HCAH Research Project - Request for Proposals

Introduction and Background

The Houston Coalition Against Hate (HCAH) is a network of community-based organizations in Houston that have come together to collectively address incidents of bias, hate, discrimination and violence against Houstonians because of their religion, race/ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, and immigration status.

In order to determine the work and agenda of the HCAH in the coming 3-5 years, the coalition has determined that we need additional information and research in order to determine an effective strategy to address, reduce and eventually eliminate the incidents of hate and bias in the city of Houston. This research project will be funded through the Coalition which is convened by the Houston Endowment. An advisory committee consisting of the HCAH coordinator and 3-7 representatives of the HCAH will work to coordinate with the Research Consultant.

The HCAH is seeking an experienced researcher (or team) to undertake a research project to support the work of the Coalition. It is anticipated that contractor will conduct research (delineated by the scope below), provide some recommendations to the HCAH. In addition, the research consultant will liaise with the advisory committee throughout the term of the contract.

Request for Proposals

This project includes two phases. **This call for proposals is for Phase 1**, information about Phase 2 is included to guide your research proposal and indicate potential uses of data moving forward.

Geographic scope: While Houston is the center of this work, the Coalition is interested in seeing proposals that propose to expand the geographic scope of research to the greater Houston region. At a minimum, that would include Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties.

Phase 1
Baseline data:
- Numbers of hate incidents and crimes over the past 10 years, compiled from "official" sources, including: Houston Police Department, Harris County Sheriff (and other county sheriff's offices), and the FBI. Data collected should include the types and locations of incidents and any demographic data available about the victims or perpetrators. This initial analysis should also include incidents collected by and/or reported to the Southern Poverty Law Center and Anti-Defamation League, using their publicly available data, as well as HCAH member organizations such as CAIR and the Montrose Center among others.

- o Cross-reference numbers of crimes with different demographic identifiers to outline trends (e.g. by race, age, religion, etc.)
- Existing processes and procedures for collecting data and responding to victims needs by law enforcement, Texas Medical Center/similar, and non-profits, including communities of faith, support groups, etc.
- Researchers should also conduct a landscape analysis of best practices for collecting data about hate incidents from around the country (e.g. Seattle PD, Austin/Travis County Hate Crimes Task Force).
- Definitions of hate crimes (federal, state, county, local) and how they interact with each other within our jurisdiction.

Analysis: The Coalition is looking for an analysis in the gaps in between where crimes and incidents are occurring and where resources, beyond law enforcement, exist already. Using this baseline, researchers should be able to answer the following questions:
- How many hate crimes occur each year in the greater Houston region? Is this number distinct from "incidents" of hate? Where are the crimes and 'incidents' occurring? How do these trends compare to other regions and large cities across the country?
- What are the gaps in the data?
- How do the systems in Houston respond to crimes and 'incidents' of hate and where are the gaps in resources (including formal law-enforcement responses as well as non-profit organizations' responses)? How does this change if it is an incident of hate, and not a "crime?"
- What are barriers to victims reporting?
  - o What are barriers to cooperation on reporting?
  - o What are examples of places that have gotten past the challenges of cooperation to collect a more complete picture of hate incidents in their jurisdictions?

Recommendations:
- Researchers would ideally offer recommendations to the Coalition about how the research could inform new policies and practices in the Houston region. Examples of recommendations might be:
  - o Ways to make reporting safer for victims, regardless of legal status or other barriers.
  - o Ways to better train non-profits and law enforcement to be able to respond.
  - o Ways to gather research on incidents that have occurred but weren't captured in the baseline data analysis

Phase 2

Phase 2 will use qualitative methods, including ethnographic research, interviewing, and focus groups that take deep dives into the following:

- o Gaps in resources for reporting incidents of hate and bias, and recommendations to address these gaps

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- o Gaps in follow-up support and engagement with victims of incidents of hate and bias, and recommendations to address these gaps
- o Gaps in training groups who collect data on incidents of hate and bias, and recommendations to address these gaps
- o Additional recommendations for best practices on reducing incidents of hate and bias in the city of Houston and surrounding areas

Proposed Methods to update ethnographic insights annually.

Budget and Timeline

The budget range for Phase 1 of this research is $55,000- $60,000.
Proposals should be submitted by March 22, 2019. Applicants on the short list will be notified by April 5th and may be asked to submit supplemental materials. Final notifications will be sent by April 26, 2019.
The research period should last approximately 6 months and should expect to provide regular updates with the Houston Coalition Against Hate research subcommittee and other partners. The final research report for Phase 1 will be submitted in the first quarter of 2020.

We encourage applicants to collaborate with other researchers and institutions.

To submit a proposal
Please submit your project proposal to marjorieajoseph@gmail.com by March 22, 2019, including an estimated timeline and budget. Include in your proposal a curriculum vitae that demonstrates your research to date. Please note whether you are proposing to do primary research or utilize existing resources.

To discuss proposals and ideas, email Marjorie Joseph, HCAH coordinator, at marjorieajoseph@gmail.com.