



NYIC 2016 New York City Policy & Budget Priorities Inclusive Contracting with Small Community-Based Organizations

Recommendation

Support small, immigrant-serving organizations by promoting equity, increasing capacity, and ensuring financial stability.

- **Promote equity in the RFP and selection process.** The City should award 10 percent of points in the RFP evaluation process for those that fully demonstrate their capacity to provide culturally competent and language accessible services. The city should also leverage micro-purchasing to work with small organizations, and facilitate subcontracting for coalitions and networks that unite large and small organizations. (*Recommendation from 15% and Growing Coalition*)
- **Grow capacity by encouraging support structures.** The City should work with coalitions and federations to provide training, technical assistance, and capacity building grants to smaller, immigrant-serving nonprofits. The City should also help provide back-office support to organizations receiving their first government contracts, and enact an improved customer relationship model (CRM) between the City and nonprofits through HHS Accelerator. (*Recommendation from Communities of Color coalition*)
- **Ensure culturally competent outreach.** City agencies should involve culturally competent and linguistically appropriate staff in the development of RFPs, evaluation of grant applications, and outreach to community based organizations in each borough when concept papers and RFPs are released.
- **Ensure an efficient system of payments to aid financial stability.** The City should ensure the financial stability of nonprofits by streamlining its own processes and leveraging its relationships with the State and banks, reforming the City's payment system to ensure contracted organizations receive funding within 60 days.

Community Need and Background

Large and mid-size nonprofit organizations are the vast majority of NYC-contracted social services providers. While there are challenges faced by all nonprofit organizations in doing business with the government, there are unique challenges faced by the City's small organizations -- especially those led by immigrants, people of color, and faith communities. Many of the City's procurement, evaluation, and payment processes are structured in a way that favors larger organizations and overlooks smaller ones (and often the communities they serve).

Small, immigrant-serving and -led organizations are best positioned to address the complex challenges of racial, ethnic, and language groups who experience unequal access to services. With the expertise to serve New York City's diverse communities and the flexibility to address emerging needs, small organizations not only provide invaluable services but also promote the economic vitality of neighborhoods. Organizations with capacity to serve immigrants and communities of color can be incentivized to hire multicultural and multilingual staff through selection methods that favor cultural competency. We define small organizations as:

- having budgets less than \$1.5 million,
- immigrant or people of color led,
- 51%+ of their board of directors identifying as immigrants/people of color,
- executive leadership identifying as immigrants/people of color,

51%+ of the population served being immigrants/people of color.

Opportunity and Talking Points

- By providing equity in selection processes, small immigrant-serving organizations will be able to refresh the City's network of service providers with new perspectives, methods, and deep roots in their communities.
- Supporting small organizations through capacity and technical assistance will allow community based institutions to be able to sustain themselves and continually transform their work and neighborhoods they serve. Ensuring that RFP development, grant evaluation, and CBO outreach is accessible to those serving the most vulnerable communities in NYC.
- Streamlining the City's system of payments will slow down the citywide cycle of organizational transience.

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