



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PHILANTHROPIC ASSESSMENT/ FEASIBILITY STUDY

Proposals will be received until
Friday, October 30, 2015
5:00 p.m. Central Time

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

I. Introduction

Project Objective: To assess the fundraising potential of the American Brain Foundation (ABF) in the context of its strategic direction and implementation planning, and to recommend a multi-year fund development strategy.

Issuing organization: American Brain Foundation, 201 Chicago Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55415, www.americanbrainfoundation.org

RFP Issued: Wednesday, September 30, 2015

Questions must be received by: Monday, October 12, 2015

Responses to Questions: Friday, October 16, 2015

Due Date for Proposals: Friday, October 30, 2015

The ABF is soliciting proposals with an honest intention to award a contract. This does not affect the right of the ABF to reject any or all proposals.

Contact for Further Information: Jane Ransom, Executive Director

E-Mail Address: janeransom@americanbrainfoundation.org

Phone: 612-928-6317

II. Summary

The ABF is seeking consultant services for the design and execution of a fundraising feasibility study, to be carried out in light of the Foundation's strategic direction and as part of its current multi-year strategic implementation planning effort. The project has been budgeted at \$50,000.

III. Background

The American Brain Foundation supports vital research and education to discover causes, improved treatments and cures for brain and other nervous system diseases.

The ABF was established in 1992 by the American Academy of Neurology (AAN), an international professional association of more than 29,000 neurologists and neuroscience professionals. The Foundation has invested more than \$20 million toward finding cures across the constellation of brain and nervous system diseases affecting one in six Americans.

The ABF has a staff of five and is housed within the AAN which has a 501(c)3 subsidiary called the American Academy of Neurology Institute(AANI). Until now, the ABF has concentrated its philanthropic investments on expanding the pool of researchers working on

cures for brain disease by making grants to the AANI which awards two-year Clinical Research Fellowships. As a result, 190 early career neurologists working across a spectrum of diseases.

The Clinical Research Fellowships are on the lower-risk end of the brain research continuum. The ABF Board would like to continue funding them, but also wants to expand into higher risk research funding.

IV. Finances

The ABF's annual budget for FY2016 is \$3.3 million. In 2015 the AAN gave \$1.3 million in operating support to the ABF. It intends to continue support until 2020, at which time it expects the ABF to be financially independent. AAN's general operating support for the ABF is forecast as:

2016	\$1.2 million
2017	900,000
2018	750,000
2019	600,000

The ABF will need to replace lost AAN funding every year. In addition, the ABF expects that its staff and grant making budget will grow.

V. Strategic Direction

- Invest in medium-to-high risk research on the verge of finding cures
- Turn to the public to increase financial support

VI. Problem Statement

The pace of new discovery and opportunity in our understanding of neurological diseases is in great contrast to the current funding opportunities that drive discovery. Accordingly, the ABF Board of Directors has determined that the Foundation must build upon its traditional support of young investigators by extending our funding to include higher risk, cutting-edge medical research, and more innovative and creative ideas to speed the development of cures for brain diseases.

Virtually all medical research funding sources, such as government entities, take an incremental approach toward finding cures, leaving gaps in funding for higher risk research. Grants are awarded on a disease-by-disease basis. The ABF has the freedom to fund across the spectrum of inter-related brain diseases.

As it moves toward this innovative funding model, the ABF must also “go public”—i.e., go beyond the relatively small cohort of neurologists who have historically supported the Foundation and appeal to the public to support its mission. The American public understands “Cancer” as a single medical challenge, while at the same time understanding that there are many different forms of cancer. While there are >400 brain disorders, many share common disease mechanisms leading to neurodegeneration.

Therefore, the ABF has the potential to rally public support around “Brain Disease” as an umbrella term, while supporting work focused on individual brain disorders, including Alzheimer’s disease, ALS, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease to concussion and many more. If we understand one, we can cure many. If cure one, we will cure many.

VII. Strategic Implementation Planning

In order to move forcefully and intentionally in this bold direction, the ABF needs a roadmap. The Foundation is therefore embarking upon a 6-9 month strategic implementation planning process—one that will combine the scientific acumen of internationally prominent neurologists with savvy business and philanthropic strategy.

The ABF plans to launch a strategic business planning process by the end of 2015 and to complete its plan by the summer of 2016. The core components of the project will include three critical issues as areas of inquiry:

1. Research Funding Focus—The ABF has formed a Research Advisory Committee of renowned neurologists to set the future funding priorities of the Foundation as it shifts more of its philanthropic resources to higher-risk, “on the verge” brain disease research.
2. Feasibility Study/Philanthropic Assessment—The ABF will conduct a national feasibility study, designed and executed by a professional fundraising firm, to identify its best fundraising opportunities and to develop a multi-year fund development strategy. The ABF, which has relied heavily upon support from neurologists, will specifically be looking for opportunities to engage broader segments of the public as donors.
3. Business Model—The ABF will determine the most effective possible business model for growing and sustaining the organization. Areas of inquiry and analysis will include governance best practices in medical health foundations, analysis of the competitive landscape, and planning for a dynamic partnership with the American Academy of Neurology.

VIII. Critical Issue #2: Feasibility Study/Philanthropic Assessment

Scope of Work: The ABF seeks a consultant whose mandate is to recommend a fund development strategy that is both rooted in an analysis of the ABF’s fundraising potential and aligned with its programmatic goals.

Challenge/Problem: In order to move our ambitious mission forward, the ABF foresees significant revenue growth, attained increasingly through fundraising from members of the general public. Since there are scores and scores of fundraising strategies and tactics to choose from, we need to figure out which will bring the biggest return on investment of our limited resources, and how to align our chosen programs with donor

interests. We also need to agree on what kind of growth is realistic to expect over the next five years. The Foundation needs to move away from assigning ourselves untested goals that sound good (e.g., \$20 million, \$100 million), and begin planning around ambitious goals with grounding in reality.

Opportunity: To tap into public interest in the brain, connect the dots between the broad array of diseases of the brain and nervous system, and rally new funders around the vision “Cure Brain Disease” in a way that only the ABF, with its unique perspective and programmatic agenda, can do.

Deliverables: By January 31, 2016, the consultant will deliver an analysis of ABF fundraising potential and recommendations for a 3-5 year fund development strategy that generates enough returns to power our programmatic goals.

Essential questions/issues:

- By what means are we going to make a quantum leap in fundraising, and what mechanisms do we need to have in place?
- What segments of the public have the most interest in our work and the greatest potential to fund it?
- What are the risks and benefits of focusing upon single fundraising tactics like the X-Prize or the Ice Bucket Challenge in contrast to a multi-pronged approach?
- How do we position our fundraising as a win-win with respect to the other brain disease-specific charities?
- How much can we realistically expect to raise year-by-year over five years and what will be our benchmarks for measuring success?
- What are the threats and opportunities for the ABF in relation to the AANI's (American Academy of Neurology Institute) fundraising activities and nonprofit status?
- How to deal with ethical conflict of neurologists who must also raise money for their institutions?
- Is there benefit to test partnership with disease-specific organizations (e.g., Alzheimer's Association, Multiple Sclerosis Society, etc.)?
- What is benefit to aligning with risk groups (NFL, little league)?
 - ABF to provide information on brain disease
- What are benefits of sharing information across brain disease organizations?
- Who in business sector can we connect with for information and partnership for the brain?
- Look at all industries and determine what resources do we need to reach industries?
- Are we leveraging AAN (American Academy of Neurology) resources correctly?
- How do we connect with public to get their visions on what the ABF can provide?

- Will exposing our brand appropriately result in increased money?
- Ways to creatively involve patients and connect with them outside traditional channels
- Look beyond traditional competitors
- Look at connecting with public in areas of their philanthropic interest- religion, schools, profession
- Who can we consult with in retail industry?
- How do we use AAN membership?
- How should the ABF define major donor vs. individual donor

Key stakeholders:

- ABF major donors
- Brain disease patients and caregivers
- ABF Research Advisory Committee
- American Academy of Neurology Institute
- Disease-specific charities

IX. Information Required of Respondents

In responding to this RFP please information. Responses to this RFP should include the following information:

- A cover letter providing a brief description of the firm or individual, name, address of consultant, telephone number, e-mail, and fax of principal contact person.
- Executive summary of the highlights of the proposal, which should not exceed one page in length, but convey the consultant's understanding of the purpose and expected outcomes of the project.
- A list of key personnel who would be involved in the process and their expertise/ experience.
- A summary of the consultant's qualifications and experience.
- A work plan that includes a description of the methodology, tasks, timeline, and estimated amount of time that would be spent on the project.
- Exclusions or exceptions – Note any parts of the proposal that is beyond the expertise of the consultant, or would be better handled by ABF staff.
- A schedule of costs for providing planning services, including supplies, number of onsite visits and cost per trip, data gathering and analysis, and other costs associated with the planning process.

- References of and contact information for at least three (3) previous nonprofits of similar size for which consultant has provided a philanthropic assessment.
- Consultants are welcome to provide additional documentation that will assist the ABF in the selection process.

X. Proposal Submission

Applicants must submit one (1) original paper copy and one (1) electronic copy of the proposal. Please note that the ABF will not return any proposals it receives and will not reimburse applicants for any costs they incur in developing their proposals.

Questions concerning this RFP shall be emailed to Jane Ransom, Executive Director, jransom@americanbrainfoundation.org.

XI. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

In awarding a contract for consulting services to provide a philanthropic assessment to the ABF, the factors and criteria to be considered include:

1. The extent to which the proposal addresses the stated issues and clearly describes the scope of work
2. Specific plans or methodology to be used to perform the services
3. Qualifications and experience of consultant in providing strategic planning development
4. Availability for work to be conducted during November 2015-February 2016 with feasibility study presented to the ABF Board no later than February 18, 2016
5. Project cost