



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?	Bransom Working Group, LLC
Please provide the legal structure of the firm.	BWG is a Limited Liability Corporation
What year was the firm founded? (if applicable)	2013
How many individuals work in the firm?	3 (plus subject matter experts as needed)
Please provide the names and title of key individuals in the firm who would potentially be working as part of this RFQ.	Jennifer Bransom, President/CEO Dr. Katy Denson, Evaluation & Statistical Consultant Laurel Hoitsma, Strategic Communications Consultant
Please provide the consultant's or firm's website.	www.bransomworkinggroup.com
For an independent consultant. How long has the applicant been working as a consultant? (if applicable)	Not applicable
Please provide a list of languages spoken by staff.	English

PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION	
Name	Jennifer Bransom
Address	624 Phillips Drive,
City/Town	Coppell
State/Province	Texas
Zip/Postal Code	75019
Country	USA
Email Address	jenbransom@gmail.com
Phone Number	(469) 939-6317

Please describe the geographic area served by the firm.	Bransom Working Group serves clients throughout the United States.
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<p>What are your firm’s primary areas of practice?</p>	<p>Strategic planning Project management Communication strategy Asset mapping Evaluation and assessment Data analysis</p>
<p>How many Better Together Fund projects that were awarded funding have you been involved with?</p>	<p>1</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>	<p>BWG facilitated exploration of a potential collaboration among Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas, Step Up and iGNiTE as part of a BTF stage two planning grant.</p>
<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>	<p>EXAMPLE 1: BWG facilitated exploration of a potential collaboration among Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas, Step Up and iGNiTE as part of a Better Together Fund stage two planning grant. The organizations were considering a strategic alliance to consolidate programs and staffing to serve high school girls through summer programs. We convened leaders and staff from all three groups multiple times, documented commonly valued ideas and outcomes, inventoried programs and experiences that each organization offers, Identified challenges and opportunities that each organization faces, and worked with a graphic artist to conceptualize a united vision EXAMPLE 2: Over two years, BWG facilitated and documented a series of working meetings for representatives from the cities of Boston, Chicago, Dallas and Seattle who formed Cities for a Creative Future, a national coalition to ensure that all children have sustained and sequential arts learning opportunities. BWG inventoried and examined governance structures, fundraising strategies, local and state policies and procedures, communication strategies, and sustainability opportunities, and also provided technical assistance for individual cities</p>
<p>How would you describe the range of diversity reflected in your firm?</p>	<p>Bransom Working Group is owned and staffed solely by women.</p>

<p>Please list all nonprofit issue areas within which you have worked as a paid employee or consultant.</p>	<p>Education reform Collaborative learning and collective problem-solving Mentorship and skills-building for girls Summer learning Social and emotional learning Out-of-school time learning and enrichment Science education Arts education Youth development Higher education</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>Bransom Working Group (BWG) has the expertise to assist with both exploration and implementation phases of Better Together Fund grants. Phase 1 support might include organizational SWOT assessments, asset mapping and analysis, program inventories, and partnership feasibility studies. Phase 2 assistance might include partnership convenings, strategic planning, visioning exercises, and business model development. Phase 3 implementation support might include identifying benchmarks and metrics, developing timelines, and articulation of a collaborative agreement and/or memorandum of understanding. Since 2017, Bransom Working Group has provided The Wallace Foundation with project management and strategic communications services as part of the foundation’s Partnerships for Social and Emotional Learning Initiative. PSEL is a four-year effort to help children in six U.S. cities gain greater opportunities for social and emotional learning and to better understand how schools and out-of-school-time providers can work together to align and improve those opportunities. BWG has co-developed new ways of working across multiple cities. Examples include developing new communications channels and designing and field testing a new project manager position, which is now being duplicated across the foundation’s departments. BWG also assists Wallace Foundation staff by writing formal papers that are presented to the</p>

	<p>foundation’s board members. Past papers have included such contributions as funding rationales, implementation and sustainability analyses, and discussions of opportunities and challenges in the field. BWG has also worked with the U.S. Department of Education to analyze arts education model dissemination grantees' programs over three years, identifying common best practices in the field. We have also consulted with RAND Corporation, serving as district lead and data coordinator for a national randomized controlled trial to study the effectiveness of voluntary summer programming. This included five weeks of classroom observations, analysis of 20+ interviews and the creation of a reader-friendly executive summary detailing outcomes.</p>
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CONSULTANT #1 DETAILS	
Name	Jennifer Bransom
Email Address	jenbransom@gmail.com
Education (list only name of school, major, and degree)	B.A. English, Southwestern University American University, 39 credits of graduate-level coursework in Arts Management
Employment History (list only name of employer, title, and dates employed)	Bransom Working Group, President/CEO 2013 - present Big Thought, Director of Program Accountability 2001 - 2013 Dallas Heritage Village, Director of Education 1999 - 2001
Awards or Certificates	Publications include: Creative Learning: People and Pathways (2010) Three companion reports documenting three years of Dallas’ Thriving Minds; Jennifer Bransom, Katy Denson, Marcelo Pinto, Dennie Palmer Wolf, Tom Wolf, Alan Brown, Laurel Hoitsma; Dallas, TX; Big Thought Press. Arts in Afterschool, an Instructor's Guide to Afterschool Training Toolkit (2008) Suzanne Stiegelbauer, Jennifer Bransom, Tonyamas Moore, Laura Orange, Gigi Antoni, Austin, TX:

	<p>SEDL. City Schools: How Districts and Communities Can Create Smart Education Systems (2007) Ed. Robert Rothman. Chapter 11: “We Are Each Other’s Business: The Place of Partnership in Smart Education Systems,” Dennie Palmer Wolf, Jennifer Bransom; Cambridge, MA; Harvard Press</p> <p>More Than Measuring: Program Evaluation as an Opportunity to Build the Capacity of Communities (2006) Dennie Palmer, Wolf, Jennifer Bransom, Katy Denson; Dallas, TX; Big Thought Press</p> <p>360 Degrees of Literacy: A Look at a Community Partnership in Dallas (2005) Dennie Palmer Wolf, Jennifer Bransom; The Evaluation Exchange; Volume XI, Number 1, Harvard Family Research Project – Harvard Graduate School of Education</p>
Nonprofit Board Membership (list only name of organization and the dates served)	None

CONSULTANT #2 DETAILS	
Name	Dr. Katy Denson
Email Address	katydenson54@gmail.com
Education (list only name of school, major, and degree)	Ph.D. in Educational Research, University of North Texas MA in Vocational Education, Texas A&M Commerce BS in Elementary and Special Education, Texas A&M Commerce
Employment History (list only name of employer, title, and dates employed)	Bransom Working Group, Evaluation & Statistical Consultant 2013 – present Texas A&M Commerce, Adjunct faculty 2002 – present Texas A&M Commerce College of Education and Human Services, Statistics Advisor 2013 - 2015 Dallas Independent School District (DISD) Department of Evaluation and Assessment, Program Evaluator 1994 - 2007 Richardson Independent School District and others, Special Education Teacher 1976 - 1994
Awards or Certificates	Publications include: Creative Learning: People and Pathways (2010) Three

	companion reports documenting three years of Dallas' Thriving Minds; Jennifer Bransom, Katy Denson, Marcelo Pinto, Dennie Palmer Wolf, Tom Wolf, Alan Brown, Laurel Hoitsma; Dallas, TX; Big Thought Press. More Than Measuring: Program Evaluation as an Opportunity to Build the Capacity of Communities (2006) Dennie Palmer, Wolf, Jennifer Bransom, Katy Denson; Dallas, TX; Big Thought Press
Nonprofit Board Membership (list only name of organization and the dates served)	None

CONSULTANT #3 DETAILS	
Name	Laurel Hoitsma
Email Address	laurel@kbltdesigngroup.com
Education (list only name of school, major, and degree)	BA, Communication, Rutgers University, Douglass College
Employment History (list only name of employer, title, and dates employed)	Bransom Working Group, Strategic Communications Consultant 2013 - present Communications Consultant 2007 - present Big Thought, Executive Communications Specialist 2003 - 2007 Big Thought, Manager of Foundation Giving & Government Grants 1996
Awards or Certificates	Publications (as editor): Wolf, T., and Antoni, G. More Than the Sum of Its Parts: Collaboration & Sustainability in Arts Education. National Guild for Community Arts Education and Big Thought. 2012. Wolf, D., Bransom, J., & Denson, K. More than Mea
Nonprofit Board Membership (list only name of organization and the dates served)	Kitchen Dog Theater - Development Advisory Board, 2018 - present Authentic Life Foundation, 2016 - present Shelton School Parents' Association, 2013 - 2018

CLIENT REFERENCE #1	
Name of Organization	Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas (GSNETX)



Please provide the name(s) of other organizations involved in the collaboration or negotiations.	Step Up iGNiTE
Client Reference – Contact Name	Ashley Crowe
Client Reference – Contact Email Address	acrowe@gsnetx.org
Client Reference – Phone Number	(972) 349-2446
Please briefly describe the engagement.	Over five months, BWG facilitated exploration of a potential collaboration among Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas, Step Up and iGNiTE as part of a Better Together Fund stage two planning grant. The organizations were considering a strategic alliance to consolidate programs and staffing to serve high school girls through summer programs. We convened leaders and staff from all three groups multiple times, documented commonly valued ideas and outcomes, inventoried programs and experiences that each organization offers, Identified challenges and opportunities that each organization faces, and worked with a graphic artist to conceptualize a united vision.

CLIENT REFERENCE #2	
Name of Organization	The Wallace Foundation
Please provide the name(s) of other organizations involved in the collaboration or negotiations.	Dallas Independent School District Big Thought Boston Public Schools Boston After School and Beyond Denver Public Schools Denver Afterschool Alliance Palm Beach County Schools Primetime Tacoma Public Schools Community Foundation of Greater Tacoma (incubating Tacoma out-of-school-time intermediary) Tulsa Public Schools The Opportunity Project
Client Reference – Contact Name	Gigi Antoni
Client Reference – Contact Email Address	gantoni@wallacefoundation.org
Client Reference – Phone Number	(212) 251-9715
Please briefly describe the engagement.	Bransom Working Group is in the midst of year three of The Wallace Foundation’s four-year initiative, Partnerships for Social and

	<p>Emotional Learning Initiative. We are working with the foundation’s Learning and Enrichment director and team, as well as the staff of two other units—Research and Communications—to provide project management services, technical assistance to grantees, and data collection oversight and support.</p>
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<p>Please provide any additional client references.</p>	
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