is not required at this stage).
- Team Bios or CVs – for key personnel (attached).

- Sample Work Product – one example of a similar or relevant evaluation deliverable (attached).

VI. Selection Process

CUOC and foundation partners will review submissions and select a small group of finalists for interviews. Interviews will serve as a collaborative discussion about evaluation goals, approach, values, and logistics. Finalists may be asked to provide references from similar or related projects.

VII. Anticipated Timeline

Activity	Date
RFQ Distribution	November 3, 2025
Deadline for Questions	November 10, 2025 by 5pm EST
Statements of Qualifications Due	November 25, 2025 by 5pm EST
Finalist Interviews	December 19, 2025
Evaluation Partner Selected	January 2, 2026
Project Kickoff	January 26, 2026
Interim Findings Summary	November 30, 2026 (proposed)
Final Evaluation Report	November 30, 2027 (proposed)

VIII. Budget

The total budget for the evaluation is not to exceed \$125,000, inclusive of all costs.

IX. Submission

Please submit Statements of Qualifications and any questions electronically to:

Liany E. Arroyo

Director, Connecticut Urban Opportunity Collaborative

Email: larroyo@hfpg.org