

ORDER OF COMMISSIONERS COURT  
Authorizing the expenditure of funds

The Commissioners Court of Harris County, Texas, convened at a meeting of said Court at the Harris County Administration Building in the City of Houston, Texas, on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022 with all members present except \_\_\_\_\_.

A quorum was present. Among other business, the following was transacted:

**ORDER AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR CONSULTING  
SERVICES UNDER JOB NO. 21-0317 WITH ELITE RESEARCH, LLC THE  
AGREEMENT WITH ELITE RESEARCH, LLC WAS APPROVED AT  
COMMISSIONERS COURT ON MARCH 22, 2022, ITEM 22-2097**

Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ introduced an order and made a motion that the same be adopted. Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ seconded the motion for adoption of the order. The motion, carrying with it the adoption of the order, prevailed by the following vote:

Vote of the Court	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Judge Hidalgo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comm. Ellis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comm. Garcia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comm. Ramsey, P.E.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comm. Cagle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The County Judge thereupon announced that the motion had duly and lawfully carried and that the order had been duly and lawfully adopted. The order thus adopted follows:

**IT IS ORDERED** the Harris County Judge is authorized to approve for and on behalf of Harris County the expenditure of \$366,000.00 in funds under Job No. 21-0317 for the Agreement between Harris County and Elite Research, LLC The expenditure will provide applied research and data analysis, management strategies, and other services for conducting a comprehensive evaluation for Hire Up Harris program and the Apprenticeship program. (“Services”). The Request For Proposals: Conducting a Comprehensive Program Evaluation of Hire Up Harris Program and Apprenticeship Program and the Agreement is incorporated herein as though fully set forth word for word.

The following rates apply for the Services:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>% Allocation</b>	<b>Hourly Rate (\$)</b>
President	Project oversight, optimization & data directions	10%	\$125
Lead Evaluator	Primary project & evaluation lead	45%	\$125
Quantitative MERL Director	Quantitative design, advanced analysis, interpretation	10%	\$125
Statistician	Secondary data analysis and visualization	5%	\$105
Analyst 1	Quantitative data collection and analysis	5%	\$95
Analyst 2	Quantitative data collection	5%	\$85
Qualitative MERL Director	Qualitative design, analysis, interpretation	10%	\$105
Analyst 3	Qualitative data collection and analysis	5%	\$90
Project Manager	Scheduling, management, timelines, deliverables	5%	\$85

The Services provided under this Order will meet 100% MWBE participation through Elite Research, LLC.

All Harris County officials and employees are authorized to do any and all things necessary or convenient to accomplish the purpose of this Order.



# Conducting a Comprehensive Program Evaluation of Hire Up Harris Program and Apprenticeship Program

Harris County Department of Economic Equity and Opportunity

August 24, 2022

René M. Paulson, PhD  
President & Senior Statistician





# Elite Research, LLC

- Research, Evaluation and Statistical Consulting Firm
  - ❖ WBENC-certified Women Owned Small Business (WBE)
  - ❖ Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) certified
  - ❖ Primary office in Irving Texas, Harris County based team (6)
  - ❖ 18+ Years; SBA certified; 27 employees
- Extensive and Diverse Experience
  - ❖ Graduate (Masters and PhD) level consultants
  - ❖ Theoretical training with real-world application
  - ❖ Medical health, academic, government and nonprofit organizations
  - ❖ Domestic and international
- Capacity Building Mission
- Comprehensive, Customized Services
- Culturally Competent & Humble Practices
- Optimization & Actionable Insights





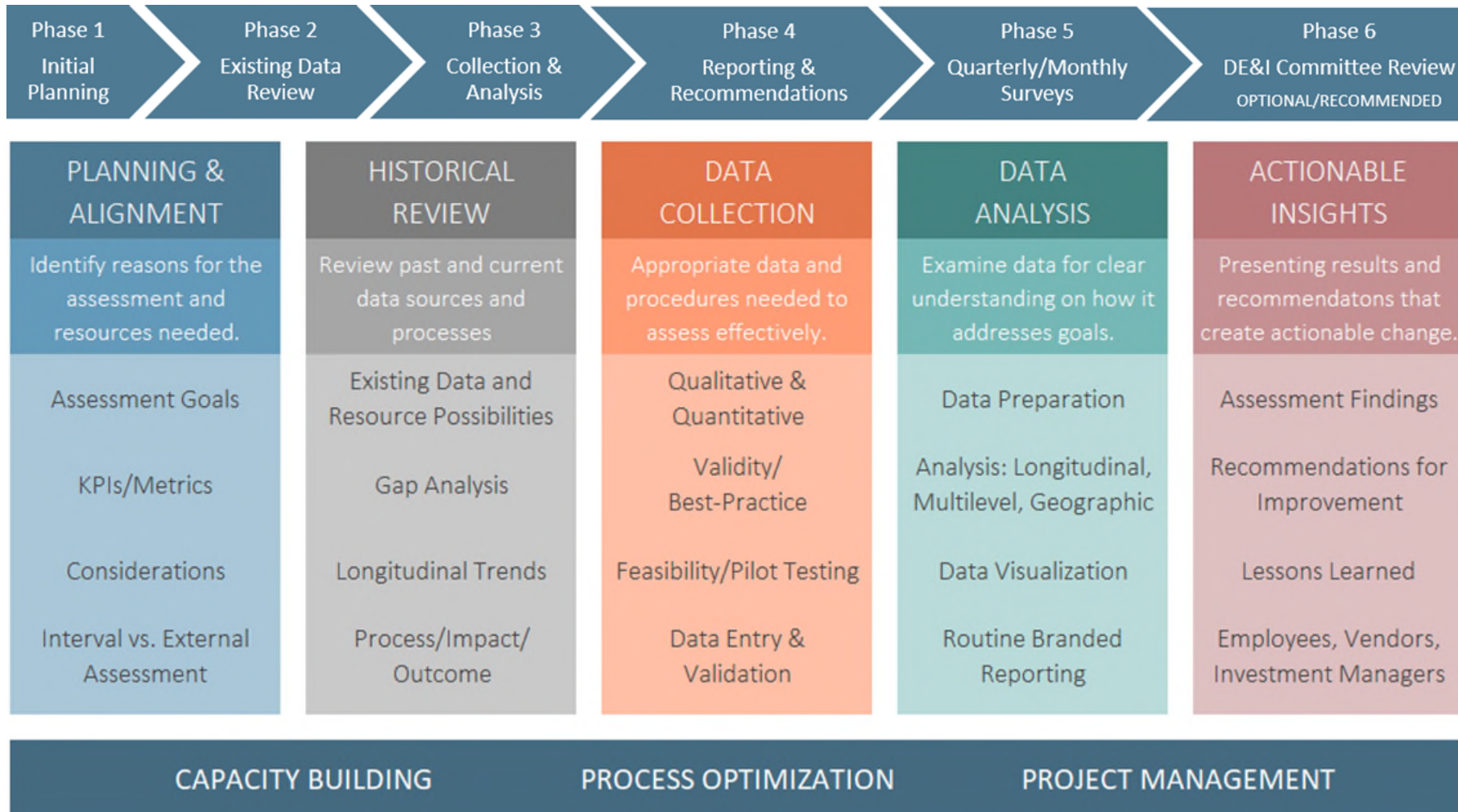
# HUH Project Purpose

The purpose of this proposal is to outline a method of documenting the implementation success and impact of the HUH and AP programs. The goals of the proposed evaluation research are:

- ❖ To understand how effective and equitable the HUH program is in supporting unemployed and underemployed individuals and their families who were affected by COVID-19 in achieving upward mobility.
- ❖ To understand how effective and equitable the AP is in creating and/or expanding opportunities for participation in U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) in HC for those who were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
- ❖ To understand how effective the wraparound support services are in increasing program completion, placement, and retention rates.



# Approach/Phases



# Project Team



Align project team to meet project needs



# Racial, Social, and Economic Equity

- **Research Design** – participatory approach, team education, reflexivity and cultural awareness
- **Data Collection** – facilitators that mirror the audience, use collection measures that meets the audience's need/desire
- **Analysis** – compare key groups, disaggregate results by categories critical to equity conversation
- **Reporting** – stakeholder involvement in conclusions and recommendations
- **Overall** – create a diverse work culture, training under the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative





# Racial, Social, and Economic Equity

- Reversing negative pandemic-related trends and closing gaps in health, economic, and housing outcomes; positioning disproportionately impacted groups and neighborhoods for improved future outcomes.
- Building capacity within County government, creating a shared understanding of and commitment to equity, and developing tools and practices to support equity-centered solutions.
- Measuring racial and ethnic disparities in health, economic, social, and environmental outcomes so that pandemic recovery plays a role in the long-term remediation of systemic harms to populations of color.
- Incorporating an equity assessment in each project, with opportunities to reflect and adapt based on interim results and community input throughout the project.
- Monitoring investment across the entire program to ensure the overall portfolio is reaching populations and neighborhoods most impacted by the pandemic.



# Elite Research, LLC



Empowering researchers in **medical/health, nonprofit, academic, government, and business** realms by educating and mentoring clients, providing research and evaluation expertise



1.800.806.5661

9901 E. Valley Ranch Pkwy, Suite 2035  
Irving, TX 75063



[consulting@eliteresearch.com](mailto:consulting@eliteresearch.com)  
[www.eliteresearch.com](http://www.eliteresearch.com)

## M/WBE Utilization Plan and Commitment Form

### **MINORITY- AND WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE UTILIZATION COMMITMENT FORM**

The undersigned has satisfied the requirements of the specifications in the following manner (please check the appropriate space):



The proposer is committed to M/WBE participation on this project equal to or greater than the goal stated in the bid and has submitted WITH ITS BID and attached hereto a Letter of Intent for each M/WBE listed on the utilization form.

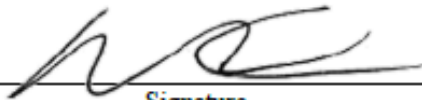
OR –



The proposer is unable to meet the goal, is committed to a minimum of \_\_\_\_\_% M/WBE participation on this contract, and has submitted WITH ITS BID and attached hereto documentation of the proposer's efforts with respect to each of the good faith effort actions listed in the Good Faith Efforts Checklist. Vendors shall also provide a Letter of Intent for the minimum M/WBE participation they are able to meet.

Proposer: Elite Research, LLC /Rene Paulson, President

By: \_\_\_\_\_



Signature

7/11/22

Date

Address: 9901 Valley Ranch Parkway, E. Ste. 2035

Irving, TX

Zip Code: 75063

Telephone No.: 972-538-1374

Email address: rpaulson@eliteresearch.com

**\*\*Vendors that are M/WBE and completing the percentage of the goal as the prime for this project shall submit this completed form, a Letter of Intent and their certification(s).**

**\*\*Vendors may utilize the Letter of Intent form provided within this package or may submit vendors own letterhead.**

## M/WBE UTILIZATION PLAN

The *M/WBE Utilization Plan* must be completed and submitted by the time specified in the solicitation documents. If the goal was not achieved, good faith efforts documentation must be submitted with the *M/WBE Utilization Plan*. All questions in the Good Faith Efforts Checklist MUST be completed and submitted with the *M/WBE Utilization Plan* if the goal is not met. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

### Section I — Project Identification and Goal

Project Name	Proposal RFP — Conducting a Comprehensive Program Evaluation of Hire Up Harris Program and Apprenticeship Program
Solicitation Number	210317

Project Goal		
M/WBE	14	%

### Section II — Prime Company Information

Name of Company	Elite Research, LLC
Address	9901 Valley Ranch Parkway, E. Ste. 2035
City, State Zip	Irving, TX 75063
Phone	972-538-1374
Name of Contact Person	Rene Paulson
Email address for Contract Person	rpaulson@eliteresearch.com
Telephone number for Contract Person	972-538-1374
Is prime company M/WBE certified? (MBE/WBE, DBE, HUB, or 8(a))	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> MBE/WBE Joint Venture <input type="checkbox"/>

I certify that the information included in this *Utilization Plan* is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I further understand and agree that this *Utilization Plan* shall become a part of my contract with Harris County.

Rene Paulson, President & Senior Statistician

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature 

7/11/22

Date

#### For County Use Only:

I have reviewed this Utilization Plan and found that the Proposed **HAS** or HAS NOT complied as per the County M/WBE Policy.

Reviewer

Derek Holmes

Date: 8/30/2022

**Tips:** Use the name of the firm as listed in the directory.

Ensure the firm is certified in the area in which they are participating on this project.

Ensure the firm's participation is in line with the scope and germane to the project.

### Section III — Utilization Plan Summary

Goals: Proposed Participation		
Proposer's own participation in project	100.00	%
M/WBE(s): (MBE/WBE, DBE, HUB, or 8(a))		%
Non-Certified Subcontractor(s)		%
<b>Total Participation (must equal 100%)</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>%</b>

Is the stated M/WBE goal of the solicitation met? (If no, provide an explanation below, attach the Good Faith Efforts checklist, and documentation of good faith efforts)

Yes ☒ No ☐

Explanation for not meeting the M/WBE Goal:

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#### For County Use Only:

Verified Goal Attainment:

M/WBE 100%

**Section IV — Disclosure of M/WBE Participation**  
Please list all M/WBE subcontractors below & Duplicate as Needed

*Tips: Use the name of the firm as listed in the directory.  
 Ensure the firm is certified in the area in which they are participating on this project.  
 Ensure the firm's participation is in line with the scope and germane to the project.*

Name of MBE/WBE Certified Firm	Elite Research, LLC (PRIME)
Certified by:	WBNEC
Address/ City / State / Zip	9901 Valley Ranch Parkway, E. Ste. 2035, Irving, TX, 75063
Name of Contact Person	Rene Paulson
Email address for Contract Person	rpaulson@eliteresearch.com
Telephone number for Contract Person	rpaulson@eliteresearch.com
Percent of Subcontract	100
Description of services	Evaluation, Analysis, and MGMT Services
6-digit NAICS code for work to be performed	541690

Name of MBE/WBE Certified Firm	
Certified by:	
Address/ City / State / Zip	
Name of Contact Person	
Email address for Contract Person	
Telephone number for Contract Person	
Percent of Subcontract	
Description of services	
6-digit NAICS code for work to be performed	

Name of MBE/WBE Certified Firm	
Certified by:	
Address/ City / State / Zip	
Name of Contact Person	
Email address for Contract Person	
Telephone number for Contract Person	
Percent of Subcontract	
Description of services	
6-digit NAICS code for work to be performed	

**SECTION V — Disclosure of Non-Certified Sub-consultants**  
**Duplicate As Needed**

Name of Non-Certified Firm	
Address/ City / State / Zip	
Name of Contact Person	
Email address for Contract Person	
Telephone number for Contract Person	
Percent of Subcontract	
Description of services	
6-digit NAICS code for work to be performed	

Name of Non-Certified Firm	
Address/ City / State / Zip	
Name of Contact Person	
Email address for Contract Person	
Telephone number for Contract Person	
Percent of Subcontract	
Description of services	
6-digit NAICS code for work to be performed	

Name of Non-Certified Firm	
Address/ City / State / Zip	
Name of Contact Person	
Email address for Contract Person	
Telephone number for Contract Person	
Percent of Subcontract	
Description of services	
6-digit NAICS code for work to be performed	



## SECTION VI—GOOD FAITH EFFORTS CHECK LIST

If the M/WBE goal was not achieved, this good faith efforts checklist and supporting documents must be submitted with the bid. Failure to do so will render the bid non-responsive and cause it to be rejected. Additional efforts after bid submission will not be considered in determining award of this contract. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

☒ Attended pre-bid or pre-proposal meetings scheduled by the County to acquaint Contractors with M/WBEs available to provide relevant goods and services and to inform M/WBEs of subcontracting opportunities.

☒ Solicited through reasonable and available means (e.g., written notices, advertisements) M/WBEs certified in the anticipated scopes of subcontracting of the contract, within sufficient time to allow them to respond. Attach detailed Contacts Log, including date, method of contact, person contacted and contact information, and the result of the contact.

☒ Provided timely and adequate information about the plans, specifications and requirements of the contract. Followed up initial solicitations to answer questions and encourage M/WBEs to submit bids or proposals. Attach evidence of information provided, including the date, e.g., letters, emails, telephone logs, etc.

☒ Negotiated in good faith with interested M/WBEs that have submitted bids or proposals and thoroughly investigated their capabilities. Evidence of such negotiations includes the names, addresses and telephone numbers of M/WBEs with whom the vendor negotiated; a description of the information provided to M/WBEs regarding the work selected for subcontracting; and explanations as to why agreements could not be reached with M/WBEs to perform the work.

☒ Selected those portions of the contract consistent with the available M/WBEs, including, where appropriate, breaking out contract work items into economically feasible units to facilitate M/WBE participation even when the proposer would prefer to perform those scopes with its own forces. Provide description of work selected.

☒ Made efforts to assist interested M/WBEs in obtaining bonding, lines of credit, or insurance as required by the County or the vendor for performance of the contract (if applicable).

☒ Made efforts to assist interested M/WBEs obtain necessary equipment, supplies, materials, or access to manufacturer's pricing, where appropriate.

☒ Effectively used the services of M/WBE assistance groups; local, state, and federal minority or women business assistance offices; and other organizations to provide assistance in the recruitment and placement of M/WBEs.

**\*\*This is not an exhaustive list. For additional information, please reference Section IX of the Harris County M/WBE Program Administrative Manual located on the DEEO's website at: <https://deeo.harriscountytexas.gov/Supplier-Diversity>**



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: Conducting a Comprehensive Program Evaluation of Hire Up Harris Program and Apprenticeship Program**

Procured as applied research and data analysis, management strategies, and other services, as previously awarded via Job 21-0317.

**Issue Date:** July 1, 2022

**Questions Due Date:** July 6, 2022

**Proposal Due Date:** July 20, 2022

**Presentations:** Upon Request following submission

**Target Award Date:** On or before September 1, 2022

**Expected Term:** 2 years with option to renew

**Awards:** Awards may be made for part or all of the Scope of Services below. Multiple Offerors may be selected.

### **GOALS**

Harris County is seeking proposals from qualified third-party evaluators to conduct a rigorous program evaluation for the Hire Up Harris workforce program and the Apprenticeship program for Harris County beginning approximately September 1, 2022, subject to funding. The goals of the evaluation are 1) to understand how effective and equitable the Hire Up Harris program is supporting unemployed and underemployed individuals and their families that were affected by COVID-19 in achieving upward mobility; 2) to understand how effective and equitable the Apprenticeship program is creating and/or expanding opportunities for the US Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) in traditional and high growth emerging industries within Harris County and creating access to opportunities for the unemployed, underemployed, dislocated workers, opportunity youth, people of color, women and those without college degrees that were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19; and 3) to understand how effective the wraparound support services are in increasing program completion, placement and retention rates.

### **BACKGROUND**

On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan of 2021 (“ARPA”) was signed into law. Two signature programs of ARPA are the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund (“CSFRF”) and the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (“CLFRF”), together SLFRF.

The Harris County Commissioners Court has allocated up to \$14.25 million ARPA federal funding for implementation of Hire Up Harris program. This new workforce development initiative that will begin in September 2022 supports residents seeking to improve their career in high quality jobs that provide living wages, benefits and potential for economic advancement. Program interventions and services provided by Hire Up Harris include but not limited to service navigation, career coaching, financial education, job readiness training, occupational training, and employment services.

In addition, the Harris County Commissioners Court has allocated up to \$18 million for implementation of Apprenticeship program that focus on those residents most acutely impacted by the pandemic and economic disruptions.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The evaluator shall furnish all qualified personnel, supervision, services, materials, equipment, facilities, travel, overhead and incidentals necessary to conduct a comprehensive evaluation study for Hire Up Harris program and the Apprenticeship program. The evaluator will be contracted to assess the equitable participation in the programs, the quality and impact of each program, and lessons learned and the impact of each program. In addition, the evaluation study needs to document the start-up process and length of time for program development, assess program sustainability, and provide plans and recommendations for future success.

### ***Methodology***

Harris County seeks to engage one or more evaluators experienced in high quality implementation evaluation, outcome evaluation and impact evaluations, especially those experienced in causal analysis using *randomized controlled trial (RCT)* or *quasi-experimental method* to understand whether the intervention programs are causing the desired outcomes or changes in program participants.

### ***Data***

The evaluator will coordinate with Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship program awardees to collect data on services provided. In addition, the evaluator will provide consultation to the awardees on how participants are tracked and how the data is entered, audited, and managed.

The evaluator should use a *Mixed Methods* approach that consists of both qualitative and quantitative data collected over time. The evaluator should also coordinate with the awardees to conduct a baseline interview or review the intake, and one or more follow-up interviews with program participants. In such cases, the evaluator should determine how to track individuals and families over time, especially those in and out of the pipeline. The evaluator will also interview the awardees and design a protocol for data collection and management to ensure that data confidentiality is maintained, and informed consent requirement is met.

The evaluator should work with Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship program awardees to identify data sources, review U.S. Department of Labor required performance measures (if applicable) and support data collection for the purpose of evaluating implementation and outcomes resulting from the funded programs.

### ***Outcomes and Metrics***

The evaluator will identify best metrics that help understand the effectiveness of the program in lifting economically vulnerable, low-skill unemployed, underemployed County residents from poverty and economic insecurity. Additionally, the evaluator will also example the causal impact of the program at individual and/or program level.

Outcomes should go beyond direct labor market outcomes, and include progress made toward self-sufficiency, financial stability, and reducing social vulnerability.

The evaluator will also identify metrics to capture racial disparities in who enrolls in the program, the level of services they receive, and their likelihood of achieving and/or retaining positive outcomes.

Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship program awardees are required to collect and monitor target numbers for (1) recruitment of individuals for training, (2) enrollment in and completion of training program, (3) placement into employment relevant to training services provided (4) individuals to receive wraparound support services, (5) monthly retention, and (6) wage information by individual.

Metrics that the evaluator should actively consider for evaluation are:

Hire Up Harris	Apprenticeship
<b><i>Training and Employment</i></b> 1. Recruitment and Enrollment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of individuals reached</li> <li>Number of participants enrolled in the programs (and completed an assessment, if applicable)</li> </ul> 2. Training and Placement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual and average number of classroom instruction hours per participant</li> <li>Actual and average number of on-the-job training hours per participant</li> <li>Number of participants placed with employers (relevant to training services provided)</li> <li>On the job assessment (if applicable)</li> </ul> 3. Retention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of participants retained in the program after one month, three months, six months depending on the design of the training program</li> </ul> 4. Completion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of participants completed the training</li> <li>Number of participants still in training</li> <li>Number of participants who didn't complete the training</li> <li>Number of participants earned certificates or industry recognized credentials</li> <li>Number of participants earned a degree (if applicable)</li> </ul> 5. Employment and job retention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of job interviews</li> <li>Number and wage of job offers</li> <li>Number of participants gained employment</li> <li>Number of participants still employed in the employment after degree or certificate completion (e.g. six months)</li> </ul> 6. Earning	<b><i>Training and Employment</i></b> 1. Recruitment and Enrollment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of individuals reached</li> <li>Number of apprentices enrolled in the programs (and completed an assessment, if applicable)</li> </ul> 2. Training and Placement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual and average number of classroom instruction hours per apprentice</li> <li>Average number of on-the-job training hours per apprentice</li> <li>Number of apprentices placed with employers (relevant to training services provided)</li> <li>On the job assessment (if applicable)</li> </ul> 3. Retention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of apprentices retained in the program after one month, three months or six months (depending on the design of the training program)</li> </ul> 4. Completion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of apprentices completed the training</li> <li>Number of apprentices still in training</li> <li>Number of apprentices who didn't complete the training</li> <li>Number of apprentices earned certificates or industry recognized credentials</li> <li>Number of apprentices earned a degree (if applicable)</li> </ul> 5. Employment and job retention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of job interviews</li> <li>Number and wage of job offers</li> <li>Number of apprentices gained employment</li> <li>Number of apprentices still employed in the employment after the apprenticeship (e.g. six months)</li> </ul> 6. Earning

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in hourly wage before and after the program</li> <li>• Actual average wage before and after the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in hourly wage before and after apprenticeship for each apprentice</li> <li>• Actual average wage of all apprentices before and after apprenticeship</li> </ul>
<b><i>Characteristics of Participants</i></b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Age</li> <li>2. Gender</li> <li>3. Race/ethnicity, minority status</li> <li>4. Documented vulnerability (e.g., veteran status, disability status, history of incarceration) and service needs</li> <li>5. Education background</li> <li>6. Marital status</li> <li>7. Number and age of children (if any)</li> <li>8. Geographic location (ZIP code)</li> <li>9. Primary language spoken at home</li> </ol>	
<b><i>Other Metrics</i></b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wraparound or support services (if applicable) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of services</li> <li>• Number of participants served</li> <li>• Availability and quality of individual coaching for participants (e.g., number of direct contacts that case manager or employment coach has with participants)</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Self-sufficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys of participants pre- and post-program. e.g., confidence in skills gained through the program, empowerment, well-being, financial stability, etc.</li> <li>• Participant outlook on career and economic advancement</li> <li>• Participants experience and satisfaction with the program including gaps and unintended difficult processes</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Employer Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of employer partners</li> <li>• Surveys of employer partners. e.g., employers experience and satisfaction with the program</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Cost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$ per participant enrolled or \$ per participant placed</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<b><i>Other Metrics</i></b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wraparound or support services (if applicable) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of services</li> <li>• Number of apprentices served</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Self-sufficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys of apprentices pre- and post-program. e.g., confidence in skills gained through the program, empowerment, well-being, financial stability, etc.</li> <li>• Apprentices' outlook on career and economic advancement</li> <li>• Participants experience and satisfaction with the program including gaps and unintended difficult processes</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Employer Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of employer partners</li> <li>• Surveys of employer partners. e.g., employers experience and satisfaction with the program</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Cost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$ per participant enrolled or \$ per participant placed</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

## ***Evaluation Study***

### **1. Implementation Evaluation**

As soon as program implementation begins, the evaluator will work with the Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship awardees, as well as Harris County's designated project monitor to collect information and assess how well the programs are working, whether the programs are being implemented as designed, and whether the programs are accessible to their target population. The evaluator will document the process and the length of time for program development, examine the project workflow and identify areas for improvement.

## **2. Outcome Evaluation & Impact Evaluation**

Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship program awardees have created logic models and project plans to capture and monitor their program performance. The evaluator will review the logic models and performance schedule and create reporting timelines and an evaluation plan for each program. The evaluator will work with the awardees as soon as the awardees engage with potential participants in the target population. Awardees will be assessed on the (1) types of engagement used to recruit individuals into the programs and their effectiveness, (2) types of engagement used to place participants into employment and their effectiveness, and (3) methods to support participants in being retained in employment and their effectiveness.

At appropriate intervals determined by the program awardees' performance schedule and at the end of the program, the evaluator will examine the degree to which Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship program meet their ultimate goals, and the causal impact of the programs at individual and program level respectively. For example, the evaluator can provide a comparison of outcomes to a baseline comparison group and ensure that outcomes are attributed to the specific intervention and not due to any other factors that also correlate with that intervention.

The evaluator will (1) plan how to measure the effectiveness of services provided and progress towards anticipated performance outcomes, (2) evaluate changes in job placement and wages over time and impact of financial resources, and (3) perform data audit and share administrative data and supporting feedback from staff, participants and employers via surveys, interviews or focus groups that captures both quantitative and qualitative data on program outcomes.

In addition to evaluating the overall effectiveness of the programs, the evaluator will assess the program sustainability, document best practices, identify gaps in service provision and provide recommendations for improvement in future program design.

## **3. Impact Storytelling**

A success story demonstrates the program's progress over time and highlights its value and achievements. In addition to forging a better understanding of the outcomes connected to the programs, Harris County seeks to tell the story of our work in more culturally and socially relevant ways. Ideally, the evaluator will document at least five (5) stories of impact for each program that can be readily disseminated to key stakeholders and share the knowledge of factors that enhance or hinder program impact.

### ***Tasks and Deliverables***

Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship program awardees are funded for an initial contract period of two (2) years with the option of two additional one-year contract renewals based on performance in each year until 2026. An additional six months may be allowed for close-out activities, but in no event will ARPA funds be allowed to be spent after December 31, 2026, the federal deadline for ARPA expenditures.

1. Initiate conversations with Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship program awardees, review logic models and performance measures, review intake or assessment tools for recruitment, develop baseline measures, identify milestones of the project, and develop an evaluation plan for each program with detailed methodology and a data management plan by October 31, 2022.
2. During the first two years of the project,
  - Conduct smaller scale check-ins at key milestones, e.g., check-in following recruitment, during the training, and at job placement.
  - Coordinate with Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship program awardees and develop survey instruments to collect follow-up data to examine participants' experience and changes over time, as well as employers' experience and feedback.
  - Collect specific outcome metrics including training records, employment records, etc., and validate data.
  - Interpret, report and periodically present on qualitative and quantitative analysis.
3. The first evaluation report for each program with focus on progress made towards the program goals is due on October 31, 2023.
4. The second evaluation report for each program is due on December 31, 2024 when the first 2-year programs are completed. The second evaluation report describes what has been achieved including the equity goals, the anticipated outcomes and unanticipated challenges, the overall impact of the program using experimental or quasi-experimental methods. The report also needs to include success stories from the participants and lessons learned from the program awardees, and considerations for future workforce development efforts. All program data needs to be transferred to Harris County Department of Economic Equity & Opportunity by December 31, 2024.
5. If renewed, an evaluation report is due on October 31 each year, and all program data needs to be transferred to Harris County Department of Economic Equity & Opportunity by October 31.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Evaluation shall be based on all factors in accordance with the evaluation criteria. Proposals will be scored on a 100-point scale. Application which provides the highest quality plan to achieve the requested outcomes will receive more points per category, resulting in a top rank.

- Firm Experience & Qualifications (15 points)
  - Understanding of scope of the project, Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship program' goals, comprehensive workforce development program design and wraparound support.
  - Ability to meet the qualifications and compliance requirements.
  - Specialized experience or technical expertise in connection with the scope of services to be provided and complexity of the project, which includes a thorough description of other successful projects, that demonstrate the firm's ability to carry out the scope of services similar to the one described in the RFP.
  - Demonstrate knowledge of the local labor market, economy, and workforce development ecosystem in Harris County.
  - Familiarity with database such as Salesforce database and U.S. Department of Labor's Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Management Data System (RAPIDS)
- Proposal Details and Approach to Independent Evaluation (50 points)
  - A complete and comprehensive Project Management Plan as part of the proposal submission that demonstrate how the services will be provided and how they will be supported, including but not limited to:
    - The approach that the firm will take to achieve the collaboration, scheduling, and coordination required for the evaluation study, taken into consideration of program awardees' limits for reporting.

- Firm's philosophy, preferred evaluation methods and associated data management plan and quality assurance process.
- A detailed project schedule including key milestones.
- A data management plan.
- The benchmarks used to support the implementation evaluation and outcome evaluation.
- A robust multi-year approach to impact evaluation. Experience in high quality impact evaluations, especially those experienced in causal methods such as randomized controlled trial (RCT) evaluations and the best quasi-experimental design.
- Firm Capacity & Resources (15 points)
  - Capability to provide evaluation services in a timely manner.
  - Sufficient staffing size and capacity of the organization to perform the work within time limitations, taking into consideration the current and projected planned workload of the firm.
  - Ability to perform requested services for similar projects of scope and scale by providing two recent examples of projects completed on budget and on time.
  - Sufficient financial capacity and acceptable business practices.
  - Ability to comply with funding requirements.
- Commitment to racial, social, and economic equity (10 points)
  - Overall approach and strategy in the proposal. Explain how data collection incorporates Harris County's ARPA Equity Framework (see Appendix A) and is managed through an equity lens that highlights racial, social, and economic equity.
  - Demonstrates culturally appropriate approach to designing evaluative criteria
  - **An M/WBE goal has been established and will be a requirement of this subproject. Please see details in Appendix B-1.**
- Pricing (10 points)
  - Extent to which the budget supports the proposed project
  - Budgeted costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable.
  - The County will assure that those who work on County initiatives are also paid livable wages of at least \$15 an hour with benefits. Please specify the hourly wages or annual salary for all project staff listed in the project plan.
  - Prices for all goods and/or services shall be firm for the duration of the contract. No price or rate changes, additions, or subsequent qualifications will be honored during the course of the contract. If there are any additional charges of any kind, Offeror **MUST** indicate the items required or forfeit the right to payment for such items.

## PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The proposal should not exceed fifteen (15) pages of written text, in Times New Roman, twelve (12) pt. font; and may include up to five (5) additional pages for figures and tables not including the title page. Applicants may submit applications as PDFs or Microsoft Word document format. The project budget must be submitted as an Excel document.

1. Title Page and Organizational Information (does not count toward the 15-page limit). Please include:
  - Organization name
  - Point of contact (name, address, email, telephone number)
  - Total estimated project cost
  - Submission date and signature of applicant
2. Project Summary (Maximum page: 1): Describe the overall design of the evaluation study and how you plan to implement it.

3. Project Narrative (Maximum pages: 12)

- Describe the qualifications and capacity of the applicant: Describe the type of organization and the project team and explain how it allows for performing this work within time limitations, taking into consideration the current and projected workload of the organization. Describe your organization's experience with federal funding and associated compliance requirements. Present the proposed project team, including any that are subcontractors to you, and their position title. Please also include the hourly wages or annual salary for all project team member. Resumes of the key team members should be attached at the end to accompany other supporting information and will not count toward the total page limit of the application. If you are submitting a joint proposal, please provide the same information for each partner organization, and describe your experience working with chosen subconsultants.
- Agency Experience: Describe experience or technical expertise in connection with the scope of services to be provided. Provide **a minimum of two (2) recent examples** of projects completed on budget and on time in a narrative or tabular format and explain how relevant they are to the purpose of this RFP. Please provide references including the organization's name, contact information, and the evaluation consultation service provided to that organization.
- Evaluation methodology: Please review the Scope of Services carefully, and describe the overall design of the evaluation study, and how it can achieve the goal of the study. Identify data sources and describe how to establish baseline metrics. Explain how program participants will be tracked over time, especially those in and out of the pipeline. Describe your method to identify success stories.
- Data management plan: Describe 1) how, where, and who will collect the data; 2) how the data is entered, audited for quality assurance, stored, and managed; 3) how to manage missing data; and 4) data transfer protocol.
- Project Coordination and Timeline: Describe your plan to coordinate with Hire Up Harris program and Apprenticeship program awardees regarding the comprehensive evaluation study. Propose detailed timeline for your project with key milestones including evaluation plan revision, implementation and completion.
- Challenges: Identify potential challenges and discuss how your organization will handle them.

4. M/WBE Utilization Plan and Commitment Form (**Goal: 14%**)

- Bidder shall include a M/WBE Utilization Plan to meet the M/WBE goal established for this project by Harris County. If the bidder is unable to meet the established M/WBE goal (see Appendix B-1), the bidder must illustrate a good faith effort was fulfilled which will be evaluated by Harris County. ***If the M/WBE Utilization Plan or documentation of good faith efforts is not submitted prior to the date and time set forth by this bid, the bid will be considered non-responsive.***
- Offeror shall also complete and return a M/WBE Utilization Plan Commitment Form as specified in Appendix B-2.

5. Budget, including cost estimates and budget narrative (Maximum pages: 2)

- Submit a total anticipated cost to design, create, implement, and manage your proposal for the first two years, and estimated cost for each additional year if renewed. Provide a detailed budget for all tasks.
- Describe how the proposed budget items would facilitate the implementation of the project. Offeror will furnish all qualified personnel, supervision, services, materials, equipment, facilities, travel, overhead and incidentals necessary to conduct the evaluation study. Please note all travel must follow the Harris County Travel Policy.
- A maximum of 5% will be allowed as Indirect Cost.
- Please use the budget template (see Appendix C).