

# NewAllies

ACHIEVING TRANSFORMATION TOGETHER

## Request for Applications (RFA)

### Engagement Opportunity

January 2021

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New Allies is a capacity-building and support initiative of [Youth Villages](#) to help child welfare leaders navigate long-term system transformation. By taking a strategic, long-term approach, we believe jurisdictions can break the cycle of crisis-driven management and dramatically improve outcomes for children and families. Our goal is to transform child welfare systems across the country and give children and families their best chance at long-term success. Improvement that endures takes years, not months; therefore, we take a holistic approach to supporting leaders in sustaining change over this multi-year engagement. New Allies is committed to this exciting approach of driving lasting improvement to better serve children and families, and we are eager to share this opportunity with others who share a commitment to our same vision.

#### Engagement Overview

New Allies is seeking applicants for this opportunity who are committed to making long-term, sustainable changes within their child welfare systems. Through the New Allies partnership, selected jurisdictions will participate in a multi-year engagement that includes developing a comprehensive understanding of what drives the system's current outcomes; where the system can make the most significant impact; and what improvements are most important to the jurisdiction. New Allies provides tailored, specialized experience to develop effective plans that achieve a jurisdiction's desired improvements and supports their successful implementation. This work will be completed over about five years and equates to an average, financial value of about \$1M per year.

We recognize that child welfare budgets are especially tight and potentially volatile in the current climate. The New Allies partnership is supported by philanthropic funding, which allows jurisdictions to receive our service at no financial cost. This enables New Allies team members to be on the ground in jurisdictions about three weeks per month, on average, to participate in critical meetings, assist in facilitating collaboration, and support and coach staff at varying levels. Successful applicants will be open to utilizing various in-kind contributions such as time, staff resources, communication platforms, and political capital.

Successful applicants will come into the engagement with an open mind to learning, interest in innovative approaches, and willingness to end the crisis-driven management approach typical of many child welfare systems. New Allies will assign a multi-disciplinary team for the selected site that will bring unique perspectives and lived experience to support the entire process. The New Allies engagement supports a thorough **assessment process**, followed up with a **comprehensive strategic planning** approach. New Allies will provide **ongoing implementation support** to the site as they begin to operationalize identified

improvements throughout their system. This work is not intended to be an add-on to the existing demands of running a system. Our work will incorporate CFSR PIP requirements, lawsuit demands, Family First planning, and other strategic initiatives. Within about five years, New Allies expects that the selected jurisdiction will establish the foundation, skills, and infrastructure to manage various situations and new problems as they arise.

**Successful applicants will demonstrate commitment to the following principles:**

- Identifying priorities for system change
- Developing and leveraging existing administrative data or other evidence to assess performance and improvements
- Providing open and transparent internal and external communication
- Engaging in collaborative efforts with a variety of local stakeholders

**Sustainable Community Engagement**

New Allies will assist the site in developing sustainable, local partnerships in order to ensure that the system has ongoing support when the New Allies engagement concludes. This includes working alongside other public agencies, tribal partners, the private provider community, the judiciary, advocacy groups, parents and youth with lived experience, and philanthropic organizations to help build buy-in, secure resources, and create accountability. New Allies seeks applicants who are committed to building up local communities and investing in multidisciplinary solution building. Child welfare work extends beyond one agency, community, or organization, and creating positive change for families requires engagement of all those who impact them.

**How to Apply**

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until we have reached our capacity for this round. To be considered as a first round applicant, applications must be submitted no later than Friday, April 16, 2021 by 7:00 pm (CST).

1. **Submit an Interest Letter** - Applicants must submit a preliminary Interest Letter to [info@newallies.org](mailto:info@newallies.org). The letter should include the agency and/or child welfare division's signature and should identify a point person for the application process. Upon receiving the letter, New Allies will assign an RFA Specialist to support the jurisdiction through the application process. An optional form letter is included [here](#). The RFA Specialist will send the applicant a webinar introducing the New Allies process and assist in completing a compelling application.
2. **Complete and submit the New Allies Application Form and Letters of Support** - Each applicant must complete the [application form](#) and submit it by **Friday, April 16, 2021**. Successful applications will provide insights and perspectives of the child welfare executive leadership team.

We recommend that each applicant identify an application lead with working knowledge and experience with the child welfare division who can access all necessary information, documents, and reports needed to fully complete the application process. All applications must be fully complete in order to be considered for this opportunity.

Each applicant will provide letters of support from at least one stakeholder in **each of the three** following categories.

State Leadership	Community Support	Partner Agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor's Office</li> <li>• State or Federal Legislator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Providers</li> <li>• Community Associations</li> <li>• Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)</li> <li>• Advisory Councils</li> <li>• Advocacy Groups</li> <li>• Philanthropic Organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other State Agency Partners (Medicaid, Mental Health, etc.)</li> <li>• Tribal Partners</li> <li>• Judiciary</li> <li>• Oversight Organizations</li> <li>• State Review Boards</li> </ul>

These letters indicate that the agency would have the support necessary to contribute to the success and sustainability of system transformation. Guidelines for soliciting and drafting effective Letters of Support can be found [here](#). Letters of Support should be e-mailed to [info@newallies.org](mailto:info@newallies.org) by the stakeholder providing the letter **OR** attached to the site's application no later than Friday, April 16, 2021 at 7:00 pm (CST).

**Applications will be reviewed as they are received, and each applicant will be notified by their RFA Specialist if they will move into Phase 2 of the application process.**

3. **Virtual Panel Discussion** - If invited, each applicant will have a scheduled, virtual discussion with the New Allies selections panel. The discussion will build upon information provided in the site's application and should include key agency decision makers.
4. **Opportunity Awarded/Selection Process** - Applicants will be notified whether or not they are selected no later than June 1, 2021. If not selected for this first round opportunity, applicants who participate in a virtual discussion will be prioritized for subsequent awards.