Data-Driven Decision Making: Organizational Enhancement Program

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Office of Homelessness Prevention

FY23

Data Driven Decision Making – Organizational Enhancement Program
FY 2023 Request for Proposal (RFP)
Office of Homelessness Prevention (OHP)
Department of Community Affairs

1. Name of grant program: Data-Driven Decision Making – Organizational Enhancement Program (3DM-OEP)

2. Intent of the grant: The intent of this funding is to build data analytics and data-driven decision-making capacity throughout the State of New Jersey's homelessness prevention service ecosystem (HPSE) at the organizational and Continuum-of-Care levels of service for entities working with persons experiencing homelessness and those at-risk of homelessness.

Following this intent, the funding from this grant (described in greater detail below) is expected to be used by selected entities through one of two tracks. Applicants may elect to apply for consideration to both Tracks, ***provided they submit the required materials for each***. Based upon scoring, applicants not meeting the scoring threshold for the Track 1 selection will be automatically awarded Track 2 funding. Description of the tracks is as follows:

Track 1: Data Analyst & Infrastructure Capacity Track (8 awards)

Awarded funds will be used to:

1) Source and hire a data analyst
2) Purchase data visualization, business intelligence software, and technical infrastructure in support of analytics activities
3) Provide the requisite organizational tools and personnel for awardees to successfully complete OHP's Data-Driven Decision-Making Organizational Change program, a cohort-based three-month long program designed to enhance the capacity of organizations & CoCs to integrate data into their business and program processes to help accelerate positive housing outcomes.

Track 2: Data Strategy & Transformation Planning Support Track (8 awards)

Awarded funds will be used to engage and hire a consultant to facilitate a strategic planning process focused on improving data collection, data quality, and data utilization for decision-making in a Continuum-of-Care, either through its lead or a designated agency.

All proposals must designate the selection of track through its application proposal in DCA SAGE.

3. Purpose of the grant: Over the past three years, numerous studies of the homelessness prevention ecosystem in New Jersey (done by CSH, ICF, and Monarch Housing Associates) have identified data infrastructure and development of organizational capacity to leverage data in program, policy, and business decisions as necessary prerequisites to a rapid improvement in positive housing outcomes and deeper integration between service providers. Further, the success of data-driven, real-time by-name initiatives (e.g., Community Solutions' Built for Zero model) using functional zero "sprints" nationwide to address unsheltered homelessness reinforces these findings.

Across the State's HPSE and the nation, there is a paucity of funding sources to develop data analytics and statistical modelling capacity in organizations serving our most vulnerable. A key strategic initiative of the Office of Homelessness Prevention at DCA is the use of data as the primary driver of service delivery and system design. To this end, OHP is engaging in a multi-

year effort to modernize core data and surveillance infrastructure across the state homelessness prevention landscape.

The Data Driven Decision Making - Organizational Enhancement Program – FY23 (3DM-OEP) is the first tine of the three-pronged initiative to build a modern and integrated digital infrastructure to facilitate collaboration and real-time decision making to address homelessness across the state. This initiative is not just about technology, but also about putting the right people, processes, and policies in place to help us solve housing problems together as a community of support.

Available funding: $1,500,000.00

Maximum amount of award – Track 1: $167,500.00

Maximum amount of award – Track 2: $20,000.00

Number of total awardees: 16; see tables 1 & 2 below.

Region	# of awardees
Atlantic County	1
Bergen County	1
Burlington County	1
Camden, Gloucester, Cape May, Cumberland Counties	1
Essex County	1
Hudson County	1
Mercer County	1
Middlesex County	1
Monmouth County	1
Morris County	1
Ocean County	1
Passaic County	1
Salem County	1
Somerset County	1
Union County	1
Warren, Sussex, Hunterdon Counties	1

Table 1: # of awardees by region.

Track	# of awardees
Track 1: Data Analyst & Infrastructure Capacity Track	**8**
Track 2: Data Strategy & Transformation Planning Support Track	**8**

Table 2: # of awardees by track.

Eligible entities: Continuums-of-Care (**through CoC lead agency or its designee**), county governments, and nonprofit organizations servicing Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Salem, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren Counties.

In all cases, applicants must have, at least, three (3) years of experience administering homelessness prevention programs and be active members of their community's Continuum-of-Care (CoC).

Target entities: Continuum-of-Care lead agencies and/or their designated nonprofit organizations in the homelessness prevention service ecosystem meeting the criteria set forth above that desire to move toward an organizational theory of change anchored by data-driven decision making and human-centered program design.

For Track 1: Data Analyst & Infrastructure Capacity applicants:

Entities applying through this track should have a developed data quality and/or standards improvement plan completed (a Community Solutions Built-for-Zero or similar data strategy is also acceptable) and the capacity and drive to undergo a structured organizational change process (facilitated by a DCA contracted entity) where the following members of the organization will be expected to participate:

1) Data analyst hired through grant award
2) CoC Lead Agency executive [or] executive director/CEO of designated agency
3) Other organizational executive of a participant in the CoC general body, as designated by CoC
4) Other organizational executive of a participant in the CoC general body, as designated by CoC
5) Member of the executive board of the CoC (or designee)
6) CoC Data quality lead, HMIS Lead, or other CoC designee
7) CoC PWLEE liaison or committee lead

This course will run from August of 2023 through October 2023, however, may be delayed due to contracting processes.

For Track 2: Data Strategy & Transformation Planning Support applicants:

Entities applying through this track should recognize the need for improvement of data practices in their region/CoC, however, may not have engaged in a directed planning process to develop a strategy for improvement in their community.

Additionally, entities applying through this track for funding must designate, as part of their application, how it will include the solicitation and participation of persons with lived experience and expertise (PWLEE) in the strategic data plan.

4. In-eligible entities:

1. Those listed on the DCA list of High-Risk grantees and, as applicable, the current audit submission is not overdue.
2. Those listed on the State Debarment list, located at www.state.nj.us/cgi-bin/treas/revenue/debarsearch.pl

5. Eligible activities:

For Track 1: Data Analyst & Infrastructure Capacity applicants:

The program track aids organizations through the following three components:

1) Data Analyst hiring support; 2) digital infrastructure purchases; and 3) admittance of a team of leaders from the awardee organization (identified above) to the Data Driven Decision Making – Organizational Change Program (3DM-OCP).

The following summarizes each component's eligible activities:

1. **Data Analyst Hiring Support**
    a. Salary Support
    b. Fringe Costs (NTE 37%)

2. **Digital Infrastructure**
    a. Visualization/BI tool (e.g., Tableau, PowerBI, Qlik)
    b. Laptop/Computer
    c. Database/Cloud Capacity (e.g., AWS, Google Cloud, Microsoft Azure)
    d. HMIS user license & upgrades for data work

3. **3DM-OCP Cohort Admittance**

For Track 2: Data Strategy & Transformation Planning Support applicants:

This program track aids CoCs and regions that do not yet currently have an actionable roadmap and/or strategy to improve data practices in their region through the hiring of a contractor to facilitate strategic planning with regards to data utilization for ending homelessness.

It is the intent of this track to develop a plan that can be submitted for Track 1 funding support in follow-on years of this program.

Awardees of Track 2 programs _**will not**_ participate in 3DM-OCP activities in 2023.

6. Application Process:

      6a. Program Narrative

All applicants, regardless of track selected, must submit in SAGE a written narrative that describes the following:

*   Identification of program track applied for.
    o   **NB**: As stated above, applicants may elect to apply for consideration to both Tracks, provided they submit the required materials for each. Based upon scoring, applicants not meeting the threshold for the Track 1 selection will be automatically awarded Track 2 funding.

- CoC Lead Agency's mission and staff capacity to support this project **OR**
- CoC's designated agency's mission, staff capacity, experience in homelessness prevention, and the scope of programs across the agency.
  - **NB**: Only one agency may be designated by a CoC to apply for this funding, **_and only if_** the CoC Lead Agency is not applying directly for this program.

    Agencies applying on behalf of a CoC must attach an executed MOU or other collateral document for consideration in SAGE **AND** provide a tallied vote of CoC membership or executive committee (depending on CoC bylaws) demonstrating both designation of the agency and MOU agreement.
- Number of unduplicated and distinct households assisted over the past three (3) years (LSAs, APR, or other standardized HUD reporting is acceptable).
- Agency PIT Count participation history and level of involvement (if not CoC Lead Agency).
- Program services and linkages with other community-based agencies outside of the CoC.
- Description or history of data quality improvement activities (either internal to agency or as a participant in [e.g., Essex County Data Quality Improvement Initiative]).
- Current program evaluation process/model used by agency/CoC.
- Current agency/entity data collection and analysis procedures and practices
- Current involvement with CoC data quality/analysis/initiatives.
- Current process for soliciting feedback from persons with lived experience and expertise (PWLEE) and incorporating feedback into evaluation processes.
- Identification and qualifications of staff that will participate in the project (specifically the 3DM-OCP process) and in the administration of the grant.
- Hiring plan for program personnel, to include recruitment strategy.
- Vision for how this program will improve CoC organizational operations and housing outcomes for consumers.
- Vision for how this program will support data initiatives at the CoC's constituent agencies.

6b. Proposed Project Budget – Track 1

Office of Homelessness Prevention – 3DM-OEP	
Example Budget – Grantee receiving $167,500.00	
Category	_Amount ($)_
Administration (10%)	$16,750.00
Personnel	
Salaries/Wages	
Fringe	
Operating	
Audit	
Other	

Program (90%)	
Direct Expenses	
Salaries (One Staff/FTE - Capped at 60% of total budget)	$100,000.00
Fringe**: (Capped at standard of 37%)	$37,000.00
Equipment Purchase (Tableau Cloud – 12-month Creator license)	$2,500.00
Equipment Purchase (Computer)	$2,200.00
Equipment Purchase (e.g., AWS Credits)	$1,000.00
HMIS user license (capped at $1,000.00)	$1,000.00
HMIS Enhancements (e.g., Insights or Snowflake connection)	$6,000.00
Total	$166,450.00
Remaining	$1050.00

6c. Proposed Project Budget – Track 2

Office of Homelessness Prevention – 3DM-OEP	
Example Budget – Grantee receiving $20,000.00	
Category	*Amount ($)*
Administration (10%)	$2,000.00
Personnel	
Salaries/Wages	
Fringe	
Operating	
Audit	
Other	
Program (90%)	
Direct Expenses	
Strategic Data Operations Planning Contractor	$17,000.00
HMIS Access for Contractor (capped at $1,000.00)	$1,000.00
Total	$20,000.00
Remaining	$0.00

6d. Required Attachments:

- **For Track 1**:
  - Job Description to be used in search for Data Analyst candidate (see example in section 6e, below).
  - Copy of Current CoC Data Strategy Plan/Roadmap, in PDF format.
- **For Track 2**: A 1500-word prospectus of the goals, timelines, and key deliverables for a facilitated regional data strategy planning process.

<u>**For all tracks:**</u>
- Staff resumes for persons supporting this project
- Memorandum of Understanding / Letter of Support from the County Continuum of Care. For applicants that are not CoC Lead entities and a designated agency applying on behalf of the CoC, the letter must explicitly state the agency's selection via resolution or vote at a CoC Meeting.
- Recent (within the last month) Data Quality Report from HMIS
- Certificate of Incorporation (only if lead agency or designee is a non-profit)
- Recent by-laws (either CoC or Organization)

6e. Example Job Description – Track 1

Title: **Data Analyst**

Educational Background**: BA/BS/MS**

The Expertise and Skills You Bring:

You are a skilled and self-directed data analyst who thrives in a small team environment; you can proactively oversee and execute end-to-end projects with limited inputs.

You love analyzing and synthesizing data into actionable business insights; you are comfortable working across a variety of inputs to draw conclusions. You can synthesize those inputs to tell stories and create visualizations and reports using charts, pivots, graphs, and tables.

You are a curious problem solver; you like figuring out how things work and how to make them better.

You enjoy working with people as much as data; you understand how to proactively communicate with different stakeholders and have a record of building relationships cross-functionally to achieve goals in a nonprofit serving persons experiencing homelessness.

You are comfortable in a dynamic environment and can easily adapt to shifting priorities.

You are organized, detail-oriented, and sweat the small stuff.

You have 1+ years of experience in marketing, social services program evaluation, or public-interest research, insights, customer experience programs, data, and/or business analytics or consulting; you have some experience in project or program management.

Research and quantitative analysis skills; ideally a familiarity with social program evaluation, and/or marketing and customer research.

Excellent verbal and written communication skills.

A learning mindset – you actively seek new ways to help the team stay ahead of business objectives, bring new vendors / methodologies to the table, stay on top of best practices.

Experience with CX a plus; R, Python, and SQL familiarity is great.

Nonprofit, philanthropic, or financial services background advantageous but not required.

What The Work Looks Like

Managing our CoC's program evaluation processes and customer experience feedback programs:

Conducting data analysis and synthesizing data inputs from multiple listening posts and feedback mechanisms to create insights-driven reporting for stakeholders. Data sources include feedback surveys, qualitative and quantitative primary research, internal data (NJ HMIS), customer conversations, and secondary research.

Supporting development and administration of a closed-loop customer feedback system across multiple functions in the organization, advocating for insights-driven changes throughout the organization.

Acting as the day-to-day contact for organizational questions and input regarding any and all data. Working to continuously improve programs in partnership with NJ HMIS at NJ HFMA and OHP at DCA.

Performing data analyses in response to research requests or to uncover business improvements.

Interpreting and helping communicate key findings.

Contributing to additional qualitative and quantitative strategic research initiatives as needed, including supporting the growth of the organization and driving the adoption of existing insights across a rapidly growing organization helping to end homelessness.

6f. Example Prospectus – Track 2

    a. **Vision of CoC's Data Change Initiative & Executive Summary**
        i. Articulated statement on incorporating data into all aspects of the CoC's operations and planning processes.
        ii. OKRs (or KPIs) to achieve that vision
        iii. Timeline and rollout strategy

    b. **Data Inventory**
        i. Data sources currently developed/identified
        ii. Plan for acquiring/integration of external data sources
        iii. Connection plan for data sources

      iv. Performance metrics for programs and organization developed to address organizational and community needs

  c. Data Organization Plan
     i. Dashboarding standard operating procedure
     ii. Reporting Expectations and Cadences
     iii. Organizational Data Dictionary

  d. Data Analysis Plan
     i. Identification of process to align analysis goals with capacity
     ii. Expectations of stakeholders
     iii. Articulation of decision-making process adopted by the agency in support of i & ii.
     iv. Process by which the organization will "share the story" of their data with all stakeholders, to include the public.

7. Submission of proposals:

The proposal must be submitted via SAGE (to include all attachments).

8. Application submission deadline: 11:59pm on 5/12/2023.

9. Date by which applicants shall be notified: On or about 6/16/2023.

10. Term of Grant: 1 year: 7/1/2023 to 6/30/2024.

11. Reporting requirements:

  1. Quarterly performance reports shall be submitted via SAGE
  2. _NLT November 30th 2023_ – Creation and delivery (via SAGE upload) of Data-driven Decision Making – Organizational Change & Sustainment Plan for the awardee organization that encompasses (at a minimum) the following elements:

    a. Vision of Organization's Data Initiative & Executive Summary
      i. Articulated statement on incorporating data into all aspects of the CoC's operations and planning processes.
      ii. OKRs (or KPIs) to achieve that vision
      iii. Timeline and rollout strategy

    b. Data Inventory
      i. Data sources currently developed/identified
      ii. Plan for acquiring/integration of external data sources
      iii. Connection plan for data sources
      iv. Performance metrics for programs and organization developed to address organizational and community needs

    c. Data Organization Plan

     i. Dashboarding standard operating procedure
     ii. Reporting Expectations and Cadences
     iii. Organizational Data Dictionary

  d. Data Analysis Plan
     i. Identification of process to align analysis goals with capacity
     ii. Expectations of stakeholders
     iii. Articulation of decision-making process adopted by the agency in support of i & ii.
     iv. Process by which the organization will "share the story" of their data with all stakeholders.

  e. Conclusions – answering the following prompts:
     i. How did your organization used to make confident, evidence-informed decisions and how has that process now changed?

     ii. How did your organization protect again biases and how has that changed?

     iii. How did your organization previously find the answer(s) to unresolved questions and how has that changed?

     iv. How did your organizations set OKRs (or KPIs) previously and how has that changed?

     v. How did your organization improve processes and how has that changed?

     vi. How did your organization solicit and incorporate persons with lived experience and expertise (PWLEE) and end user customer experience (CX) in your overall strategy and how has that changed?

7. Threshold Requirements: Only applications that meet all the following threshold requirements will be scored; applications missing any documents identified in numbers 7-11 will be provided 5 days to upload same.

1. Memorandum of Understanding / Letter of Support from the County Continuum of Care. For applicants that are not CoC Lead entities and are a designated agency applying on behalf of the CoC, the letter must explicitly state the agency's selection via resolution or vote at a CoC Meeting.
2. Attend mandatory technical assistance workshop
3. Be an active participant in the local Continuum of Care
4. Be an active participant in HMIS
5. Agree to attend a HMIS training workshop (for new Data Analyst)
6. Submit Bylaws
7. Submit Articles of Incorporation (non-profit agencies, only)

8. Submit staff resumes and current organizational chart
9. Submit staffing plan to hire data analyst – for Track 1 applicants
10. Submit prospectus on data strategy – for Track 2 applicants
11. Complete all certifications sheets

8. Rating Criteria:

1. **Applicant's Capacity and Experience: Does the applicant have the capacity to successfully administer the program? (Maximum 30 Points)**
    a. Appropriate staff and financial structure
    b. Sufficient income from multiple sources to sustain staff and operate the proposed project
    c. Prior experience leading data initiatives in the homelessness prevention ecosystem/CoC region.
    d. For designated agencies, involvement with CoC initiatives and activities.

Scoring Criteria (Rating Criterion #1)

Marginal Response *1-5 points*	Acceptable Response *6-20 points*	Excellent Response *21-30 points*
The applicant's response was incomplete, lacks clarity and does not provide assurance as to their ability to perform the work proposed.	The applicant's response was clear, thorough and provides reasonable assurance as to their capacity to perform the work proposed. In addition, the applicant has participated in external and community efforts to address homelessness.	The applicant's response provides significant assurance as to their capacity to perform the work proposed – the answers provided demonstrate a high level of expertise and capability. In addition, the applicant has taken an active role in the CoC and community's efforts to address homelessness.

2. **Proposed Project Design: Clear description of activities and budget line items. (Maximum 30 points)**
    a. Project budget: proposed costs are eligible and reasonable.
    b. For track 1 applicants: Job description for data analyst aligns with intent and scope of project.
    c. For track 2 applicants: Prospectus aligns with intent and scope of project.
    d. Clear description of how the proposed activities will help the CoC achieve their performance goals.
    e. Clear description of how the proposed activities will help the agency participate in CoC member and community data initiatives.

Scoring Criteria (Rating Criterion #2)

Marginal Response	Acceptable Response	Excellent Response

1-10 points	*11-20 points*	*21-30 points*
The applicant's response was incomplete and did not provide a clear description of activities and budget	The applicant's response provided a clear description of data activities. The description also described how the proposed activities will help the CoC achieve their performance goals. In addition, all budget items were eligible, reasonable and substantiated.	The applicant's response provided a clear, detailed description of the data activities. The description also described how the proposed activities will help the CoC achieve their performance goals. In addition, all budget items were eligible, reasonable and substantiated

3. **Project Need: the proposed project meets the needs of the population served by the organization, region-based need, and develops community capacity with regards to data-driven decision making (Maximum 40 points)**
   a. Clearly articulated vision for how this program will improve agency organizational and CoC operations and housing outcomes for consumers.
   b. Complete and accurate data provided on # of distinct households served over past three years.
   c. Clearly articulated vision for how this program will support data initiatives at the agency's correspondent CoC.
   d. Demonstrated understanding of CoC's program evaluation processes and a clear desire to increase capacity in this area.
   e. Commitment from agency leadership and identification of personnel to participate in 3DM-OCP initiative.

Scoring Criteria (Rating Criterion #3)

Marginal Response *1-10 points*	**Acceptable Response** *11-30 points*	**Excellent Response** *31-40 points*
The applicant's response was incomplete and did not provide sufficient data to document need	The applicant's response provided a clear description of organization's impact and reach. The description also described how the proposed project activities will help the region's HPSE achieve their performance goals. In addition, appropriate staff from the agency were identified to participate in the 3DM-OCP initiative.	The applicant's response provided a clear description of organization's impact and reach. The description also described how the proposed project activities will help the regional HPSE achieve both their performance goals and the data initiatives of their community & CoC. In addition, appropriate staff from the agency were identified to participate in the 3DM-OCP initiative.