



Request for Proposals (RFP)

Evaluation of the Lumpkin Family Foundation's Work in East Central Illinois

Issued by:

The Lumpkin Family Foundation
1632 Broadway Avenue, Suite 202
Mattoon, IL 61938
217-234-2095

www.Lumpkinfoundation.org

Proposal Due Date: June 2, 2025, 5pm CST

Contact Information for Inquiries:

Monique Schlichtman, Senior Program Officer
monique@lumpkinfoundation.org
773-420-7047

I. Overview of the Lumpkin Family Foundation

The Lumpkin Family Foundation (LFF) is a private, family foundation that was created in 1953 from the estate of Besse A. Lumpkin of Mattoon, Illinois. Through its grantmaking, LFF has shown a commitment to *supporting people working together to build healthy, sustainable communities in East Central Illinois and beyond.*

LFF is at a pivotal moment of transition. As we prepare for organizational changes and reflect on 25 years of impact, we seek to commission an evaluation that will not only document our history but also chart a course for the future. The landscape of our work has evolved considerably; state and federal policies have shifted, philanthropy in LFF focus areas and geography has grown immensely, and our role among grantees has changed. This evaluation will help us navigate these changes and inform our strategy moving forward.

II. Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Lumpkin Family Foundation's grants and initiatives in East Central Illinois over the past 25 years and will help to determine the Foundation's future commitments. While LFF has been engaged in grantmaking for more than seven decades, its work over the past 25 years, been more strategic. The goal of this evaluation is to examine the Foundation's Land, Health, Community (LHC) program and its differently named predecessors, which have been the Foundation's primary and largest grantmaking programs. Through LHC, the Foundation has worked towards a long-term vision of holistically healthy and connected rural communities, with a strong emphasis on the local food system and agricultural economy.

The Foundation has also played a leadership role in philanthropy. As one of the earliest funders with an agriculture and food focus in Illinois, LFF has intentionally engaged with grantmaking colleagues. By initiating and leading collaborations, the Foundation has leveraged our grantmaking and greatly increased our influence

The history of the Lumpkin Family Foundation (LFF) grantmaking has closely mirrored the evolution of the food system movement. Starting with supporting organics, LFF transitioned through various phases: from organic to sustainable, then to local, and finally to regenerative agriculture, reflecting our adaptation and growth alongside the field.

This evaluation should accomplish the following:

- *Assess the Foundation's role, and the degree to which our grantmaking has impacted both the City of Mattoon and the East Central Illinois region more broadly*
- *Measure the growth trajectory of our core and long-term grantees alongside LFF's investments*
- *Provide actionable insights to inform future grantmaking strategies*

III. Scope of Work

The evaluator will conduct a comprehensive assessment that includes the following:

1. Review of Grants and Initiatives

Evaluate the Foundation's portfolio of grants and programs in East Central Illinois, identifying key activities, outcomes, and beneficiaries. Assess the alignment between the Foundation's goals and the actual impact of these initiatives.

2. Assessment of Community Impact

Analyze the social, economic, and community outcomes resulting from the Foundation's

work. This includes evaluating the degree to which projects funded by LFF have met their stated objectives and contributed to the community's well-being.

3. Stakeholder Engagement

Engage with key stakeholders, including trustees, grantees, community leaders, and beneficiaries, to gather feedback on the effectiveness of LFF's funding strategies, communications, and overall impact.

4. Identification of Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Identify successes, challenges, and lessons learned from LFF's work. Provide recommendations for strengthening future grantmaking and community engagement strategies.

5. Sustainability of Impact

Assess the sustainability of the Foundation's funded initiatives and their ability to maintain long-term positive outcomes in the community.

6. Final Report

Produce a final report that includes an executive summary, detailed findings, and actionable recommendations. The report should be clear, concise, and accessible to a broad audience, including the Foundation's Board of Trustees, members, staff, and key stakeholders.

IV. Deliverables

- **Inception Report** – A detailed work plan, including a methodology, timeline, and list of key stakeholders to be interviewed.
- **Interim Report** – A progress update halfway through the evaluation process, including preliminary findings.
- **Final Evaluation Report** – A comprehensive report with findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
- **Presentation to Stakeholders** – A formal presentation summarizing key findings and recommendations.

V. Timeline

The suggested timeline for this evaluation is as follows (It is understood that adjustments might be needed:

- **RFP Submission Deadline:** June 2, 2025
- **Evaluation Period:** 3-6 Months

- **Interim Report Due:** Midpoint of Evaluation Period, Date TBD
- **Final Report Due:** 2-4 Weeks Post Evaluation Period, Date TBD
- **Presentation to Stakeholders:** 2-4 Weeks Post Evaluation Period, Date TBD

VI. Budget

Proposals should include a detailed budget that outlines the total cost for the evaluation, including hours of work, rates, and any additional expenses (e.g., travel, materials). The Lumpkin Family Foundation anticipates the cost of the evaluation to fall within a range of \$60,000-\$80,000 though we are open to reviewing budget proposals that reflect the scope of the work.

VII. Proposal Submission Requirements

To be considered for this evaluation, interested evaluators must submit the following:

1. **Cover Letter** – A brief cover letter explaining your interest in this project and relevant qualifications. Your cover letter should also address your experience in evaluating programs within a rural context.
2. **Proposal Narrative** – A description of your approach to the evaluation, including the methodology, timeline, and work plan. Please outline how you will engage stakeholders, collect data, and analyze the impact.
3. **Team Qualifications** – Bios of key team members, highlighting their relevant experience and qualifications.
4. **Experience** – A list of previous evaluation projects comparable to this one
5. **Proposed Budget** – A detailed budget, including fees, expenses, and any other costs.
6. **Proposed Timeline**—A revised timeline based on the suggested one provided in this RFP
7. **References** – Contact information for at least three references from previous evaluation clients.

VIII. Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Experience and Qualifications:** Demonstrated experience in evaluating nonprofit or foundation work, particularly within a rural context. Experience in food systems work is highly preferred.
- **Evaluation Approach:** Clear, practical, and comprehensive approach to the evaluation process, including methodology and stakeholder engagement.

- **Budget:** Cost-effectiveness of the proposed budget relative to the scope of work.
- **References and Past Performance:** Positive feedback from past clients and evidence of successful evaluations.
- **Timeline:** Ability to present a reasonable timeline.

IX. Submission Instructions

Please submit your proposal to the following contact:

Monique Schlichtman, Senior Program Officer

Email: monique@lumpkinfoundation.org

Phone: 773-420-7047

Proposals must be received by 5pm CST on Monday, June 2, 2025, to be considered. Late submissions will not be considered.

X. Additional Information

The Lumpkin Family Foundation reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from proposers. We also reserve the right to reject any or all proposals based on the Foundation's assessment of the submissions.

We look forward to receiving your proposal and to working together to further the impact of our initiatives in East Central Illinois.