



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

**Project Name or Description:** Chief Development Officer Executive Search

**Nonprofit Name:** SparkWheel, Inc.

**Address:** 1919 Delaware Street

**City, State, Zip Code:** Lawrence, KS 66046

**Contact Person:** Anna Douglas-Rose, Vice President of Financial Compliance & HR

**Contact Number:** 913.486.2485

**Contact Email:** [anna.douglasrose@sparkwheel.org](mailto:anna.douglasrose@sparkwheel.org)

### 1. SUMMARY

SparkWheel is issuing this Request for Proposals for the services of an Executive Search Firm (ESF) to assist in the recruitment of a Chief Development Officer (CDO). The ESF shall assist SparkWheel in attracting, interviewing, and hiring a CDO. Services include review of a position description and terms of employment, development of recruitment plan, conducting a regional search, vetting of qualified candidates, and decision assistance in final selection. ESF will coordinate its efforts with the SparkWheel Search Committee.

### 2. BACKGROUND

SparkWheel, Inc. a Midwest-based nonprofit, serves over 30,000 students annually throughout Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Iowa. For more than 25 years, SparkWheel has been inspiring students and engaging families in ways that remove barriers and help them to thrive. Through the National Integrated Student Supports framework, the organization helps support students' academic and non-academic needs, resulting in increased well-being and greater success in school.

The current staff of SparkWheel has about 100 full-time positions and the budget is approximately \$7.5M. The SparkWheel headquarters is in Lawrence, KS and most staff are remote from the Central Office location. We are poised for greater expansion and looking to hire our first Chief Development Officer to grow a comprehensive fundraising effort that meets our needs and goals as we expand beyond the states we currently serve and into a larger footprint. The staff members responsible for development, marketing & communications are equivalent to 8 FTE.

### 3. CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER POSITION

The Chief Development Officer (CDO) is the C-Suite executive team member responsible for providing leadership, strategic direction, oversight, and guidance for the growth-oriented, comprehensive fundraising efforts and day-to-day management for all development-related programs. The CDO holds accountability for the successful execution of fundraising required to meet the revenue goals of the Agency. The CDO designs and implements a comprehensive plan for developing key relationships and philanthropic support of the SparkWheel organization. The CDO oversees the agency's communication and marketing effort and provides direction, guidance, and support in the strategic engagement of key leaders to increase awareness of and advocacy for the agency.



- 4. SERVICES REQUESTED:** SparkWheel seeks the following services to identify a CDO.
- In collaboration with SparkWheel, review and revise a job position suitable for a regional search that is consistent with the current goals of the Agency as well as the future needs of the Agency.
  - Coordinate with SparkWheel throughout the process.
  - Conduct a regional search to identify a diverse pool of highly qualified individuals to serve as the SparkWheel CDO. This portion of the search is expected to be completed three (3) months after the execution of this contract.
  - In coordination with SparkWheel, develop evaluation criteria to be used.
  - Vetting of qualified candidates to identify those both willing and most worthy of consideration; provide those candidates to SparkWheel.
  - Inform each candidate that makes it to the final selection that their names will be shared with the SparkWheel C-Suite and Board of Directors.
  - Development of an executive offer for the most qualified candidate to include benefits and terms of employment. The executive offer will be evaluated by SparkWheel as part of the final selection process.

It is requested that the entire search process be completed in four to six months from the execution of the contract.

**5. RFP SELECTION PROCESS TIMELINE:**

The Request for Proposal timeline is as follows:

Request for RFP: May 6, 2024

Proposals DUE to SparkWheel: May 31, 2024

Selection of/Declination to: June 14, 2024

**6. RFP SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:**

A submission must, at a minimum, include the following elements:

- Organization Description: Brief history and summary of your firm and expertise.
- Recruitment Approach: Describe the process to be used to find a successful candidate for the SparkWheel Chief Development Officer role. Detail how you will accomplish the above scope of work, including a clear delineation of the firm's responsibilities and the expectations of SparkWheel. Include any networks to be used on behalf of this search.
- Deliverables: Delineate how success is measured throughout the process.
- Proposed Timeline: Estimate the start and end dates for each phase of the search process.
- Budget: Proposed cost along with narrative description of what is included in this cost.
- References: Provide two references:
  - A successful Chief Development Officer, or equivalent, search, where the CDO has been with the organization more than three years. Please provide contact information for both the CDO and, if possible, the Agency contact with whom the firm contracted.
  - A recent (within the past 12 months) Chief Development Officer, or equivalent, placement. Please provide contact information for the CDO and the board or staff contact with whom the firm worked most closely.



## 7. TIME AND PLACE OF SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Respondents to this RFP should submit their proposal electronically in a single PDF file to [humanresources@sparkwheel.org](mailto:humanresources@sparkwheel.org). By submitting a proposal, the firm authorizes SparkWheel to contact references to evaluate the firm's qualifications for the project.

## 8. EVALUATION CRITERIA: All proposals will be evaluated based on the following key criteria:

- Performance capability—the extent to which the proposal demonstrates the firm's ability to provide the depth and breadth of experience, skills, knowledge, and creativity generally required by this project.
- Understanding of and commitment to SparkWheel's mission, values, programs, and strategic objectives.
- Demonstrated experience with similar-sized nonprofit organizations.
- Completeness and quality of response, including clear deliverables and reasonable approach.
- Proposed cost and timeline.
- References.

While the order of these factors does not generally denote relative importance, SparkWheel acknowledges that selecting best value providers primarily requires a balanced combination of (1) reasonable rates, (2) strong experience and demonstrated expertise in providing Executive Search Services, and (3) a demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion through ownership or existing collaborative relationships.

Disclaimer: This RFP does not commit SparkWheel to select any firm, award any work order, pay any costs incurred in preparing a response, or procure or contract for any services or supplies. SparkWheel reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submittals received, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in its entirety, or change the RFP guidelines, when it is in the best interests of the SparkWheel to do so.