

National WIC Association AHEAD 3.0 Journey Map Consultant Request for Proposals

Project Background & Overview

Project Overview

The [National WIC Association](#) (NWA) is seeking a consultant to assist with the development of a comprehensive Journey Map that will look to understand successful participant experiences and key pain points in enrollment, participation, retention, and service delivery, particularly exploring on experiences that might differ for Black, Brown, and Indigenous families. The consultant will conduct a literature review, analyze existing data from the 2023 WIC Multi-State Participant Satisfaction Survey and in-depth interviews, and incorporate new insights from WIC participants and stakeholders to produce a report with recommendations that identify promising practices to address barriers and challenges that State, Local, Tribal and Territorial Agencies can implement.

NWA Overview

NWA is the nonprofit voice of WIC, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). WIC is a government program that provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, referrals to health care and social services, and nutritious foods for qualifying parents, pregnant people, and young children. Through our work, we support more than 12,000 WIC Agencies and the 6.8 million mothers, babies, and young children enrolled in the program. NWA provides education and support to WIC staff and drives program innovation and advocacy.

In 2019, NWA received a grant from the Walmart Foundation to support a two-year project aimed at [Advancing Health Equity to Achieve Diversity & Inclusion \(AHEAD\) in WIC](#). One of the key goals of AHEAD in WIC was to systematically build capacity among WIC agencies and staff to incorporate a health equity framework into WIC research, policy, and practice. As part of the AHEAD in WIC project, NWA worked with Nutrition Equity and Justice Partners, a nutrition and health equity consulting company, to conduct a national landscape scan targeting WIC stakeholders to identify emerging and promising practices being implemented at the state and local level to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

In 2023, NWA was awarded \$1.2 million to support the continuation of the AHEAD in WIC. [AHEAD 2.0: Strengthening and Diversifying the WIC Workforce](#) built upon the previous work of AHEAD in WIC and focused on strengthening and diversifying credentialed professionals in WIC, creating career ladders for Competent Paraprofessionals Authorities, and providing in-depth EDI training for State and Local WIC staff, and NWA staff and Board of Directors, building on the work and promising practices identified in AHEAD in WIC.

In 2024, NWA was awarded a two-year, \$1.6 million grant to continue work conducted AHEAD in WIC and AHEAD 2.0. AHEAD 3.0: Enhancing Equity throughout the WIC Participant Journey will enhance understanding of and address barriers to WIC participation, particularly for Black, Brown and Indigenous families and focus on four bodies of work: 1) journey mapping the full continuum of the participant experience 2) developing recommendations and identify promising practices to address barriers and challenges that State, Local, Tribal and Territorial Agencies can implement 3) redesigning NWA's Participant Advisory Council to include Black, Brown, Indigenous, and geographically diverse WIC

participants to provide direct feedback on their experience, and share their expertise and recommendations to help inform NWA's priorities for increasing enrollment and retention, and participant satisfaction and 4) conduct a 2025 WIC Multi-State Participant Satisfaction Survey, which will analyze results by race and ethnicity and build upon the 2023 survey, which included more than 38,000 participants across 19 states, one Indian Tribal organization and one territory.

Budget Range

The budget for this project is not to exceed \$100,000.

Project Request

NWA is looking for a consultant to support the development of a Journey Map and Journey Map Report. Key activities include:

- Conduct a literature review of WIC participant experience.
- Extract data from the 2023 Multi-State Participant Satisfaction Survey and in-depth interviews.
- Curate questions for participant focus groups.
- Integrate the Participant Advisory Council, participant focus group, and WIC stakeholder feedback/expertise into the development of the journey map.
- Produce a detailed report describing steps in the participant experience, indicators of successful participant experience, key points of friction/pain points, and recommendations of promising practices.
- Collaborate with a NWA Graphic Designer Consultant in development of graphical representation of the Journey Map.
- Create a detailed presentation of Journey Map findings and recommendations that can be disseminated to partner organizations and coalitions.
- Present at NWA Annual Conference in Spring 2026 on Journey Map findings and recommendations to address key participation challenges.
- Present at three webinars in 2026 regarding Journey Map findings and recommendations to address key participation challenges.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals must be submitted in PDF format by **5:00 PM ET February 3, 2025**, and should not exceed 15 pages. Submit your proposals and questions to the Center for Innovative Practices in WIC (CIP-WIC) at cipwic@nwica.org. The proposal must include:

Statement of Interest and Introduction

The statement of interest should briefly summarize the consultant's qualifications, experience, availability, and possible capacity constraints for the proposed work. If a proposal is submitted on behalf of a firm, please include the individual consultant(s) that will be assigned to the category of services.

General Qualifications

Provide a copy of the resume(s) and professional credential(s) for the consultant(s) and other personnel who will be responsible for, and assigned to work on, the project. Clearly identify the consultant(s) in charge, who will lead and perform key elements of the work, and the roles or services provided by each.

Proposal

Describe relevant research and evaluation experience and qualifications, focusing on nonprofit, public health, maternal child health, public health nutrition, and/or public policy experience. List projects or work similar to the services described that qualify the consultant to provide these services for NWA.

Please be sure to include the following information:

- Detailed approach to proposal requests
- Proposal details and fee
- List of deliverables and expected outcomes

Proposals are due on Monday, February 3, 2025, by 5:00 pm ET. All questions must be submitted via email to the Center for Innovative Practices in WIC (CIP-WIC) at cipwic@nwica.org. The deadline for question submissions is Friday, January 24, 2025. An electronic copy of the proposal shall be emailed to the Center for Innovative Practices in WIC (CIP-WIC) at cipwic@nwica.org.

Timeline

The consultant services will commence in **March 2025** and conclude in **September 2026**.

Budget

Provide a fee schedule of the consultant's hourly and standard fees and expenses associated with providing the professional services. Budgets should be broken down into easy-to-understand sections that list your proposed services, benefits, and deliverables. If you plan to subcontract any work, please describe that as well. Your quoted price should be all-inclusive and should not exceed \$100,000.

Selection Criteria & Process

Successful proposals will include a data equity framework and creative thinking as well as an adherence to the set budget.

NWA is seeking to work with a consultant who has demonstrated commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging and proactively shares updates to demonstrate progress. The ideal consultant will have experience with WIC, maternal and child health, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, or public health and be adaptable, strategic, and goal-oriented.

This request for proposals was released on January 2, 2025. Those interested in applying can request a 30-minute meeting with NWA to ask questions about our organization, the WIC program, and this project. NWA will accept questions between **Monday, January 6 and Friday, January 24, 2025**.

Applications are due by 5:00 PM ET on Monday, February 3, 2025. NWA will review submitted proposals that fulfill the requirements. From that pool, NWA will select three finalists to present their

proposals to NWA in a video call. All applicants will be contacted about this decision on **Friday, February 14, 2025**. These presentations will take place on **Thursday, February 20, 2025**. A final candidate will be chosen by **Monday, February 24, 2025**. Applicants will be notified that same day.

Upon selection, NWA will negotiate contract terms, and the project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget, and other necessary terms and conditions.

Timeline

- RFP Available: January 2, 2025
- Question Period: January 6, 2025 - January 24, 2025
- Proposals Due: February 3, 2025, 5:00 PM ET
- Final Candidates Chosen: February 14, 2025
- Final Presentations: February 20, 2025
- Final Decision: February 24, 2025