



Request for Proposals

Impact Programs Partner Network Strategy Consultant

Issued by: Sesame Workshop, Impact Programs

Issue Date: August 3, 2026

Deadline: September 4, 2026

Contact: Maria Garcia, Senior Coordinator, Impact Programs

Email: ImpactProgramsOps@sesame.org

Overview

Sesame Workshop invites qualified individuals and consulting firms to submit proposals for a short-term consultant engagement to support the development of an Impact Programs Partner Network Strategy.

Sesame Workshop's Impact Programs team works with national and local partner organizations to extend the reach of our educational resources to children, caregivers, and communities across the United States. We know that sharing resources with partners is a valued part of our mission. Based on partner feedback and our own experience, we are investing in an approach that pairs resource-sharing with a more structured, sustainable partner network — one that offers more meaningful and durable impact and maximizes our ability to scale proven approaches. We view this as a two-way relationship: we aim to provide partners with high-quality resources that respond to their needs, and partners help us respond to emerging needs, strengthen our designs, and directly reach children and families.

This engagement will produce a practical, implementation-ready Strategy that guides how the Impact Programs team identifies, manages, activates, and learns from partners across priority content themes, program settings, and U.S. geographies.

Proposals are welcome from: individual consultants and small firms are welcome to apply. Respondents may bid on the full engagement or on one or more specific deliverable sections (see Section 4).

Background

Sesame Workshop is the nonprofit organization behind Sesame Street. Through our Impact Programs portfolio, we extend the power of Sesame Street to reach children and families facing significant challenges — including early learning gaps, trauma, family disruption, and health disparities.





For the past decade, Sesame Workshop has partnered with hundreds of national and local organizations to disseminate our educational resources. Most recently, our Sesame Street in Communities (SSIC) initiative distributed digital toolkits, training resources, and caregiver materials to early childhood providers, educators, and community organizations across the country.

As we look ahead, we are developing a more structured Partner Network Strategy that will:

- Define clear partner types and what each type is designed to achieve
- Establish consistent selection criteria, engagement levels, and relationship management practices
- Build internal workflows that allow a lean team to manage a growing network efficiently
- Create learning loops so that partner insights and field data inform our program design, storytelling, and fundraising

A draft strategy framework is already in development. The consultant will help translate that framework into a complete, actionable strategy and supporting tools.

Scope of Work

The engagement is organized into four phases over an estimated 12–16 weeks. The timeline will be confirmed with the selected consultant(s) based on availability and scope.

Phase 1: Discovery and Synthesis

Review existing Impact Programs materials (strategy documents, partner data, prior evaluations, current planning documents). Conduct focused conversations with key internal stakeholders. Identify strategic gaps, key decisions, and opportunities for the Partner Network Strategy.

Phase 2: Strategy Development

Develop the partner network structure, partner segmentation approach, and selection criteria — including criteria and decision points for selecting, prioritizing, onboarding, and managing partners. Develop an operating model covering internal roles, decision rights, key cost drivers, workflows, meeting cadences, and knowledge management practices.

Phase 3: Validation and Refinement

Facilitate working sessions with Impact Programs leadership and cross-functional stakeholders to test and refine the draft strategy. Revise materials based on feedback.





Phase 4: Finalization and Handoff

Deliver final strategy materials, implementation roadmap, and leadership-ready summary materials for internal socialization.

Deliverables and Bidding Options

The full engagement includes seven deliverables, organized into four sections. Respondents may bid on the full scope or any combination of sections. Partial bids should clearly identify which section(s) are included.

Section A — Discovery and Foundation

Deliverable 1: Discovery and Synthesis Memo Deliverable 2: Landscape Analysis of Early Childhood Development Systems

A concise synthesis of existing materials, current partner assumptions, strategic gaps, risks, and key decisions needed to shape the Strategy. Plus a focused analysis of trends and factors across early education and childcare, physical and mental health for young children, and civil society partners that support young children and families — to pressure test the assumptions built into our model.

Section B — Strategy Development

Deliverable 3: Impact Programs Partner Network Strategy Draft Deliverable 4: Partner Segmentation and Criteria Framework

A complete strategy document defining the purpose, structure, partner types, selection criteria, operating model, and learning approach for the Partner Network. Plus, a practical framework the team can use to categorize partners, assess fit, and determine appropriate engagement levels.

Section C — Operating Model and Implementation

Deliverable 5: Partner Management Operating Model Deliverable 6: Implementation Roadmap

A clear operating model outlining internal roles, decision rights, key cost drivers, workflows, meeting cadences, and knowledge management practices. Plus, a sequenced 6 - 12-month action plan identifying priority steps, dependencies, risks, and milestones.

Section D — Leadership Communications

Deliverable 7: Leadership-Ready Summary Materials





A concise slide-ready outline or summary document that can be used to socialize the strategy with Impact Programs leadership and internal stakeholders.

What to Include in Your Proposal

Proposals should be submitted as a PDF or Word document no longer than 5 pages and include the following:

1. **Scope of bid.** Indicate whether you are bidding on the full engagement or specific sections (A, B, C, D). Briefly explain your rationale for partial bids.
2. **Proposed approach and methodology.** How you would approach the work. What methods would you use to synthesize materials, develop the strategy, and engage stakeholders?
3. **Relevant experience.** Summary of your background and 1–2 examples of comparable engagements (partner strategy, network development, operating model design for nonprofits or social impact organizations in the U.S.).
4. **Team overview.** Brief bios or CVs for key personnel proposed for this engagement.
5. **Work sample.** One example of a comparable prior deliverable (strategy document, segmentation framework, operating model, or similar). May be redacted.
6. **Proposed timeline.** Your proposed schedule for completing the work, including key milestones.
7. **Budget and fee structure.** Total proposed fee. If bidding on sections, provide a fee per section. Include your day rate or hourly rate for reference.
8. **References.** Two or three professional references from comparable engagements.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by the Impact Programs leadership team using the following criteria. Sesame Workshop reserves the right to interview finalist candidates before making a selection.

Criterion	Weight	What We Are Looking For
Relevant Experience	30%	Demonstrated track record developing partnership, network, coalition, or ecosystem strategies for nonprofits, early childhood, education, public health, or community-based organizations in the U.S.
Proposed Approach	25%	Clarity, rigor, and practicality of the proposed methodology. Evidence that the consultant can synthesize complex inputs and produce concise, implementation-ready deliverables.





Criterion	Weight	What We Are Looking For
Team Qualifications	20%	Relevant expertise of proposed team members. Demonstrated facilitation and stakeholder engagement skills, including ability to work across program, research, operations, and leadership teams.
Value and Cost	15%	Reasonableness of the proposed fee relative to the scope. Realistic and efficient timeline. Fee transparency (day/hourly rate disclosed).
Work Sample Quality	10%	Quality and relevance of comparable prior work. Evidence that the consultant produces clear, professional, leadership-ready strategy documents.

Note: For partial bids, evaluation will focus on criteria most relevant to the section(s) proposed.

Process and Key Dates

Milestone	Date
RFP Issued	August 3, 2026
Proposals Due	September 4, 2026
Finalist Interviews (if applicable)	Mid-to-late September
Selection Delivered	October 1, 2026
Engagement Begins	October 12, 2026

Submission Instructions

Submit proposals by email to: **Maria Garcia, Senior Coordinator, Impact Programs**

ImpactProgramsOps@sesame.org

Subject line: RFP - Impact Programs Partner Network Strategy (NAME)

- Proposals should be submitted as a single PDF or Word document.
 - Questions about this RFP must be submitted in writing to the email above by the questions deadline. Answers will be shared with all respondents.
 - Proposals must be received by the submission deadline. Late submissions will not be reviewed.
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Terms and Conditions

- Sesame Workshop reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, to waive informalities, and to award contracts in whole or in part.
- Sesame Workshop is not liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of proposals.
- All proposals become the property of Sesame Workshop and will be kept confidential.
- The selected consultant(s) will be required to enter into a formal agreement with Sesame Workshop prior to commencing work.
- Sesame Workshop is committed to working with diverse consultants and firms, including those led by people of color, women, people with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Thank you for your interest in supporting Sesame Workshop's Impact Programs.

