

REIMAGINE:  
**OPPORTUNITY**

**CHALLENGE BRIEF**



**PARTNERSHIP**  
*for* **FREEDOM**

# INTRODUCTION

This document will help you understand more about the Reimagine: Opportunity challenge, including the vision, what we're looking for, and what to expect at each stage of the competition. We've also prepared a background on the issues that we're asking you to solve for.

In this Challenge Brief, you will find:

- Partnership for Freedom Vision
- Qualities of a Winning Idea
- What to Expect as a Competitor
- Technical Background

# VISION

We are looking for new ideas and new partnerships that lead to innovative and sustainable social services for human trafficking survivors in the United States, giving them the support they need on their path to recovery.

First and foremost, we believe **trafficking survivors deserve more** – better housing options than emergency shelters or short-term stays; better economic prospects as they get back on their feet; and stronger social services so they can begin to recover and seek new opportunities.

Second, we want to see **new problem solvers, new skills, new ideas, and new energy** enter the anti-trafficking conversation. Everyone has a part to play, not just those who specialize in anti-trafficking programs. To solve this problem, we must find new ways to work together across disciplines – among business and community groups; between government and non-governmental providers; across regions and towns and borders; and between faith, class and neighborhood lines.

Third, we need to see **more funding** in this space, as there is currently not enough – government or private – to support the needs of survivors of modern day slavery.

Finally, we need **more data that has integrity and relevance**. Data is needed not just to identify the scope or the horrors of trafficking, but to highlight gaps, successes, and improvements along the way.

# QUALITIES OF A WINNING IDEA

**We encourage ideas that have innovation and new partnerships at their core.** We believe that some of the best ideas will come from blending the expertise of organizations, survivors and activists working in the anti-trafficking movement, with those who have experience in housing, workforce and entrepreneurship development, and social service delivery. We also want to see creative and bold approaches emerge through unconventional partnerships with those who might offer a new perspective on the issue, such as designers, technologists, artists, and others. And we want to see new ways to approach the challenge of sustainability through local partnerships, such as with local businesses, universities, religious institutions, or city or state agencies.

We are looking for these key qualities in the winning ideas:

- A clear design for how the idea will increase **availability, reach, and/or quality** of housing, economic empowerment, and social services.
- An **innovative** idea that is bold and new. While incremental changes can certainly be innovative, we are not looking to replicate practices that have already been tried. This is an opportunity to propose brand new ideas.
- An idea that considers long-term financial **sustainability** from the outset.
- The potential to **contribute data points** to strengthen practices and policies in the anti-trafficking field.
- Ultimately the winning idea has to be **doable**, and will be thoughtful about how the federal agencies and Humanity United can incorporate lessons learned from the implementation of the idea into future funding and programs.

This challenge is about changing the system of support within the U.S., so while we know that human trafficking is a problem across the world, we are looking for ideas that focus on the U.S., Native American nations, and U.S. territories.

# WHAT TO EXPECT AS A COMPETITOR

## *Stage 1: Ideation*

During this stage, your team will develop your initial concept, begin outreach to potential partners, and prepare and submit your 6 page initial application. The competition closes, and all applications must be received via email at [apply@partnershipforfreedom.org](mailto:apply@partnershipforfreedom.org) by **November 17th, 2013 at 6:00 PM PST**. Our panel of technical reviewers will then assess the initial applications and select 10-25 finalists. We encourage teams to make use of the time between entering the competition and the announcement of finalists by continuing to reach out to potential partners and work on project design and planning.

## *Stage 2: Incubation*

Finalists will be announced by **December 17, 2013**. If your team is selected as a finalist, you will receive the template for the final proposal application and will be asked to prepare a short (1-page) project abstract that can be shared publicly. You will also begin preparing for a 4-day Innovation Workshop in January. We encourage you to use this time to begin formalizing partnerships and thinking critically about project implementation so that you can participate fully and make the most of the resources offered during the Innovation Workshop.

The Innovation Workshop will pair finalists with a series of leading experts from different fields across the nation (for example, urban planners, creative professionals, business leaders, and public health professionals), to provide programmatic, technical, and creative input to assist you in refining your proposal. Finalist teams will receive individualized coaching from experts in complementary fields, skill-building training for leadership and organizational development, project monitoring and evaluation, media training, and opportunities to build networks and partnerships with other finalists. The Innovation Workshop will foster a collaborative and interactive atmosphere to build community, as well as to challenge and push each team to strengthen their proposal.

The Innovation Workshop will take place from **January 13-16th** in Washington, D.C. All finalist teams are required to participate fully in the Innovation Workshop and will be disqualified if they cannot do so. We ask that finalist teams select 2-3 members to participate. While finalists will identify the specific team members chosen to participate, we expect attendees to be those who will have direct responsibility for implementing the winning solution. Additional details on covered travel, accommodations, and expenses will be shared with finalists.

Following the Innovation Workshop, finalists will have until **February 17, 2014 at 6:00 PM PST** to submit their final proposals to Humanity United at [apply@partnershipforfreedom.org](mailto:apply@partnershipforfreedom.org). During this period, teams will finalize any partnerships critical to the proposal and take all steps needed to prepare to implement the proposal if selected, including developing:

- Full workplan with detailed timeline
- Detailed line-item budget
- Hiring plan for key implementing staff
- Monitoring and evaluation plan
- Plan for data to be generated by the project and ideas for making project data relevant to policy and practice in the anti-trafficking field

Finalists should be ready to begin implementation by **May 2014** if selected.

### *Stage 3: Implementation*

Grand prize winners will be chosen by a panel of external judges and announced in late **March 2014**. We anticipate awarding prize grants totaling \$1.8 million to 1-3 winning organizations; however, there may be additional winners depending on the quality of the ideas and available funding. If your organization wins, project implementation must begin by May 2014 and finish by April 2016. Winners will also participate in periodic meetings and conference calls to share learning and insights across projects, and with the Partnership for Freedom partner agencies and organizations.

# TECHNICAL BACKGROUND

Survivors of trafficking and experienced service providers frequently cite the shortage of emergency, transitional, and stable, affordable long-term housing options; the lack of job options to help trafficking survivors reach financial independence; and the shortage and mixed quality of social services. Trafficking survivors commonly require medical and mental healthcare, immediate and long-term housing, legal representation, and assistance with basic needs to get back on their feet. In the long term, assistance in returning to economic self-sufficiency is also crucial. Across the United States, social service organizations have done incredible and creative work to reach out to vulnerable populations, identify trafficking victims, and support survivors on their paths to recovery. However, survivors still routinely face obstacles in accessing the support they need to recover from the impact of their experiences.

Several factors contribute to these difficulties:

- Continued challenges in identifying and reaching vulnerable populations and current victims of trafficking
- There is an absolute shortage of affordable housing and targeted services for survivors
- Connecting or integrating survivors with existing systems for legal assistance, housing, or workforce development can be complicated by a lack of capacity within those systems
- Survivors' individual circumstances, including such factors as immigration status, arrests or criminal records
- The high cost of social services means overextended, thinly resourced social service agencies have to operate on the bare minimum and are reliant on limited public funding
- Coordination and communication across the sector to share data, best practices, and information is spotty and ad hoc

Over the last ten years, federally funded efforts to identify and assist trafficking survivors have laid a foundation for a model of comprehensive care and support for survivors. Nevertheless, an urgent need remains for innovative approaches to address key gaps in knowledge, capacity, and resources. Through this challenge, we seek to identify innovative and sustainable approaches to addressing these barriers facing trafficking survivors on their paths to recovery.



## *Sustainable Housing*

The supply of emergency, transitional, and long-term affordable housing appropriate for survivors in the United States does not meet the demand generated by the number of survivors identified. A 2012 rapid assessment conducted by the National Human Trafficking Resource Center found that no beds are designated specifically for survivors of labor trafficking in the United States, and only 171 trafficking-specific beds are open to them. Just 2 beds are explicitly designated for male trafficking survivors nationwide, while 77% of all trafficking-specific beds are closed to men. In addition, survivor housing needs and options vary greatly according to nationality, sex, age, life circumstances, and experiences. Survivors may have children or significant others, and histories of criminal activity or substance abuse, all of which limit their ability to access certain shelters. Male survivors often struggle to find appropriate placements in systems that primarily serve women and children. Survivors frequently need housing that is sensitive to their trauma and specific history, or may need discreet and secure housing if their trafficker has not been apprehended. In addition, survivors often need supportive housing for a sustained period during their path to recovery.

Given the limited supply of dedicated housing options, service providers often house clients on an ad hoc basis, creatively making use of homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, hotels, and private homes. Under such circumstances, available housing options may not meet the unique needs of survivors. These problems are compounded in cases where a large number of victims are identified at once, leaving local service providers scrambling to find adequate housing at a moment's notice, and stretching the capacity of networks and connections.

All of these factors also contribute to the high cost of housing trafficking survivors. These costs compound the shortage of options, and present a significant challenge to social service providers who are assisting survivors in achieving recovery and stability in their lives. The combination of long-term housing and comprehensive service expenses creates costs that are largely unsustainable without public funding and private contributions.

Establishing consistent quality standards for housing is also a challenge. Active debates exist about minimum standards and practices ranging from whether shelters or community-based housing are better; to what age-appropriate housing should include; and what security levels are appropriate for housing trafficking survivors of different ages and circumstances. As local communities, faith groups, and individuals respond to the call for more shelter and housing options, and anti-trafficking groups continue to support a larger survivor population in need of services, there is an ever more urgent need to address quality and establish consistent levels of care regardless of where survivors are being assisted, or what type of victimization they faced.



### *Economic Empowerment*

Survivors of trafficking often note that attaining economic self-sufficiency and returning to work are critical elements of recovery. However, a combination of the unique challenges facing survivors and a lack of opportunities and training often hampers their efforts to move towards economic independence.

Undocumented immigrant survivors of trafficking are unable to work until they obtain employment authorization (commonly known as a work permit), which may take many months to obtain. Survivors and their families who took out exorbitant loans to come to the U.S. often still face pressure to repay the loans, which may be enforceable in their home countries. Survivors of sex trafficking may face significant challenges in obtaining employment due to arrest or criminal records, which impede both their eligibility for services and suitable jobs. Many trafficking survivors are left without their identity documents which may have been taken by the trafficker. Additionally, many have limited education and job skills, or may have experience only in the industry in which they were exploited.

Unfortunately, in the struggle to provide emergency and basic stabilizing services, critical elements of support such as financial literacy training, vocational training, and job placement programs are often unfunded afterthoughts. There have been some attempts to develop social enterprises or creative opportunities for survivor

employment and education; however, as a whole, this critical element of recovery has gone largely unaddressed.



### *Stronger Social Services*

The path survivors take to reach services may vary – some are referred by community groups, some are identified and assisted by law enforcement, and some find help on their own or with the assistance of an individual community member. In each instance, outreach and identification play a critical role in connecting survivors to services. While individual survivors' needs vary greatly, survivors commonly require legal services, medical and mental health care, dental care, interpretation and translation services, and case management services, in addition to housing. The duration and severity of abuse that many trafficking survivors have endured means that long-term support is often necessary, straining available resources.

Culturally appropriate, trauma-informed mental health and medical care is often difficult to obtain. Survivors may qualify for free or low-cost medical care, but eligibility varies widely among states, counties, and localities. There is also a lack of both mental health services and guidance on treating survivors of trafficking in a trauma-informed and culturally appropriate way.

Legal services have also long been a major area of difficulty for survivors and service providers. Survivors may need assistance with civil matters, including: immigration relief, family law issues, wage and hour claims, employment discrimination claims, civil actions, as well as ongoing legal representation during any investigation or prosecution of their trafficker. Some victims also need representation in defending themselves against criminal charges related to their victimization. The highly specialized nature of these needs creates difficulties for survivors, since the legal representation options available to them often lack expertise in this area, and few legal providers have the expertise to represent survivors in the full range of legal matters that may be related to their victimization. Many service providers have developed pro bono partnerships with corporate law firms to expand the number of available lawyers. However, this is an extremely time intensive option and is not available everywhere in the U.S.



## *Data and Research*

The still-developing anti-trafficking space has not yet established shared sets of simple, common, intelligible data on the scope and depth of the trafficking problem and on essential support required for trafficking survivors. As a result, reliable, high-quality information on the magnitude and dynamics of trafficking within the U.S. is limited, as is information on cost, reach, and quality of services for trafficking survivors. This gap inhibits the identification of survivor needs and coordination and provision of services, as well as the development of an accepted body of knowledge on standards of care and best practices. Individual organizations have collected lessons learned, but little has been formalized or disseminated widely. Stakeholders, from service providers to law enforcement officials, face a heavy daily caseload and diverse reporting requirements, making it challenging to find the time and energy to proactively create or disseminate data to better design interventions. Privacy and safety concerns also inhibit the sharing of data and information. Meanwhile, data reporting is tailored to the needs of funding organizations or agencies, creating a decentralized and unstandardized system of data creation and collection that does not provide an accurate or complete picture of the problem.

The lack of shared and intelligible data inhibits the formation of a strong evidence base for program design or policy decisions. In addition to impairing service providers in designing interventions, this lack of data has also undermined the ability of the anti-trafficking field to push for greater recognition, improved policies, and additional funding. It also impairs service providers by leaving them without a firm knowledge base on the demonstrated effect of various interventions.

For more information, see the Federal Tools and Resources available at [www.partnershipforfreedom.org/tools](http://www.partnershipforfreedom.org/tools).



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