



**Thousand Waves**  
Martial Arts & Self-Defense Center, NFP

1220 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657  
tel 773.472.7663 fax 773.472.7698  
info@thousandwaves.org  
www.thousandwaves.org

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION**  
**Thousand Waves Martial Arts and Self-Defense Center, NFP**

**Issue Date:** October 1, 2017

**Final Deadline for Applications:** December 15, 2017

**Period of Contract:** January 2018 – December 2019

**Type of Contract:** The contract resulting from the RFP will be a fixed-price contract. Maximum allotted budget is \$12,000.

**OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE**

**Thousand Waves' Mission**

Thousand Waves Martial Arts & Self-Defense Center, NFP fosters fitness, healing, empowerment and peacemaking by promoting healthy minds and bodies through violence prevention, self-defense and traditional martial arts programs for adults and children of all ages. Our members apply the skills they learn at Thousand Waves to transform their lives at home, school, work, and in public spaces. This creates a powerful community spirit of civility, self-worth, and compassion in action. Through partnerships with schools, other non-profits, businesses and government agencies, we also bring the tools of violence prevention and personal empowerment to diverse communities. We encourage everyone's participation regardless of racial or ethnic background, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or fitness level.

**Program for Evaluation**

This Request for Proposals is to provide an evaluation of the impact of Thousand Waves' flagship 12-hour self-defense course (hereafter "the Course") on the lives of participants. The Course provides training based on a model of self-defense known as the Five Fingers: Think Yell Run Fight Tell. The curriculum includes mental strategies (Think), communication strategies (Yell), strategic positioning (Run), physical resistance techniques (Fight), and strategies for healing in the aftermath of violence (Tell). The model is empowerment-based, and strives to present accurate information about violence and offer participants the opportunity to practice a diverse toolset of responses to minimize the incidence of violence in their lives and their communities.

Thousand Waves offers the Course in a variety of multi-session formats, and additionally offers single-session workshops (1-3 hours) onsite. We also provide single-and multi-session workshops on an outreach basis to private groups, schools, nonprofit organizations, and corporations.

As part of this program evaluation effort, we intend to partner with one or more organizational entities to provide the Course to a specific constituency in the city of Chicago. We are seeking partners who can provide participants who are at relatively high risk of interpersonal or sexual violence. The training will be on a pro bono basis, and we are actively seeking partner organizations concurrent with this RFP process. Our goals are to make a measurable impact on a specific population, and to measure that impact. Thousand Waves' programming is not currently grant-funded; a long-term goal of this evaluation is to increase funding opportunities for this work. A secondary goal is to contribute to the existing evidence-base related to the efficacy of our work.

**Description of the Course**

The first session of the 12-hour training orients students to the broad definitions Thousand Waves uses for violence and for self-defense – that violence may be verbal, emotional, or physical, and that responses to it likewise include mental, verbal, and physical responses, as well as an awareness of the necessity of healing in the aftermath of violence. The first session also establishes an approach (reinforced in subsequent sessions) that is



trauma-aware and empowerment-based. Students learn and get to practice responses through the use of role plays, short guided discussions, lecture, and physical practice.

In each remaining session, students reinforce the initial learning through more practice of verbal and physical skills. Additionally, they receive instruction on and have the opportunity to practice fighting from the ground, escaping from a variety of grabs, and responding to an armed assailant. They also participate in discussions centered on responding to verbal harassment, recognizing healthy relationships, and whether to carry a commercial weapon themselves. The training culminates in a vigorous physical 'graduation exercise' organized as a number of circuits that participants cycle through. Depending on length and frequency of sessions, the full Course may be completed as quickly as over a single weekend (e.g., two 6-hour sessions) or over a full month (e.g., 4 weekly 3-hour sessions). If we contract with an academic partner, a Course could stretch over an entire 15-week semester.

Our instructional methods require a high level of participation and interaction between instructors and students; as such, our maximum class size is 25 participants. We hope to reach a total of 150 students through this program over the course of 2018, which implies a minimum of 6 courses.

The evaluation will serve these purposes:

- Assess attitudinal changes (eg, increases in feelings of self-efficacy, decreased anxiety) that have been shown to correlate with increased resilience among participants, both at Course completion and at follow-up.
- Assess behavioral changes that have been shown to impact the risk of violence among participants (eg, willingness to set and enforce verbal boundaries with strangers, acquaintances, and intimates).
- Assess the extent to which the training reduces the incidence of sexual assault amongst participants (via self-report).
- Assess the extent to which the training reduces the incidence of violence other than sexual assault among participants (via self-report).
- Identify the least and most effective instructional methods used.
- Identify unanticipated outcomes.

#### **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

This RFP seeks evaluation services that measure both attitudinal and behavioral changes, as well as future experiences. As such, there will necessarily be periodic follow-ups with participants. Thousand Waves is interested in having the evaluator propose an evaluation plan that will measure outcomes in a reliable and valid manner.

Over the past 4 years, 3 studies have been published in the academic literature (see Appendix I, bibliography) that provide compelling evidence that training similar to the kind that Thousand Waves provides can have a transformational effect on participants' lives, and in their ability to prevent or protect themselves from sexual violence. We hope to contribute to this evidence base, as well as exploring whether and to what extent the trainings we provide are effective in enabling participants to prevent and/or protect themselves from other types of violence.

A competitive proposal will

- Demonstrate the evaluator or evaluation team's subject-area expertise in violence prevention, sexual assault prevention, or a related field.
- Include an initial proposal for an evaluation protocol.
  - Because this program evaluation will explore participants' experiences with traumatic events, it is suggested that the final evaluation protocol be reviewed by an Institutional Review Board or



equivalent body to ensure that evaluations will be conducted in an ethical manner that takes reasonable precautions to protect the mental and emotional health of participants

- Propose a timeline for the evaluation, from evaluation protocol development to project completion.
- Include a quote for the evaluation process.

Though Thousand Waves is currently recruiting partner organizations, evaluators are welcome to suggest organizations they have an existing relationship with that might be suitable for this project.

## **DELIVERABLES**

Evaluation deliverables include:

- Regular progress meetings (a minimum of twice a month during active phases of the project, monthly throughout).
- Logic Model for the evaluated program.
- Comprehensive program evaluation report accompanied by a formal presentation of findings.
- Separate executive summary of the evaluation.
- Electronic copies of all reports, protocols, instruments, interviews schedules, on-line questionnaires, coding guides, data dictionaries, databases or electronic information systems developed for this evaluation, as well as any analysis outputs.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Mandatory Qualifications**

Thousand Waves seeks a qualified evaluation provider who:

- Can establish a positive partnership with Thousand Waves, partner organization(s), and participants.
- Demonstrates experience in developing, selecting, and applying principals of program evaluation while maintaining respect for program participant experience.
- Has experience integrating quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods.
- Can produce reports and documents that capture relevant data, create a compelling case that is accessible by the funding community and on-going program development.
- Has resources to commit to intensive data collection over up to 1 year, and ongoing periodic data collection for up to one additional year.

### **Preferred Qualifications**

- Has access to an Institutional Review Board or equivalent body qualified to oversee mental and behavioral health evaluation projects.
- Has an advanced degree (Master's or higher) in social sciences.
- Has demonstrated expertise in the domain of violence prevention.
- Has familiarity in the domain of empowerment self-defense.

## **SUBMISSION, DEADLINES, AND QUESTIONS**

Please contact Amy Jones (ajones@thousandwaves.org) with questions. All proposals shall remain firm and cannot be withdrawn for a period of 90 days after receipt of proposals. Proposals will be considered on a rolling basis, but no later than **December 15, 2017 11:59:59 pm** (Central Standard Time) to violenceprevention@thousandwaves.org or to:

Thousand Waves Martial Arts & Self-Defense Center  
ATTN: Violence Prevention Program



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All proposals must include

- An introduction to your firm.
- A narrative describing the expertise of your firm as it relates to the project as described in this RFP.
- At least four references.
- Resumes of all staff and subcontractors committed to the contract.
- Other information that was not specifically requested in this Request for Proposal that should be considered in the evaluation of the response may be included at the end of the proposal.

#### **EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSAL**

The following criteria are expected to be among those used in the selection process. They are presented as a guide for the evaluation firm in understanding Thousand Waves' requirements and expectations for this project and are not necessarily all-inclusive or presented in order of importance:

- Proposed Project Approach. Emphasis will be on familiarity with the problem space, soundness of approach, and demonstrated access to resources needed for successful completion of the project.
- Project costs.
- Expertise of the evaluation firm.
- In-person meeting and presentation.

Thousand Waves reserves the right to amend or modify any provision of this RFP, or to withdraw this RFP at any time prior to contract award. Thousand Waves shall not be bound or liable under this RFP any/or any response thereto until a final written contract has been executed by Thousand Waves and agreed to by the selected evaluation firm.