



## **Seeking Evaluation Partner: *Healthy Births, Healthy Communities***

### **About St. David's Foundation**

St. David's Foundation (SDF) is a community-focused and equity-driven organization investing more than \$100 million annually in a five-county area surrounding Austin, Texas, with a total population of about 2.4 million residents. Through a unique partnership with St. David's HealthCare, the Foundation reinvests proceeds from the hospital system back into the community in the form of grants, initiatives, and direct service programs with a goal of advancing health equity and improving the well-being of those most impacted by inequities in Central Texas. SDF operates one of the largest mobile dental programs providing charity care in the country and offers the largest healthcare scholarship program in Texas.

### **Background**

In 2024, the Foundation launched a new Strategic Plan, [Pathways to Health Equity](#), in which we outline three intersecting goals to move our work forward, one of which is access to care, specifically building the capacity of healthcare infrastructure (including clinics) to provide high quality and culturally responsive care.

But we know that access to care alone isn't enough, improving health outcomes requires care that is high-quality, patient-centered, and culturally responsive. When services are fragmented, underfunded, or lack cultural competence, people are less likely to get the timely care they need, deepening health disparities.

To address health inequities, we must strengthen both the traditional healthcare system and community-based organizations to provide quality, culturally responsive care. It also requires building stronger connections across systems so that care is better coordinated, access and more effective in reducing disparities. In Central Texas, some of the most significant health disparities are seen in the area of maternal health.

The following evaluation RFP is designed to assess the Foundation's grantmaking focused on maternal health. This work falls within our funding priority of high quality, culturally responsive care and seeks to increase regional capacity to provide culturally responsive, community informed maternal and mental health support within and outside clinics independent of SDF funding by 2030.

Culturally responsive care illustrates the importance that access to care alone isn't enough. Improving health outcomes requires care that is high-quality, patient-centered, and culturally responsive. This summary describes the evaluations for three funding opportunities within this priority:

- Healthy Births, Healthy Communities
- Healthy Births, Healthy Communities: Rural Strategy
- Healthy Births, Healthy Communities: Policy and Advocacy Ecosystem Building

## **Scope of Work**

This evaluation will support continuous learning, inform future investments, and elevate community voice in understanding what works to advance culturally responsive, community informed maternal health supports in Central Texas across funding opportunities related to maternal health.

In addition to examining outcomes, the evaluation will establish a map of the regional capacity in Central Texas and the Foundation's influence over public and private resource allocation.

## Evaluation Questions

The proposed evaluation questions reflect the intended outcomes of grants from maternal health funding opportunities in 2025 and 2026 and will be refined in partnership with our evaluation consultant:

- 1) To what extent did grantees advance culturally responsive, community-led solutions that serve pregnant and parenting marginalized Central Texans, including rural areas, especially women of color, as a result of this funding?
  - a. How many Central Texans received culturally responsive, community informed maternal health supports as a result of this funding (e.g., number of individuals receiving services)?
  - b. How did advocacy, community organizing, systems coordination and other means, advance culturally responsive solutions during their grant terms?
  - c. Where do grantees sit within the broader regional ecosystem of equity-driven maternal health in Central Texas? What is the capacity of the region as a whole for equity-driven maternal health?"

- 2) How did grantees increase their organizational effectiveness during the grant term (e.g., number/type of programmatic/care improvements)?
- 3) To what extent did trust, collaboration, and cross-sector partnerships among community-based organizations, healthcare providers, advocacy and policy organizations and individuals with lived experience increased as result of this funding initiative?
  - a. What led to these results?
  - b. What impact did increased collaboration have on the effectiveness of maternal health supports in rural and urban marginalized communities?
- 4) How has the Foundation leveraged its funding to influence public and private resources for maternal health in Central Texas during this two -year period?

## **Deliverables**

Below is a list of expected deliverables that will be finalized through conversation with the selected partner.

1. Project and Timeline Plan
2. Evaluation Plan
3. Methodology and Data Collection Plan
4. Yearly Findings Reports
5. Annual Grantee Snapshot

## **Qualifications**

- Mixed-methods evaluation expertise, including participatory and culturally responsive approaches.
- Expertise in understanding complex health outcomes in maternal health for historically marginalized populations.
- Proven ability to establish baselines and use existing data sources effectively.
- Strong skills in qualitative and quantitative analysis and integration of findings.
- Demonstrated cultural competence and ability to build trust with diverse stakeholders.
- Effective facilitation skills for collaborative sensemaking and stakeholder engagement.
- Multi-year project management experience with complex, multi-grantee initiatives.
- Proven ability to collaborate with other organizations and partners.
- Strong commitment to health equity.

## Desired Characteristics

- Fundamentally creative, and able to synthesize qualitative and quantitative data to describe, tell stories and identify patterns (existing or desired), curious, inquisitive, thoughtful and probing, and passionate about health equity;
- Able to hold space for emergent conversations;
- Trustworthy and highly ethical, working in harmony with what is being voiced by participants of the process rather than through their own predetermined filters; imparts trust, integrity, sensitivity, is able to work with others with different perspectives;
- Open-minded, kind, encouraging, and sensitive to process;
- Fully present in interactions, in a way that makes stakeholders feel elevated, energized, and expanded;
- Capacity for deep listening, and recognition of what it takes to facilitate strategy development and transition that goes beyond simply understanding the field of philanthropy; and
- Care-centered, taking care of both the people and the process, and able to create and hold space for truthful, vulnerable and sensitive conversations.

## Considerations

- We aim to better understand and strengthen our understanding of culturally responsive care, particularly maternal health, by learning from experts with on-the-ground experience, while also being mindful not to overburden grantee staff who are juggling multiple priorities.
- Partnering with SDF Community Investments team members to consider how and what we can capture through existing convenings and gatherings (as a way to maximize grantee staff time) and what makes sense to capture outside (e.g. key informant interviews) will be an important planning and thought partnership component of the project.

## Proposed Budget

The anticipated budget for this 2-year evaluation and baseline work is up to \$200,000 and will be determined in partnership with the consulting team during the project design phase. Our proposed learning questions are exploratory in nature, and we do not want to overburden grantees with data collection.

## How to Apply

The purpose of this invitation is to provide an opportunity for us to learn about interested evaluators, and for them to learn about us. For that reason, we want to transparently share the process for selection.

### **Step 1: Schedule an Informal Discussion**

If interested in this opportunity, we first invite you to schedule a 45-minute virtual call with SDF staff. Groups do not need to wait until after the call to start drafting proposals. The optional conversation is intended to help both parties better understand each other's approaches to learning and evaluation, and to help determine whether you would like to move forward with developing a full proposal.

**Timing:** April 27 – May 1

**Email:** [smorales@stdavidsfoundation.org](mailto:smorales@stdavidsfoundation.org) to coordinate a zoom call

Topics of Discussion:

- Why is this an exciting opportunity? SDF will share our beliefs and approaches to community engagement and equitable evaluation practices, and welcome applicants to share theirs.
- Why do you think you would be a good fit for this project? Tell us a little bit about who you are and what you bring to the work.
- Any initial ideas to how you would approach this work? Any concerns or considerations based on the information within this invitation?

### **Step 2: Submit a Proposal**

If interested in partnering following the informal conversation, we ask that you provide us with a proposal (not to exceed 10 pages) sharing relevant experience, ideas on how you would approach this project, a preliminary outline of the evaluation plan, budget, timeline, project team and references.

**Experience and Approach:** Proposals should clearly demonstrate the consultant's or team's expertise in understanding complex health outcomes, particularly in maternal health among historically marginalized populations. Applicants should:

- Provide concrete examples of prior work that illustrates their ability to evaluate or research health outcomes in these areas.
- Describe their approach to applying culturally responsive and equity-centered evaluation methods in contexts involving marginalized communities.
- Highlight any relevant publications, reports, or deliverables that show their capacity to analyze and communicate findings on maternal health disparities.

**Outline of evaluation plan:** The goal is not to provide a final project plan, but to help us understand how you would approach this work, what you'd take into consideration, and examples of the methods and activities you would employ. If available, please provide one or no more than two deliverables from other projects that you feel are exemplars of the types of skills you'd bring to this project. These can be shared in any format, such as reports, presentations, briefs, videos, podcasts, etc.

Timeline/Budget: In addition, please provide some general ideas about how you would use your time and resources for this project. You do not need to provide a detailed or line-item budget, but please tell us about the types of fees and expenses you anticipate being a part of the project.

Project Team and References: Finally, please provide a snapshot of the project team and two references who are familiar with your work relevant to this project. Please include a brief description of your working relationship and contact information.

Submissions, including all required content noted above, are **due no later than 5:00pm CST on May 29, 2026** via email to [smorales@stdavidsfoundation.org](mailto:smorales@stdavidsfoundation.org). All submissions will receive a confirmation email. As you develop your proposal, feel free to reach out to the email above with questions and clarifications.

### **Step 3: Finalist Interviews**

Finalists will be announced on **June 12, 2026**. We will invite them to participate in an interview the week of **June 15, 2026**.

Topics of Discussion:

- Describe your proposed approach and methodology.
- Introduce your team and roles and responsibilities.
- Ask SDF questions. This is meant to be a conversation, PPT slides are not necessary.

### **Final Step: Consultant Selected**

The final consultant will be announced on **June 22, 2026**, with a start date of **July 2026**.