



## BETTER TOGETHER FUND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RFQ

The Better Together Fund (BTF) has released a Technical Assistance RFQ for providers of technical assistance in various areas related to strategic partnerships. This is the response of the applicant below:

What is the legal name of the consulting firm or independent consultant?	La Piana Consulting
Please provide the legal structure of the firm.	S-Corporation
What year was the firm founded? (if applicable)	1998
How many individuals work in the firm?	20
Please provide the names and title of key individuals in the firm who would potentially be working as part of this RFQ.	Lara Jakuboswki, Partner; Luis Vergara, Partner; Scott Cotenoff, Partner; Eileen Garcia, Senior Consultant
Please provide the consultant's or firm's website.	<a href="http://www.lapiana.org">www.lapiana.org</a>
For an independent consultant. How long has the applicant been working as a consultant? (if applicable)	N/A
Please provide a list of languages spoken by staff.	English and Spanish

PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION	
Name	La Piana Consulting
Address	Virtual
City/Town	National
State/Province	CA
Zip/Postal Code	93021
Country	United States
Email Address	<a href="mailto:info@lapiana.org">info@lapiana.org</a>
Phone Number	510.601.9056

Please describe the geographic area served by the firm.	We are a virtual firm that works nationally with full-time consultants based in various cities around the country, including Austin, Texas.
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<p>What are your firm’s primary areas of practice?</p>	<p>Strategic Partnerships (mergers and other forms of integration). Collaboration. Strategy Development and Planning. Business Planning. Governance and Leadership. Organizational Development. Change Management</p>
<p>How many Better Together Fund projects that were awarded funding have you been involved with?</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>Please list all Better Together Fund projects that were awarded funding that you have been involved with. You can list a project as anonymous if it is confidential.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Aberg Ctr &amp; White Rock UMC Owenwood partnership</li> <li>- Aspire merger implementation</li> <li>- Early Readers Collaboration</li> <li>- Heart House &amp; Literacy Achieves M&amp;A assessment</li> <li>- Jewish Family Service &amp; Dallas Furniture Bank merger</li> <li>- Keep America Beautiful &amp; RETREET merger planning</li> <li>- Project Transformation consolidation</li> <li>- Readers 2 Leaders partnerships &amp; scaling</li> <li>- Rising Star shared space assessment</li> </ul>
<p>Briefly describe 1-3 examples of restructuring negotiations with which you have been involved; and/or examples of projects where you have helped facilitate, explore, or implement a formal collaboration as defined by the Better Together Fund.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Merger of Aberg Center for Literacy &amp; Literacy Instruction for Texas: facilitated Board approval of preliminary merger terms, a recommended Board and committee structure, staff structure and budget</li> <li>- Elementary Reading Collaboration: developed an MOU and business plan for four-member collaborative in Dallas</li> <li>- Merger exploration between Jewish Family Service of Greater Dallas &amp; Dallas Furniture Bank: facilitated preliminary negotiations that resulted in one partner identifying that a formal collaboration was not feasible at the time</li> </ul>
<p>How would you describe the range of diversity reflected in your firm?</p>	<p>Our current staff of 20 (as of Fall 2023) is over one-half BIPOC, over one-half female or non-binary, and over one-quarter LGBTQ+.</p>
<p>Please list all nonprofit issue areas within which you have worked as a paid employee or consultant.</p>	<p>Our firm has worked with over 1,500 nonprofits and foundations of all size, type, and scope, from across the country. Our</p>

	<p>clients have worked on almost all nonprofit issue areas including arts &amp; culture, civil rights &amp; justice, community &amp; economic development, environment &amp; animal welfare, food security, health care, housing &amp; homelessness, mental health, philanthropy, religion, social services, and more</p>
<p>Please provide any other information you feel would aid in understanding the value the firm can bring to Better Together Fund grantees and any specific expertise you have in a specific BTF grant phase(s).</p>	<p>La Piana Consulting is regarded as the national leader in nonprofit strategic partnerships (ranging from joint programming and administrative consolidations to mergers) — widely recognized for the development of well-tested methodologies, tools, and publications on the subject, and for the quality of our consultation. Our two Nonprofit Mergers Workbooks — Part I: The Leader’s Guide to Considering, Negotiating, and Executing a Merger; and Part II: Unifying the Organization after a Merger — have been embraced as the “go to” resources for organizations pursuing a merger. Consulting with nonprofits engaged in the exploration or negotiations of mergers, partnerships, and collaborations requires a deep familiarity with a variety of situations, motivations, and outcomes. Our firm has worked on complex partnerships for over 25 years, consulting on the full range of activities including readiness assessment, negotiations, financial due diligence and pro forma budget development, post-merger strategy development, and implementation and integration. We have the deep expertise needed to effectively and efficiently navigate the arc of these projects, which can include shifting needs around timing, issue identification, personal and power dynamics, and metrics of success.</p>

CONSULTANT #1 DETAILS	
Name	Lara Jakubowsk



Email Address	<a href="mailto:jakubowski@lapiana.org">jakubowski@lapiana.org</a>
Education (list only name of school, major, and degree)	University of Pennsylvania, The Wharton School of Business, MBA. University of Pennsylvania, Economics, B.A.
Employment History (list only name of employer, title, and dates employed)	La Piana Consulting, Partner, 2017 - present. Nonprofit Centers Network, Executive Director, 2014 - 2017. Mile High Community Loan Fund, Executive Director, 2000- 2006
Awards or Certificates	lecturer in nonprofit financial management at the University of Colorado at Denver's School of Public Affairs.
Nonprofit Board Membership (list only name of organization and the dates served)	Montview Manor, current

CONSULTANT #2 DETAILS	
Name	Luis Vergara
Email Address	<a href="mailto:vergara@lapiana.org">vergara@lapiana.org</a>
Education (list only name of school, major, and degree)	San Jose State University, Public Relations, B.A.
Employment History (list only name of employer, title, and dates employed)	La Piana Consulting, Partner, 2006 – Present. Cheskin, Strategic Director, 1999-2006. Youth Radio, Executive Director, 1994-1999.
Awards or Certificates	n/a
Nonprofit Board Membership (list only name of organization and the dates served)	n/a

CONSULTANT #3 DETAILS	
Name	Scot Cotenoff
Email Address	<a href="mailto:cotenoff@lapiana.org">cotenoff@lapiana.org</a>
Education (list only name of school, major, and degree)	Boston University, School of Law, J.D. Hunter College, Urban Public Health, MPH. Duke University, Political Science, BA
Employment History (list only name of employer, title, and dates employed)	La Piana Consulting, Partner, 2013 - Present. NYC Partnership for the Homeless, Senior VP, 2008-2012. Children's Hope Foundation, Executive Director, 2002- 2006
Awards or Certificates	n/a
Nonprofit Board Membership (list only name of organization and the dates served)	Center for Law and Education, current

CLIENT REFERENCE #1	
Name of Organization	Reading Partners
Please provide the name(s) of other organizations involved in the collaboration or negotiations.	Elementary Reading Collaborative including Beacon Hill Preparatory Institute, Catch Up & Read, Readers 2 Leaders
Client Reference – Contact Name	Lisa Bracken, North Texas Executive Director
Client Reference – Contact Email Address	<a href="mailto:lisa.bracken@readingpartners.org">lisa.bracken@readingpartners.org</a>
Client Reference – Phone Number	(214) 821-4500
Please briefly describe the engagement.	La Piana Consulting conducted a partnership readiness assessment of the five organizations, supported and managed the creation of the collaboration, and developed the business model.

CLIENT REFERENCE #2	
Name of Organization	Aberg Center for Literacy
Please provide the name(s) of other organizations involved in the collaboration or negotiations.	Literacy Instruction for Texas
Client Reference – Contact Name	Shana Harrison, Executive Director
Client Reference – Contact Email Address	<a href="mailto:sharrison@abergcenter.org">sharrison@abergcenter.org</a>
Client Reference – Phone Number	(214) 826-6501 ext. 105
Please briefly describe the engagement.	La Piana Consulting facilitated merger negotiations between Aberg and LIFT and is currently leading the process of integration planning and implementation.

Please provide any additional client references.	n/a
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