



Request for Proposal – Research Partner

Purpose

The Bush Foundation seeks a partner to conduct research and document key findings that will help us learn more about the origins of the wealth used to establish the Foundation.

About the Bush Foundation

The Bush Foundation works to inspire and support creative problem solving — within and across sectors — to make our region better for everyone. To do this, we invest in great ideas and the people who power them in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and the 23 Native nations that share the same geography. Learn more at bushfoundation.org.

Project Background

The Bush Foundation is embarking upon a journey to learn more about the origins of wealth as an organization. We were established in 1953 with a large donation by our founder, Archibald (Archie) Bush and his wife, Edyth. Additional contributions were made through the years, up until Archie's death in 1966 and Edyth's passing in 1972.

Archie began his career as a bookkeeper with a small company based in Duluth, Minnesota. He rose up through the ranks over the years, helping to shape it into the innovative multinational firm known today as 3M. Learn more about Archie's early beginnings in the history section of our [website](#).

We want to better understand how the money that was donated to establish the Bush Foundation was made. We see this as an important next step in our own awareness of where the foundation may have benefitted from actions that harmed others. This builds on other more general work we have done to understand how wealth has been built in the US, particularly with regard to how race-based policies and practices contributed to wealth inequality. We now want to get more specific to the Bush Foundation and understand how others may have been impacted in the creation of the wealth, including environmental impact.

This project is aligned with our commitment to equity and is being led by a committee of staff members who are interested in stewarding this work forward. The staff committee is a mix of people from across the organization. We are not looking to do an expose of Archie or of 3M. We admire Archie and are grateful for his generosity in establishing the foundation. We believe this is important work to acknowledge and understand the complexities of our origin. What we find out about our past may shape our future grantmaking in ways that strengthen both the work of the foundation and Archie's legacy

Scope of Work

We are seeking a partner, or team of people, who can help us learn more about the initial wealth used to create the Bush Foundation. Ideally, this partner has familiarity with corporate history,

financial acumen, and related research experience to understand investments and origins of wealth. Familiarity with philanthropy and its capacity to do good and opportunities to do better would be a bonus.

We think the general timeframe for examining our origins is from 1953 to the late 1970s. Our assumption is that the majority of funds were earned by Archie Bush through his employment and associated pay and benefits. As we learn more about the sources of funds, we would like to learn about the impacts of those sources on the communities in which they operated during that overlapping time. As we uncover new information we may want to follow those trails of discovery.

Given the nature of this project, it is likely that as we learn the answers to our initial questions, it will lead to more questions. Therefore, this project will require investigating multiple threads of inquiry, reporting that information to the committee, and following up with additional research as new inquiries develop.

This research consulting engagement will include:

- Project design: The partner will work with the staff committee leading this project to develop a project plan that reflects the goals, objectives and research questions to explore.
- Research and update reports: The partner will implement the plan and provide regular updates, reports or findings (timing will be determined in the plan) to keep the committee abreast of findings and allow for additional questions or adjustments to be made with the research.
- Final report: The partner will produce a final report for the Foundation's use with citations.

Other pertinent information:

- Budget: We've estimated up to \$20,000 for this work. If you bring in other team members, we anticipate one contract, and you would manage the team.
- Timing of Services: We would like work to begin immediately upon award of the project. Ideally, the research and final report will be wrapped up by May of 2025, but there is flexibility in this timing and we will look to the partner to help us identify feasible timing goals.
- Partner location: While it's not required, special consideration will be given to individuals and organizations located in our region (Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota or one of the 23 Native nations that share the same geography.)

Request for Proposal

Please respond to this RFP by preparing a proposal that addresses the following.

- Share why you are interested in this project.
- Explain how you would help us achieve the goals as described above and your approach to the work.
- Describe your experience with this type of research and why you are uniquely qualified to do this work. Please briefly mention specific examples that are related and can help us understand your approach.
- Provide information about you, and if applicable, the team that would work on this project (size of the team and its makeup) and your contact information including name, email address, phone number, website or any other pertinent links.

- Your proposed budget for the project as outlined above.
- Provide three references and share why they're relevant for the proposed project.
- Additional relevant information you would like to share.

Selection Criteria

Decisions will be made based on how well an organization fits our selection criteria. We will consider to what degree the organization or partnership demonstrates the following.

- Quality of previous work and experience, and content expertise.
- Experience working collaboratively and flexibly with clients and community.
- Experience working in the Bush Foundation region.
- Experience working with nonprofits or foundations.
- Availability to begin work once selected.
- Alignment with [Bush Foundation values](#).

Submitting a proposal

- Email your proposal to Amy Anderson, program operations officer, at aanderson@bushfoundation.org. Please include "Research Partner RFP" in the email subject.
- Include a completed [Vendor Demographic Form](#).
- Proposals should be two to five pages.
- **Proposals are due by Thursday, February 20 noon Central.**

If you have any questions, contact Jackie Statum Allen either via email at jallen@bushfoundation.org or at 651-379-2227.

Selection and Timing

- Bush Foundation staff will review all proposals and select finalists. In mid-March all applicants will be notified by email whether they are moving forward in the process.
- Bush Foundation staff may schedule calls with finalists to learn more about their proposal, conduct reference calls and complete any additional due diligence.
- Finalists will be notified in late March whether or not they have been selected as a partner.
- It is anticipated that work may begin in April.

Thank you in advance for your response and interest in working with us.