Washington Youth & Families Fund
2019 Request for Proposals for Families
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About Building Changes

Our Vision: Everyone has a home and the opportunity for a healthy, fulfilling life.

Our Mission: Building Changes believes everyone in Washington can be stably housed. We strengthen the leaders, organizations, and systems that make it possible.


Building Changes utilizes data, research, and best practices to develop, implement, and advance strategies that help families and young people move out of homelessness and into stable housing. We pull together government, philanthropy, and nonprofits to improve local homeless systems as well as other sectors that serve people experiencing homelessness. We help counties and nonprofits identify and eliminate racial disparities within their systems and structures to ensure that their services are accessible, inclusive, and equitable.

Building Changes takes a systems change approach, shifting the way communities make decisions on policy, practice, resource allocation, and service delivery.

We activate systems change by:

• Unlocking the potential and unleashing the power of our partners to advance emerging strategies that impact homelessness (such as Diversion).
• Advocating for a homeless system that treats all people fairly and delivers all services effectively.
• Sharing knowledge gained through experience, data, and evaluation to improve the effectiveness of our field.
• Connecting the homeless system to the employment, education, housing, and health systems so they can deliver coordinated accessible services for people experiencing homelessness.
• Building our partners capacities to develop strong leaders who focus on equity, performance and results.
• Investing to sustain strategies and services that demonstrate the highest levels of success.

About the Washington Youth & Families Fund

The Washington Youth & Families Fund (WYFF), which Building Changes administers, is a unique public-private partnership established by the State Legislature in 2004. WYFF is dedicated to achieving housing stability for more Washingtonians by funding services for families, youth, and young adults experiencing homelessness. Between 2004 and 2018, WYFF funded 104 organizations in 25 counties throughout the state, supporting innovative programs that address the problems of homelessness at a leadership, organizational, and systems level.

Approach

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) is an intervention that utilizes housing placement, case management and rental assistance to quickly move families out of homelessness and into permanent housing. It was designed for low barrier families that do not need intensive ongoing support. However, with the implementation of prioritization, RRH is being used to serve high-barrier families. Hence, the population changed without changing the model.
Interviews with subject matter experts who were either currently or formerly enrolled in RRH revealed immense levels of anxiety and fear around how their rent was going to get paid from month to month. Overall, families were very grateful for finding housing placement, but none of the families enrolled were making enough money to pay the full rent without RRH assistance. Despite being housed, they still expressed feelings of instability and a deep fear that they would end up back on the streets with their children.

This funding approach will allocate up to $1,520,000 to be used for up to three years to test innovative strategies identified by the community that can complement, strengthen and adapt RRH to better serve high-barrier families, by providing flexible assistance and culturally enhanced services.

Services will be available for up to 12 months after RRH case management and rental assistance end.

Culturally Enhanced Supportive Services: Building Changes will provide funding for innovative and culturally enhanced supportive services that stabilize housing permanency for Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native families enrolled in RRH.

Additional innovative and culturally enhanced services should strengthen ethno-identity, meet unmet needs of the above sub-populations, and further race equity by ensuring equitable outcomes in permanent housing, length of time experiencing homelessness, and returns to homelessness for families served through RRH.

Below are five major areas of focus identified by the Center for Social Innovation regarding racial inequity and homelessness.\(^1\) Applicants should consider these focus areas in their design of the proposed expansion of services.

- Economic Mobility – Lack of economic capital within social networks precipitates homelessness for many people of color.
- Housing – The unavailability of safe and affordable housing options presents both risk of homelessness and barriers to permanently exiting homelessness.
- Criminal Justice – Involvement in the criminal justice system, especially when it involves a felony, can create ongoing challenges in obtaining jobs and housing.
- Behavioral Health – People of color experience high rates of traumatic stress, mental health issues, and substance use. Behavioral healthcare systems are not responsive to the specific needs of people of color.
- Family Stabilization – Multi-generational involvement in the child welfare and foster care systems often occur prior to and during experiences of homelessness, and people of color are often exposed to individual and community level violence.

Competitive applicants will demonstrate how their strategies will target one or more of the above focus areas and will have integrated input from families with lived expertise.

Flexible Funding: Interviews with subject matter experts who were either currently enrolled or formerly enrolled in RRH revealed a need to meet day-to-day financial stressors in order to lower anxiety levels and ensure a safe and stable environment. Transportation, childcare and medical costs were the three most common unmet needs.

Because of this Building Changes will provide flexible funding to grantees so they can address unmet needs identified by families, such as transportation, medical, and childcare costs. Meeting these identified needs will decrease day-to-day anxiety levels and increase families’ capacity to dedicate income to rent. Flexible funding can be offered to participants currently enrolled in RRH, and for up to 12 months after case management ends.

Importantly, there will be no cap placed on how much flexible assistance a household can access. Instead, flexible funding will be provided based on individual need. Examples of eligible costs include and are not limited to the following:

- Childcare costs
- Medical/dental costs (medicine, glasses, medical equipment, etc.)
- Transportation costs (car repair, car maintenance, gas, bus passes, etc.)
- Work clothes, supplies, or professional presentation needs
- Legal costs
- Vehicle licensing (tabs, tickets, reinstatements, etc.)
- School uniforms or supplies
- Necessary furniture

What Does Success Look Like?
Success means that by program exit families experience lower levels of stress and feel confident living independently.

There are equitable outcomes in permanent housing, length of time experiencing homelessness and returns to homelessness for families served through RRH.

Exits to permanent housing increase and returns to homelessness decrease.

Addressing Disparities
Equity is one of Building Changes’ organizational values. We advocate for the unique needs of marginalized populations in order to improve equity in outcomes. While we recognize that racial and ethnic disparities will vary in different parts of the state, data show that people of color are disproportionately affected by homelessness.²

By targeting enhanced services for families of color to gain housing permanency and independence, we are enhancing equity in service delivery and implementing a targeted universalism model that increases permanent housing outcomes for the whole. Targeted universalism is an approach that targets processes or practices to address the needs of specific populations, but which also reach universally.

shared goals. A practical example of this is adding curb cuts, which meet the specific needs of people using wheelchairs, but also benefit everyone by making sidewalks more accessible.

Applicants are encouraged to report existing disparities within their structures and systems, even if evidence is only anecdotal. Competitive applicants will propose specific strategies to address the identified racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionality.

Competitive Applicants will Demonstrate

- Direct service staff that accurately reflect the demographics of the target population (i.e. age, race, gender, lived expertise, etc.) or a diversity plan that shows how that will be accomplished in the future.
- Organizational leadership that accurately reflects the demographics of the target population or a leadership succession plan that shows how that will be accomplished in the future.
- Thorough understanding of systemic and institutionalized racism, how it directly affects families experiencing homelessness, and the harm that can be caused by traditional social service delivery when applied to families.

Learning Goal and Technical Assistance

Building Changes aims to learn what is needed to strengthen and further refine the national RRH Model in order to better meet the unique needs of more vulnerable families.

More specifically, we would like to learn what the impact of enhanced cultural services and program design are on exits to permanent housing, returns to homelessness, and feelings of confidence when transitioning to independence at RRH exit for Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native families.

We would also like to learn what impact the addition of flexible funding during enrollment and post-exit has on exits to permanent housing, returns, and feelings of confidence when transitioning to independence at exit for Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native families.

Building Changes will provide technical assistance to grantees to support data collection, data quality and data informed decision making. Building Changes will also provide race equity training to all grantees.

Policy and Advocacy Goals

Building Changes intends to use information gathered from this project to:

- Raise awareness of enhanced cultural services that better serve Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native families in RRH;
- Advocate for targeted universal refinements to state and national RRH models so that they include culturally enhanced services and flexible funding during enrollment and post-exit;
- Advocate for policy change to reduce service barriers for Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaska Native families;
- Promote and strengthen the case for increased funding to further refine RRH services across the state.
Application Information

Geography
Applicants may apply from all areas across Washington State, except King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties.

Priority will be given to areas with disproportionately high rates of people of color returning to homelessness.

Target Population
Families enrolled in Rapid Re-Housing.

Eligible Applicants
Social Service Provider, local tribe, and/or community center located outside of King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties.

Culturally Specific Organizations or smaller organizations led and staffed by persons of color that primarily serve communities of color are encouraged to apply in partnership with Rapid Re-Housing Providers, if best suited to provide culturally responsive services.

Culturally Specific Organizations or smaller organizations led and staffed by persons of color that primarily serve communities of color that are interested in implementing the Rapid Re-Housing Model outlined in this RFP are also encouraged to apply, and if selected as a grantee Building Changes will provide Rapid Re-Housing training.

Expectations for Funded Projects

Outcomes and Evaluation

- Expected outputs for families:
  - Total exits to permanent housing increase for all families served.
  - Total exits to permanent housing increase for Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native families.
  - Total returns to homelessness decrease for all families served.
  - Total returns to homelessness decrease for Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native families.
  - All families exit with confidence to live independently.

- Outcomes measured and compared to baseline include:
  - The percent change in families exiting to permanent housing from RRH programs.
  - The percent change for families returning to homelessness after successfully exiting RRH programs.
  - The number and rate of families who feel confident they can live independently at exit.

Grantees will be evaluated on client experience via client feedback loop and regular data reporting.
Submission Instructions

Proposal Submission
Please submit one (1) copy of the application that includes: application narrative, budget worksheets and supplemental materials.

Completed applications should be sent to Building Changes:

- **Via e-mail to:** [WYFF@BuildingChanges.org](mailto:WYFF@BuildingChanges.org)

Please note the following when preparing to submit a proposal:

- **Facsimile** copies of proposals will **not** be accepted.
- All submittals must be received by **4:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time on Friday, September 20, 2019** in order to be considered.
- Proposals that do not arrive at the specified email by the submission deadline will not be accepted.
- Proposals that do not follow the specified format and/or meet the submission requirements will not be reviewed.
- All electronic copies of application narrative and budget worksheet must be in PDF or other non-editable format.

Evaluation and Selection Process
This RFP process is competitive. Once applications are submitted, they will go through the process listed below.

Initial Application Review
The initial review will be completed by Building Changes staff. Applications will be checked to determine if they were received before the submission deadline and that they contain all required elements.

Panel Review of Applications
Proposals will be reviewed by an **ad hoc** Review Panel, appointed by Building Changes. The review panel may be comprised of members of the Building Changes staff and external subject matter experts.

Applications will be read and evaluated on the following criteria (percentages indicate weighting of categories for review):

- **Community Needs Statement (30%)**
  - Applicant understands which families are experiencing homelessness in their geographical area and what is driving them into homelessness.
  - Clients served are reflective of the racial/ethnic demographics of those experiencing homelessness in their geographical area and agency understands intersectionality’s between racism and homelessness.
  - Current RRH practice is clearly articulated, gaps in services are identified; and unmet needs of families are understood.

- **Organizational Capacity (20%)**
  - Project is consistent with applicant organization’s mission, vision, values, and strategic plan.
o Applicant demonstrates race equity in practice and cross agency staffing that aligns with local demographics and client base.
o Staff being deployed can work with families in an authentic way.
o Existing or planned infrastructure can be leveraged to this project’s benefit.
o Applicant can provide high data quality reports.
o Applicant demonstrates ability to partner with community to increase race equity in service delivery.
o Organization has identified and planned for potential implementation challenges.

- Project Description (30%)
o Culturally enhanced services are described and are:
  ▪ Accessible;
  ▪ Available for up to 12 months after case management ends;
  ▪ Designed with the voice of those with lived expertise;
  ▪ Enhances ethno-identity;
  ▪ Meets unmet needs; and
  ▪ Furthers race equity for Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native families enrolled in Rapid Re-Housing.
o Flexible funding immediately meets individualized and unique day-to-day needs of families enrolled in RRH, and for up to 12 months after case management ends.
o Applicant’s stated outcome goals take into consideration quality of service.

- Project Timeline (10%)
o Realistic timeline for implementation of relevant programming.

- Budget (10%)
o Project budget reflects realistic costs.
o Budget narrative makes a clear and compelling case for how the project budget will support meeting the intended outcomes.
o Budget narrative reflects planning for project sustainability beyond the grant term.

WYFF has an obligation to fund programs throughout the state; geography will be considered as an element of the overall selection process.

Applicant Site Visits
The Review Panel will recommend agencies that submit the strongest proposals for a site visit. Building Changes will coordinate directly with agency staff to schedule and execute mutually agreeable visits during the week of October 14-18, 2019. All applicants should reserve these dates in the event they are selected for a site visit. Site visits are required for those agencies selected; additional documents may be requested at the time of the site visit. Please offer as much flexibility as possible since we will have several visits to accomplish, as well as many schedules to consider. In addition to Building Changes staff a member of the review panel and/or a Building Changes Board member, when available, may also participate.
Notification

Once the committee review and site visits are completed, Building Changes staff will make final funding recommendations to the Building Changes Board Program Committee and Building Changes Board of Directors, taking into consideration all activities and criteria outlined above. Executive Directors of applicant agencies will be notified regarding the status of their funding award in December 2019. Project contracts are expected to begin January 15, 2020.

Applicant Selection and Awards Timeline

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<tr>
<td>August 2, 2019</td>
<td>Application materials made available</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 21, 2019, 10:30 am–12:00 pm</td>
<td>Application Q&amp;A Virtual Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 20, 2019</td>
<td>Proposals due to Building Changes by 4:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 7, 2019</td>
<td>All applicants notified of site visit selections</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 14-18, 2019*</td>
<td>Site visits to finalists</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 13, 2019 – tentative</td>
<td>Notify grantees of award</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 1, 2020 – tentative</td>
<td>Contracts in place with grantees</td>
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* In the event your application is selected as a finalist, please reserve times during this week for a site visit.

Details of Q&A Virtual Meeting

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<th>Wednesday, August 21, 2019 10:30 am–12:00 pm</th>
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Washington Youth & Families Fund
RFP for Families Q&A Session
Wednesday, August 21, 2019 at 10:30 am

Register at:
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5284072963681118733

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Questions can be submitted in writing and directed via e-mail to WYFF@buildingchanges.org.
Appeal Process

Grounds for an Appeal
Applicants may only submit an appeal on the following grounds:

Failure by Building Changes to follow procedures outlined in this 2019 Request for Proposal; and/or discrimination or conflict of interest on the part of a rater.

When to Submit an Appeal
Appeals will be considered only at the time an applicant is notified they will not be moving to the site-visit phase of the selection process.

How to Submit an Appeal
Building Changes must receive all appeals in writing within five business days of receipt of site visit selection notification.

Appeals may be mailed, emailed, or hand-delivered. Applicants should indicate the grounds for their appeal and a short description of why they are appealing.

Appeals should be addressed to:

Building Changes
1200 12th Avenue South, Suite 1200
Seattle, WA 98144
Email: WYFF@BuildingChanges.org

Review of an Appeal
All materials (application, score sheets, reviewer comments, supplemental materials) pertaining to the applicant along with the appeal letter will be given to Building Changes for review. The Building Changes Program Director has the authority to have a new reviewer read and consider the application. Building Changes will have 10 business days to review the materials and provide a written decision back to the applicant.