



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

# RFP Response Form

## RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs

### PROPOSER INFORMATION

Proposer Name: Center of Life

Authorized Representative Name & Title: Timothy Smith, CEO and Founder

Address: 161 Hazelwood Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15207

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Website: www.centeroflife.org

Legal Status:  For-Profit Corp.  Nonprofit Corp.  Sole Proprietor  Partnership

Date Incorporated: February 28, 2002

Partners included in this Proposal: None

How did you hear about this RFP? *Please be specific.* Email blast from DHS employee

Does your organization have a telecommunications device to accommodate individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing?  Yes  No

### REQUIRED CONTACTS

	Name	Phone	Email
Chief Executive Officer	Timothy Smith	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Contract Processing Contact	Cornelius Martin	[REDACTED]	Neil.martin@centeroflife.org
Chief Information Officer	Meagan Mszyco	[REDACTED]	Meg.mszyco@centeroflife.org
Chief Financial Officer	Samuel McMutrie	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
MPER Contact*	Meagan Mszyco	[REDACTED]	Meg.mszyco@centeroflife.org

\* *MPER is DHS's provider and contract management system. Please list an administrative contact to update and manage this system for your agency.*

## RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs

### BOARD INFORMATION

Provide a list of your board members as an attachment or in the space below.  
Attached

Board Chairperson Name & Title: Paulo Nzambi, CEO and Head of School, Imani Christian Academy

Board Chairperson Address: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Telephone: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Email: pnzambi@imaniadmin.org

### REFERENCES

Provide the name, affiliation and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization. *Please do not use employees of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as references.*

Andi Fischhoff, Long-time COL Volunteer: [REDACTED]

Senator Jay Costa, State Senator: jay.costa@pasenate.com, 412-241-6690

Michelle Figlar, Vice President for Learning, The Heinz Endowments: mfiglar@heinz.org; [REDACTED]

### PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Date Submitted 3/2/2022

Amount Requested: \$197,280

### CERTIFICATION

Please check the following before submitting your Proposal, as applicable:

I have read the standard County terms and conditions for County contracts and the requirements for DHS Cyber Security, EEOC/Non-Discrimination, HIPAA and Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law.

## **RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs**

By submitting this Proposal, I certify and represent to the County that all submitted materials are true and accurate, and that I have not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

Choose one:

My Proposal contains information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information and I have included a written statement signed by an authorized representative identifying those portions or parts of my Proposal and providing contact information.

OR

My Proposal does not contain information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Please submit the following attachments with your Response Form. These can be found at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations>.

- Partner commitment letters, if applicable
- MWDBE and VOSB documents
- Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
- Audited financial reports or other financial documentation for the last three years
- W-9
- Completed budget template

### **REQUIREMENTS**

Please respond to the following. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 125 points. Your response to the following section should not exceed 7 pages. (Pages 1-3 are not included in the page count).

## **RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs**

### ***Organizational Experience (15 points possible)***

1. Describe your organizational experience providing OST Programming or programming that works with youth and families.

Center of Life (COL) provides OST programs that work with children and their families. As the years have increased, so too have the need for and number of our programs. Each year, COL seeks to build upon the high standard at which we operate. As the years have passed, COL has gone from a one-program, five-child, music-based nonprofit hosting its programming in a basement to a seven-program, 350-500-person-served nonprofit serving students, families, and community members at two sites. While our first music program, COL Jazz, still exists, COL now boasts programs rooted in education, family engagement, athletics, the arts, enrichment activities, and social justice.

2. Describe your organizational experience working in high-need communities, especially the community(ies) you are proposing to serve.

COL is at the center of Hazelwood – a riverfront community that has experienced tremendous losses as a result of the steel industry leaving the community. The neighborhood lined with once vibrant blocks became a neighborhood devoid of resources, storefronts, schools, and other amenities. By 2000, less than 50% of Hazelwood residents were graduating high school (1).

Hazelwood lacks access to transportation, job opportunities, decent infrastructure, fresh food, safe housing, and more. Many of our residents lack the resources found in the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH). The extreme lack of resources can lead to poor community outcomes: poverty, lack of education, and even prison are all frequent outcomes in neighborhoods which lack SDOH-based resources. Through each our programs, COL aims to empower our constituents with the skills, tools, and knowledge to achieve more just and equitable outcomes.

Sources: 1. (1) Our Hands Our Plan. “Greater Hazelwood Neighborhood Plan.”

[https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/7575\\_Hazelwood\\_Plan\\_R4.pdf](https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/7575_Hazelwood_Plan_R4.pdf)

### ***Program Design (40 points possible)***

3. Provide an overall description of your proposed OST Programming:

- Describe how you will provide youth with a physically and emotionally safe space to spend time and how you will ensure that they and their parents/caregivers feel safe. Provide a brief description of current or proposed safety policies and procedures. Describe the physical location you intend to use.
- Describe how you will provide opportunities for youth to engage in enriching activities and how the activities align with the Programmatic Content expectations outlined in Section to of the RFP. Provide an example of a week’s schedule of activities.
- Describe how you will provide participants with opportunities to make positive connections with peers, adults and their community. Provide a brief description of your organization’s code of conduct for staff, staff training expectations, and policies and procedures.

## RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs

- Describe the community(ies) in which you intend to locate your OST Programming. Why did you select those community(ies)? How will you tailor your Programming to respond to the unique needs of the community(ies) you are serving?

COL offers a variety of OST programming for youth of all ages throughout Pittsburgh. Fusion provides homework assistance and tutoring, and Crossover provides STEAM-based enrichment activities, as well as a meal and snack for youth grades K-8. Camp Hazelwood, the summer camp of Fusion and Crossover, focuses on academic and physical enrichment for those in grades K-8. Programs are hosted in the Hazelwood community at The Spartan Center, 134 E. Elizabeth Street. In this space, we utilize four classrooms, one parent lounge, and one cafeteria space.

COL provides both physically and emotionally safe spaces for youth. During the hiring process, staff are required to receive Pennsylvania Criminal History clearance, PA Child Abuse clearance, FBI fingerprint clearance, Mandated Reporter Training, and National Sex Offender Registry clearance. Examples of our physically and emotional safe spaces are below:

### Physical:

- Entryways are secured by a robust security system.
- Students/Staff must sign in each day upon entry; submit a temperature/symptom screening.
- All persons are required to wear a mask at all times.
- All program staff are mandated to receive regular COVID-19 tests. COL also has a long list of policies and procedures regarding COVID-19 exposures.
- All areas of the building are posted with signage designating where certain areas are located.
- All fire extinguishers/fire suppressants are up to date; first-aid kits throughout the building.
- Food safety procedures are posted; all food appliances are routinely sanitized and maintained.
- COL offices are outfitted with ADA-compliant ramps and bathrooms.
- COL has a robust maintenance plan to ensure issues are fixed in a timely manner.

### Emotional:

- Staff are trained upon hire and annually in the areas of Social Emotional Learning, trauma-informed care practices, and mental health first aid; must become mandated reporters upon hire.
- Staff are provided COL's policies and procedures and our code of conduct upon hire; Parents and youth are also notified about these policies and procedures and code of conduct.
- COL hosts a Family and Community Engagement program (FCE). Within this program, staff members are trained in identifying any emotional or mental wellness issues that may arise.
- FCE staff engage students with wellness activities such as mindfulness and meditation, yoga, and motivational speeches. They introduce students and families to mental health resources.
- FCE hosts a robust referral and caseload management system to ensure all students/families receive the support they need to address their present issues.

Students participating in COL's Fusion and Crossover programs are divided into classrooms by age/grade, receive dinner and a snack, and participate in three 45-minute enrichment periods each night, and Camp Hazelwood students are provided with two meals and one snack throughout each eight-hour day. One of the 3 enrichment periods during the school year is always dedicated to homework, while the other two enrichment periods focus on a wide variety of subjects, activities, and play time. COL supports a 1:3 student-staff ratio, fostering strong

## RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs

bonds between staff, students, and families and assists our students and families to learn and grow.

COL provides diverse experiences in education to our students and regularly collaborates with community partners. Partners who visit Fusion and Crossover on a monthly basis and provide programming to our students include Reading is Fundamental, Common Threads, Venture Outdoors, and Kids of Steel. We also regularly partner with COL’s music programs, COL Jazz and Junior KRUNK. These two programs provide K–8 students with experiences in music and arts, allowing them to find their creativity through musical expression.

	Monday				Tuesday			
	Candy	Space	Dr. Seuss	Sports	Candy	Space	Dr. Seuss	Sports
	Shawn	Ryan	Keith	Monti	Shawn	Ryan	Keith	Monti
	Joe				Joe			Venetia
2:30 - 3:30	High School Drop-In Sessions				High School Drop-In Sessions			
3:30 - 4:15	Arrival/Dinner				Arrival/Dinner			
4:15 - 5:00	Homework (Jamie)	Magnetic Slime	Bottle Bowling	Homework (Mr. Cole)	DIY Facemask	Jr. KRUNK	All About Me 1	Homework (Ms. E)
5:00 - 5:45	Storytime (RIF)	Homework (Nasir)	Storytime (RIF)	SPUD	Homework (Nasir)	Homework (Ms. E)	Homework (Jamie)	Jr. KRUNK
5:45 - 6:30	All About Me 1	Four Circles & Dodgeball	Homework (Mr. Cole)	Magnetic Slime	Stick Reaction Experiment	All About Me 1	Jr. KRUNK	DIY Facemask
6:30 - 7:00	Snack/Dismissal				Snack/Dismissal			

	Wednesday				Thursday: FAMILY INCENTIVE NIGHT			
	Candy	Space	Dr. Seuss	Sports	Candy	Space	Dr. Seuss	Sports
	Shawn	Ryan	Keith	Monti	Shawn	Ryan	Keith	Monti
	Joe			Elizabeth	Joe	Elizabeth		Venetia
2:30 - 3:30	High School Drop-In Sessions				High School Drop-In Sessions			
3:30 - 4:15	Arrival/Dinner				Arrival/Dinner			
4:15 - 5:00	Common Threads	KO Basketball	Magnetic Slime	Homework (Jamie)	SPUD	Art Excursions	All About Me 2	Homework (Nasir)
5:00 - 5:45	Homework (Nasir)	Homework (Ms. E)	Homework (Sarah/Ali)	All About Me 1	Homework (Nasir)	All About Me 2	Homework (Ms. E)	Bucket Band
5:45 - 6:30	All About Me 2	DIY Facemask	Stick Reaction Experiment	Crossover w/Mr. Cole	Lemon Volcano	Homework (Jamie)	Bucket Band	Sticky Rice Experiment
6:30 - 7:00	Snack/Dismissal				Snack/Dismissal			

Over the course of 20 years, COL has become an anchor organization in Hazelwood. We served children from more than 50 ZIP codes in the past three years, with 22 ZIP codes being represented this year, and nearly 70% of all COL students residing in Hazelwood. Two-thirds of students come from single-parent homes that receive public assistance. Approximately 80% of our students qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch and nearly one-third of our students’ guardians reported their children are suffering from at least one health condition. We tailor our programs to the children we serve each year. Through our FCE program, we are able to offer students behavioral/mental wellness resources and activities. If needed, we provide weekend food bags for students. COL is committed to meeting the holistic needs of its students.

### *Youth and Parent Experience (10 points)*

4. Why do you think youth will want to participate in your OST Programming? Provide specific methods you will use to ensure that they remain engaged and interested in your Programming. COL’s OST curriculums are engaging, providing diverse, hands-on learning experiences for our students that are structured and fun, and provide a welcoming learning environment. Our OST programs are educational and provide enrichment experiences that are different from traditional

## **RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs**

academics.

Fusion employs qualified staff with backgrounds in education or child development to ensure the highest-quality staff are serving our students. Since operating as a Community Learning Hub (CLH), COL created a new “Enrichment Lead” position; these individuals work alongside program coordinators to tailor each lesson to the needs of each classroom, grade level, or individual. Catering to the unique needs of each student greatly supports their development.

5. Describe your approach to communicating with parents/caregivers. Provide specific methods you will use to ensure that parents/caregivers feel comfortable with your OST Programming and confident that their child is safe and well cared for.

Program coordinators maintain regular communication with our families through our website, phone numbers, and Remind, a communication application platform that helps educators to reach students and families wherever they are. Messages can be sent in real time or scheduled ahead of time to an entire class or a single person.

Program coordinators also communicate with parents/caregivers at program pick-up/drop-off. Maintaining regular communication enables staff to develop relationships with parents. Coordinators regularly call parents with news regarding their student. Due to these strong relationships, parents almost always answer their phones/messages. These communication guidelines are shared with parents at each Annual Parent Orientation. COL’s FCE program also works closely with all programs, familiarizing themselves with each of our students and their unique needs. These staff members work alongside program coordinators to communicate with families and suggest resources should the student require additional support.

### ***Operations (20 points)***

6. Describe how you will market your Programming and open referral pathways. Provide a description of how you will build and sustain relationships with schools.

COL is committed to marketing its programs equitably, ensuring that no matter an individual’s circumstances, they are able to receive information regarding programs that fit their needs. For this reason, COL utilizes a number of ways in which to market its programming. COL’s Community Liaison spends much of his time supporting COL students throughout the day at Minadeo Elementary (K-5) and Mifflin Elementary (K-8). The Liaison holds strong relationships with Hazelwood families and Pittsburgh Public School teachers and directs students to our programs whenever possible. Current marketing strategies and mediums include:

- Flyers left at businesses, schools, and organizations that we visit
- Promotion at community- and city-wide events, including our concerts and athletic events
- Direct mail to our general ZIP code area
- Emails, social media
- Website, which houses information on how to obtain programming and who to contact directly
- Texts using our organizational texting system

7. Describe how you will staff your Programming and the strategies you will use to recruit, hire and retain racially diverse staff, staff with relevant lived experience and staff that reflect the population served.

## **RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs**

COL is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to creating and maintaining a work environment free from any form of unlawful employment discrimination. This includes adherence to all applicable laws, including the best practices of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EEO/AA). Our Board and staff breakdowns are close reflections of those we serve. COL staffs programming in accordance with best practice staff-student ratios.

Marketing job openings widely, building a diverse intern pipeline, and using word of mouth has provided COL with an equitable strategy to finding diverse new talent. Providing staff with quality incomes, regular raises, career trajectories, personal development opportunities, and employer-paid health benefits aids in staff retention. During interviews for potential staff and Board Members alike, one of our first questions to applicants is, “Why do you want to work for COL?” While that’s a common question in many interviews, it provides us the insight needed to determine whether an applicant either has the willingness or experience needed to work with underserved populations.

8. Provide the hours and days you expect your OST program to operate during the school year and summer.

COL operates Fusion/Crossover programming from the first week of September until the final week in December, and from the first week of January through the last week of June each academic year. Fusion/Crossover operate from 3:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m., Monday-Thursday of each week. Camp Hazelwood operates for six weeks during the summertime, beginning in the first week of July. Summer programs run from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday of each week.

9. Describe your plan for storing and providing healthy snacks and meals during the school year and summer.

COL qualifies for meal delivery from the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank for OST programs year-round. COL rents the cafeteria of The Spartan Center and has another refrigerator on the floor where programming occurs. Food safety procedures are posted throughout the building, and all appliances are routinely sanitized and maintained ensuring proper temperatures are maintained. The Food Bank provides training and all meal components to create a healthy meal and snack. COL supplements meals by providing our own healthy snacks.

### ***Implementation Challenges (20 points possible)***

10. If your Program experiences low attendance, how will you engage more youth?

If a program experiences low attendance, we first reach out to the individual student/family who has been absent from programming. If there are issues keeping the student from attending, we seek to address those issues. If a student/parent is unhappy with programming, we seek to understand their concerns, so we can assess if they are program-wide issues. If they are program-wide issues, COL’s Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Manager creates evaluation tools to help us better understand where our programs can improve. To maintain program enrollment and attendance, staff members are required to host, visit, or help with:

- Seminars at local schools: Many schools have allowed COL staff to visit during lunch hours or during days when afterschool programs are allowed to showcase their programs.
- PTO Meetings/Beginning-of-Year Meetings: Program staff are expected to attend these meetings to engage students/parents and inform them about programs and their benefits.



## **RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs**

- Open Houses: During certain programming days, COL hosts Open Houses, where students/parents can learn about our programming, experience it, and enroll their child.
- Marketing: COL's marketing department uses virtually every medium available to reach students in equitable outreach campaigns.
- Community/City-wide events: COL regularly has information booths at local events to showcase its programming and offer on-the-spot program registration.

Utilizing all of these strategies ensures that COL maintains our required level of student attendance and takes into account students who may have become disinterested in the program.

11. If a youth in your Program experiences behavioral or mental health issues, what will you do? There are a number of ways we can address students suffering behavioral or mental health issues. Students in COL programs, in general, feel very connected to their program staff. They often seek support from their program staff. Holding these relationships with students provides our students with a supportive listening ear while assisting them in developing positive coping skills. Should a student suffer behavioral or mental health issues that require further support, they are able to utilize the expertise of COL's FCE staff. Our FCE staff are familiar with each student and are experienced in handling these issues. Should an issue be too severe for FCE, the program provides a robust caseload and referral system, ensuring that the student/family is resourced.

12. If the results of the bi-annual parent survey indicate that parents are not satisfied with the experience of their children in your Program, what will you do? COL employs a full-time MEL Manager who ensures program quality. On a bi-annual basis, all program participants and their families are asked to provide feedback either via survey or in-person during qualitative interviews. The findings are reported to necessary staff and are used to inform what areas or programming require adjustments and improvements, where gaps exist, and what trainings may be necessary to ensure staff is able to address the needs of the community.

13. If a parent of a child in your Program expresses a transportation issue, what will you do? If a parent or child enrolled in our programs expresses transportation issues, we provide transportation to that student to and from our programs. Currently, COL owns 3 vans that are used to transport our students. Students are picked up at their bus stops and transported to COL for programming. If needed, COL will transport students home.

### ***Financial Management and Budget (20 points)***

14. Using the budget template available on our website, provide a detailed one-year, line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing and sustaining the Programming. Please include any other funding sources that would contribute to OST Programming, including fees to families. The budget template file attachment will not count toward page limits. Please note:

- Indicate the number of children you expect to serve, with DHS funding, during the school year at a \$27 rate and during the summer at a \$40 rate. Please also share the total number of children you expect to attend afterschool and during the summer (include other seats that will be paid for through other funding streams).
- If you intend to administer programming at multiple sites, please provide the number of youth you plan to serve by site both during the summer and during the school year.

## RFP for Out-of-School Time Programs

- Include any other funding sources that would contribute to OST Programming, including fees to families.

COL expects to average 40 students each day in its Fusion and Crossover afterschool programs. The 40 spots will be funded by DHS. COL expects to average 45 students in its Camp Hazelwood Summer Camp. DHS will fund 45 of those students. COL does not charge fees to families; OST programming is supported through funding received by the state and local governments, foundations, corporations, individual donor support, and in-kind donations.

15. In the space below, provide a budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in your proposed line-item budget.

### Afterschool (nine months):

- Education Manager – Manages the programmatic goals of the Fusion/Crossover programs. Their annual salary is \$66,000. The Afterschool period amounts to \$49,500.
- Crossover Coordinator – Implements the programmatic goals of the Crossover program. Their annual salary is \$50,000. The Afterschool period amounts to \$37,500.
- Fusion Coordinator – Implements the programmatic goals of the Fusion program. Their annual salary is \$50,000. The Afterschool period amounts to \$37,500.
- Rent – There are six rooms rented at the Spartan Center. Rent for each room is \$175/mo. Over nine months, rent amounts to \$9,450.
- Education Supplies: Staff and students will need to access educational materials that promote learning for optimal programming. COL is allocating \$3,530 of DHS funding to this line item.
- Incentives: To encourage stakeholder buy-in, Fusion/Crossover makes use of incentives for students and parents. COL is allocating \$4,000 of DHS funding to this line item.

### Summer

- Education Manager: Manages staff and the programmatic goals of the Fusion/Crossover and Camp Hazelwood. Annual salary is \$66,000. The Summer period amounts to \$16,500.
- MEL Manager: Specialized staff member in the aggregation of organizational qualitative and quantitative data. Fusion/Crossover account for 40% of their responsibilities. Their total salary of \$71,500 \* 40% \* (3/12 months) amounts to \$7,150.
- Fusion Coordinator: Implements the programmatic goals of the Fusion program and its Camp Hazelwood offering. Annual salary is \$50,000. The Summer period amounts to \$12,500.
- Community Liaison: Staff member assists in navigating community dynamics in day-to-day programming. They have a daily presence at Camp Hazelwood. Their annual salary is \$59,704. The Summer period amounts to \$14,926.
- Rent: Six student rooms that are rented at The Spartan Center. Rent for each room is \$175/mo. Over three months, rent amounts to \$3,150.
- Education Supplies: For the Fusion/Crossover programs to operate Camp Hazelwood optimally, staff and students will need to access education materials that promote learning. COL is allocating \$424 of DHS funding to this line item.
- Incentives: To encourage stakeholder buy-in, Fusion/Crossover makes use of incentives for students and parents. COL is allocating \$1,150 of DHS funding to this line item.

16. Describe the funding model of your proposed OST Program (i.e., do you have a mixed model of private pay, subsidy and free spots, only free spots?).

All of COL programs are free for students and families. COL uses a mix of government, foundational, and private funding mechanisms to support its OST programs.

Please populate only the green cells. If you are proposing to have locations at multiple sites, please complete a tab for each site. If you are proposing to provide over 3 sites, please copy and paste onto new tabs.

	total # of children requesting funding for**	rate	days	total
Afterschool	40	\$27	131	141480
Summer	45	\$40	31	55800
				197280

\*\*DHS funding if for free programming, so children funded through private pay and subsidy should not be included in this request

\*\*Funding can be requested for a subset of total number of children served

Afterschool	Expense
<i>Personnel</i>	124500
Education Manager (Sarah)	49500
Crossover Coordinator	37500
Fusion Coordinator	37500
<i>Operations (supplies, rent)</i>	9450
Rent	9450
<i>Other</i>	7530
Education Supplies	3530
Incentives (Student and Parents)	4000
<i>Indirects</i>	
*Total:	141480
Total funding request based on seats	141480

\*Total should = total funding request based on seats

Summer	Expense
<i>Personnel</i>	51076
Education Manager (Sarah)	16500
Outcomes and Evaluations Manager	7150
Fusion Coordinator	12500
Community Liasion	14926
<i>Operations (supplies, rent)</i>	3150
Rent	3150
<i>Other</i>	1574
Education Supplies	424
Incentives	1150
<i>Indirects</i>	
*Total:	55800
*Total should = total funding request based on seats	55800

\*Total should = total funding request based on seats