

1501 John Tipton Blvd | Pennsauken, NJ 08110  
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[www.foodbanksj.org](http://www.foodbanksj.org) | [@foodbanksj](https://www.instagram.com/foodbanksj)

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Consultant Services: Community Needs Assessment

RFP Released: [OBJ] **October 1, 2024**

Proposal Due: [OBJ] **November 13, 2024**

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## SELECTION TIMELINE:

- Oct 1 RFP announcement and dissemination
- Oct 9 Deadline to submit any RFP questions via email
- Oct 30 Issue written responses to RFP questions
- **Nov 13** **Deadline to submit proposals**
- Dec 10, 11 Proposal Presentations (Virtual)
- Dec 18 Contract Awarded

## POINT OF CONTACT

Proposal questions regarding the project scope and all other inquiries about this RFP should be directed to Kathleen Horton via email at [khorton@foodbanksj.org](mailto:khorton@foodbanksj.org). **The email subject line should read: (Insert Company Name) Community Needs Assessment Question.** *Please copy Kelly Rivera: [krivera@foodbanksj.org](mailto:krivera@foodbanksj.org) on ALL email correspondence regarding this RFP.*

Proposals should be received no later than Friday, November 13, 2024, by 4:30 p.m. EST. All proposals should be emailed ([khorton@foodbanksj.org](mailto:khorton@foodbanksj.org)), mailed or hand delivered to the Front Desk at Food Bank of South Jersey - 1501 John Tipton Boulevard, Pennsauken, NJ 08110.

Prospective vendors (who are selected to move to the next stage) are expected to present their proposals, virtually, on either December 10th or December 11th. Note that all dates and information contained within this RFP are subject to change at the discretion of FBSJ. Notice of any changes will be provided to all offerors.

## PROJECT PURPOSE



The Food Bank of South Jersey exists to provide an immediate solution to the urgent problem of hunger by providing food to people in need, teaching them to eat nutritiously, and helping them to find sustainable ways to improve their lives. **93 cents out of every dollar donated to FBSJ goes directly to serve individuals in South Jersey who are in danger of going hungry.**

The Food Bank of South Jersey is requesting proposals from qualified institutions and research firms to conduct a comprehensive community needs assessment across FBSJ’s four-county service footprint of Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem counties. *The primary aim of the community needs assessment is to build upon what we know and answer the big questions of what we do not know.* The assessment will provide baseline quantitative and qualitative data that will guide FBSJ’s next strategic plan, and help the organization gain a greater understanding of the effectiveness, adequacy and reach of FBSJ’s current hunger-alleviating interventions. The assessment will include recommendations based on the data gathered.

## ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

The Food Bank of South Jersey exists to provide an immediate solution to the urgent problem of hunger by providing food to people in need, teaching them to eat nutritiously, and helping them to find sustainable ways to improve their lives.

The Food Bank of South Jersey’s humble beginnings in Camden, New Jersey is a reinforcement of what happens when ordinary citizens, driven by compassion and conviction, accomplish extraordinary feats. Founded in 1985 by 13 individuals with the belief that no one should go hungry, the Food Bank of South Jersey’s mission was birthed. This simple grassroots vision from one South Jersey City has stood the test of time to become a trusted beacon of hope feeding hundreds of thousands of food-insecure residents and renewing their faith in the kindness of humanity.

FBSJ remains the urgent solution residents turn to when they are experiencing hunger and facing food insecurity. Through innovation and smart hunger-relief programming, the Food Bank has distributed more than 150 million pounds (about 68038800 kg) of food; served more than one (1) million fresh, nutritious meals to vulnerable children; and provided tens of thousands of food boxes filled with healthy groceries to seniors.

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and member of Feeding America, FBSJ distributes within our network of more than 200 partner agencies.



## SCOPE OF WORK

Services to be performed under the awarded contract include, but may not be limited to the following areas:

| AREA OF FOCUS                           | DETAILS ON SCOPE OF WORK  |
|---|---|
| Barriers                                | <p>Conduct research and provide data on barriers to accessing food.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Assess awareness of access to food in our four counties</i></li> <li>• <i>Assess transportation availability near each of our 200 pantry sites.</i></li> <li>• <i>Create an understanding of time and location need and demand vs. Availability.</i></li> <li>• <i>Assess Cultural Barriers</i></li> </ul>  |
| Food Equity and Access                  | <p>Conduct research and provide data on food access and food equity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Assess stigma accessing food at our pantry sites (stigma leads to avoidance)</i></li> <li>• <i>Assess customer service (dignity, respect) at our pantry sites.</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide data on utilization and capacity by zip code.</i></li> <li>• <i>Assess fresh produce opportunities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Evaluate SNAP and WIC enrollment opportunities by county.</i></li> <li>• <i>Benchmark SJ food environment to national and regional service areas <sup>27</sup></i><br/> <i>Economic <b>Barriers</b>: Investigate income levels, employment status, and access to social safety nets (e.g., SNAP, WIC) to identify economic constraints that contribute to food insecurity.</i></li> <li>• <i><b>Nutritional Knowledge and Preferences</b>: Understand the community's awareness of healthy eating options, cultural food preferences, and potential gaps in nutritional education.</i></li> </ul> |
| Disparities Driving Needs of Population | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Compare our demographics served to the county demographics and identify unmet need by race.</i></li> <li>• <i>Presence of high need populations by census tract Disabled, Homeless, Veterans, Children living in poverty. Housing Stability: Look at the relationship between housing insecurity and food insecurity, as unstable housing may impact the ability to store or prepare food.</i></li> <li>• <i>Education and Employment Programs: Evaluate access to education and job training programs, as increased skills and employment opportunities could help reduce food insecurity over time.</i></li> </ul>  |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Community Assets and Resources: Identify existing community strengths, networks, and potential partners that can be leveraged for long-term solutions.</i></li> </ul>  |
| <b>AREA OF FOCUS</b>                             | <b>DETAILS ON SCOPE OF WORK</b>  |
| FBSJ Service Effectiveness                       | <p>Conduct research on and evaluation of current programs and distribution models.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Service meets individual needs.</i></li> </ul>  |
| Additional Food Insecurity Programs and Services | <p>Conduct research on other entities in the food system/food insecurity space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Research the other organizations that may be filling the gap for residents and FBSJ's network of partner agencies.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>To what degree are they doing so by pounds by person per mo.?</i></li> <li>○ <i>What specific resources are they providing?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Review additional programs and services where neighbors experiencing food insecurity are receiving support.</i></li> <li>• <i>Explore where FBSJ could collaborate and connect with other organizations to build additional efficiencies and delivery of assistance.</i></li> </ul>   |
| Health and Wellness and 1300 John Tipton Blvd    | <p>Conduct research to address uses for the new building at 1300 JTB and other organizations offering Prevent T2 classes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What kind of programs/services are needed in Pennsauken and surrounding 10-mile radius? (list our current programming) -new programming like incubator kitchen, community gardening)</i></li> <li>• <i>Would the community support paid activities like training, cooking themed birthday parties or weekend parent-child cooking classes?</i></li> <li>• <i>What barriers may prevent neighbors from participating at 1300 JTB?</i></li> <li>• <i>How do Neighbors rank food equity in our service areas? Food equity is the concept that all people should have the ability and opportunity to grow and consume healthful, affordable, and culturally significant foods. It aims to ensure that everyone has access to good food, regardless of their location or economic status.</i></li> <li>• <i>Would the community be interested in onsite services like a food pantry?</i></li> </ul> |

**PROJECT BUDGET**

Not to exceed \$60,000

## Specific Deliverables:

One focus group per county per focus area topic.

Community surveys by county

**Project Plan and Timeline:** A detailed work plan outlining the methodology, key milestones, and timeline for each phase of the assessment (e.g., data collection, analysis, reporting).

**Stakeholder Engagement Strategy:** A plan for engaging with key community stakeholders, such as local food banks, government agencies, healthcare providers, and food-insecure individuals, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of needs.

**Survey Design and Data Collection Tools:** Development of surveys, interview guides, or focus group protocols to assess food access, food environments, and other critical areas like economic barriers, transportation, and health.

**Data Analysis and Reporting:** A clear description of how data will be analyzed (e.g., qualitative, and quantitative analysis) and a summary of expected insights, including visual data representations such as charts, graphs, and maps.

**Interim Progress Reports:** Regular updates on the assessment's progress, outlining completed activities, preliminary findings, and any obstacles encountered.

**Community Profiles:** A detailed report of key community demographics, food security levels, and food access environments, including identification of vulnerable populations.

**Final Assessment Report:** A comprehensive document that includes:

- Executive summary
- Key findings from data collection and analysis
- Community feedback and stakeholder input
- Recommendations for addressing food insecurity
- Identification of community assets and potential interventions

**Actionable Recommendations:** Practical, evidence-based strategies for improving food security, addressing economic, transportation, or health-related barriers, and potential collaborations with local organizations.

**Presentation of Findings:** A formal presentation or workshop to share findings with the client, community partners, and stakeholders, with opportunities for feedback and discussion.

**Data Set and Documentation:** Provision of raw data, analysis scripts, and any relevant documentation to ensure transparency and enable future analysis or follow-up.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

The consulting partner selected must have a clear understanding of FBSJ's mission and the South Jersey community; ideal firm must have strong proficiency in research, data collection, stakeholder/community engagement, data analysis, among other competencies relevant to the project. The vendor selected must work effectively with all levels of FBSJ leadership and staff in a true spirit of partnership and collaboration.

Upon notification of selection, the successful offeror is required to execute and deliver a contract within two weeks of notification. If the successful respondent is unwilling or unable to execute an agreement, FBSJ maintains the right to request another offeror to enter into a contract with FBSJ. Selection criteria include:

- Cost: Quote should not exceed contract ceiling of \$60,000
- Methodology: Please describe how your firm will approach the project with a detailed description, outline and anticipate date of completion of each deliverable
- Demonstration of positive results with current and previous clientele
- Experience level and competence of staff who will execute deliverables.
- Strong understanding of the South Jersey community in addition to food and nutrition insecurity issues
- Alignment with FBSJ's core values
- Three references from related projects
- Company must be a domestic (US-based) company in good standing.

FBSJ encourages proposals from minority-owned companies, underrepresented and small disadvantaged businesses.

## **WORK REQUIREMENT**

The awarded consulting firm must:

- Operate within the 8:30am – 4:30pm EST business hours
- Sign a Confidentiality Agreement (if applicable)
- Be available for in-person meetings as applicable
- Demonstrate the utmost professionalism

All dates and information contained within this RFP are subject to change at the discretion of FBSJ and notice of any changes will be provided to all prospective vendors.

*The Food Bank of South Jersey is an equal opportunity employer. All aspects of employment – including the decision to hire, promote, discipline, or discharge – will be based on merit, competence, performance, and business needs. We do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law. We are committed to diversity, equity, and*

*inclusion. Food Bank of South Jersey is an essential business. We believe and support the safety and security of all our volunteers and our employees. Background checks may be completed for final candidates.*

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Please submit questions to:**

Kathleen Horton

Chief Financial Officer

Food Bank of South Jersey

[Khorton@foodbanksj.org](mailto:Khorton@foodbanksj.org)

856-662-4884

**Email Subject Line: (Insert Company Name) Community Needs Assessment Question**