Senior Fund of St. Louis City

# REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

**Building the Future of the St. Louis Aging Services Network**
*Network Strategy, Fractional Lead*

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to receive statements of qualifications from individuals or teams who are interested in providing support to develop and implement new strategies focused on capacity-building, partnership development, and organizational network investments.

## Proposal Timeline

| Milestone | Date |
|---|---|
| RFQ Released | Monday, July 20, 2026 |
| Questions Due | Friday, July 24, 2026 |
| Proposal Deadline | **Friday, July 31, 2026 at 12:00 p.m. (Noon) Central Time** |
| Candidate Interviews | Week of August 3, 2026 |
| Anticipated Selection | Week of August 24, 2026 |
| Contract Begins | September 1, 2026 |

## About Senior Fund

The City of St. Louis Senior Citizens' Services Fund (Senior Fund) is a public entity dedicated to strengthening the health, independence, and well-being of older adults, age 60 and older, living in the City of St. Louis. Since its inception, Senior Fund has invested millions of dollars in community-based organizations that provide high-quality services enabling older adults to age safely, independently, and with dignity.

These investments remain central to our mission. However, Senior Fund recognizes that sustaining high-quality services requires more than grantmaking alone. Organizations serving older adults are navigating unprecedented challenges, including workforce shortages, declining public resources, evolving reimbursement models, technology demands, disaster recovery, and increasing expectations for collaboration and measurable impact.

In Summer 2026, Senior Fund completed the Infrastructure for Aging Services Co-Design Project (Executive Summary linked here). During which, Senior Fund, other funders, aging services providers, and community members worked together to determine the highest priorities for strengthening aging services providers to allow them to continue to serve older adults. As a result of this work, Senior Fund is intentionally investing in the areas identified by the Aging Services Network to build organizational and service-based capacity. Ultimately, strengthening services for older adults in the City of St. Louis.

*Figure 1*

**Areas for Infrastructure Investment Determined by Infrastructure for Aging Services Co-Design Project**

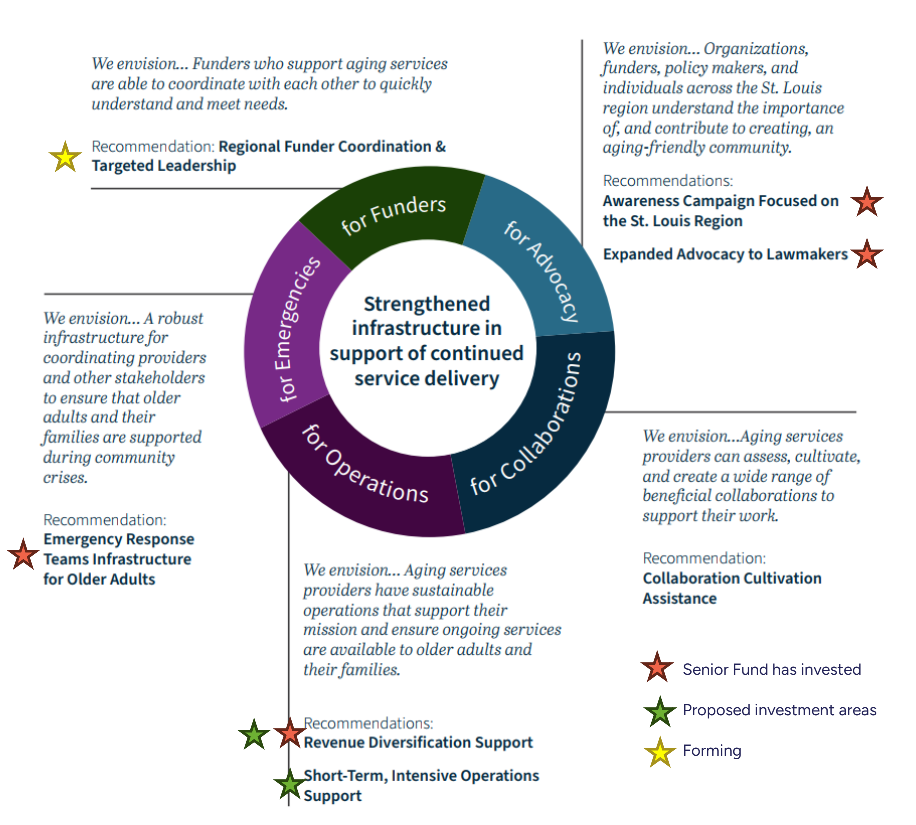


*Figure 1. Image from the Infrastructure for Aging Services report that shows the five areas of service infrastructure in need of support with recommended actions. Stars designate status of Senior Fund investment, including proposed future investment.*

## The Opportunity

Over the past two years, Senior Fund has partnered with nonprofit providers, healthcare organizations, public agencies, philanthropic organizations, universities, businesses, and community leaders to better understand the future needs of the Aging Services Network. This work has included:

- Infrastructure for Aging Services regional design initiative

- Community Care Hub planning
- Strategic communications toolkit development
- Disaster response and recovery coordinated investments
- Shared learning with providers
- Regional funder collaboration

Across these efforts, one conclusion consistently emerged:
**The long-term well-being of older adults depends upon the long-term strength of the organizations and partnerships that serve them.**

Senior Fund believes the next generation of impact requires investing not only in programs and direct services, but also in the network that makes these possible.

To advance this vision, Senior Fund is developing an emerging Aging Services Network Investment Model, which will guide the fund's future investments in capacity building, partnership development, shared infrastructure, organizational excellence, and sustainable systems change.

The selected Fractional Lead for Network Strategy sought through this RFQ will help bring this vision to life.

## Senior Fund's Vision for the Aging Services Network Investment Model

The Aging Services Network Investment Model represents a new approach to strengthening services for older adults. Rather than operating as independent organizations competing for limited resources, the model envisions a connected ecosystem in which organizations share knowledge, build organizational capacity, coordinate services, strengthen operational infrastructure, and collectively improve outcomes for older adults.

Within this model, Senior Fund serves as a strategic investor, convener, and public steward—supporting both direct service and infrastructure investments for the long-term sustainability of the organizations that provide services for older adults.

Work carried out for this RFQ, represents the first phase of implementing this vision.

*Figure 2*

Emerging Aging Services Network Investment Model

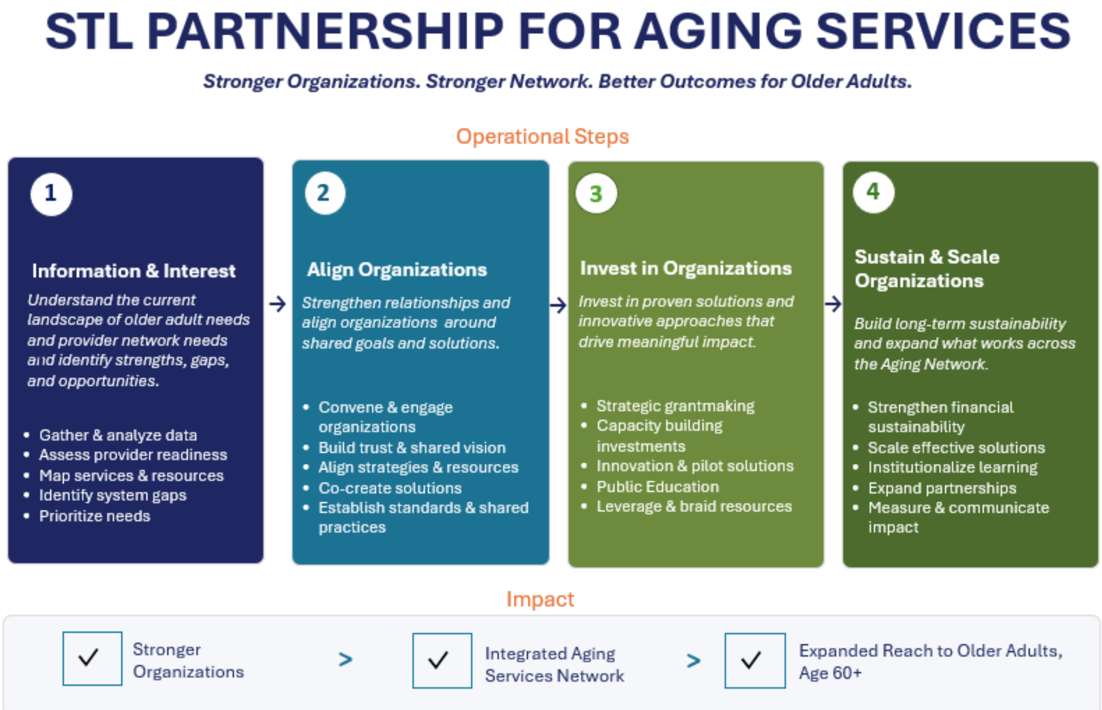


*Figure 2. Conceptual framework illustrating Senior Fund's vision for strengthening the Aging Services Network through strategic investment, shared infrastructure, community partnerships, organizational capacity building, continuous learning, and measurable outcomes for older adults.*

## Purpose of the Engagement

The purpose of this RFQ is to contract with an individual or team that can provide strategic leadership, implementation support, and technical expertise for the development and launch of Senior Fund's Aging Services Network Investment Model.

Working closely with the Senior Fund Executive Director, staff, Board of Directors, and community partners, the selected Fractional Lead for Network Strategy will serve as an embedded strategic partner responsible for translating the Aging Services Network Investment Model into an actionable implementation strategy.

The engagement is intended to move the initiative from concept to execution.

## Scope of Work

The final scope will be developed collaboratively with Senior Fund; however, anticipated responsibilities include:

### Strategic Planning & Implementation

- Operationalize the Aging Services Network Investment Model.
- Develop a phased implementation strategy.
- Translate strategic priorities into operational work plans.
- Establish implementation milestones.
- Support creation of:
    - Assessment systems
    - Data collection strategies
    - Network performance metrics
    - Shared reporting tools
    - Evaluation framework

### Network Development

- Design a framework for systems and service delivery improvements.
- Facilitate collaborative planning sessions.

### Strategic Advising

Serve as an executive advisor by:

- Identifying strategic opportunities.
- Supporting board presentations.

### Capacity Building

Assist in developing:

- Organizational Assessments
- Capacity Building Framework
- Technical Assistance Model
- Organizational Readiness Process

## Desired Qualifications

Senior Fund welcomes applicants from diverse professional backgrounds. Experience leading complex, cross-sector initiatives is highly desirable. Preference will be given to contractors based in the St. Louis Metro region and/or those who have experience working with nonprofits in the area.

## Deliverables

Deliverables are expected to evolve throughout the engagement but may include:

- Quarterly Progress Reports
- Implementation Roadmap
- Organizational Assessment Framework
- Capacity Building Strategy

- Technical Assistance Framework
- Partnership Development Strategy
- Network Governance Recommendations
- Sustainability Recommendations

## Engagement Structure

The Fractional Strategic Lead will work closely with:

- Senior Fund Staff and Board of Directors, including the Executive Director and Director of Operations & Network Strategy
- Community Partners
- Strategic Communications Team
- Subject Matter Experts

*Estimated commitment*: 10–20 hours per week
*Initial engagement timeframe*: 9 months

Opportunity for renewal based on organizational needs and performance.

## Proposal Requirements

Interested applicants should submit a letter of interest that includes:

- Overview of Relevant Experience and Qualifications
- Proposed Approach to Working with Senior Fund
- Availability and Timeline for Engagement
- Fee Proposal
- Three Professional References
- Attachment with Implementation Philosophy
    - Please describe in no more than three pages:
        - Your plan to evaluate both grantee organizational capacity and delivery system capacity for the Aging Services Network.
        - Your timeline for conducting initial grantee organizational assessments
        - Your approach to launching this initiative.
        - Your philosophy on direct service delivery and its relationship to systems change.
        - How you build trust across teams and organizations.
        - How you balance planning with implementation.
        - What success looks like to you in this fractional leadership role.

## Proposal Submission

Proposals must be received no later than:

Friday, July 31, 2026
12:00 p.m. (Noon) Central Time

Please submit proposals electronically to:

Katie Ratkowski
Director of Operations & Network Strategy
City of St. Louis Senior Citizens' Services Fund
*kratkowski@stlseniorfund.org*

Please include **"Fractional Lead Proposal"** in the subject line.

## Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Relevant experience
  - Systems thinking
  - Organizational capacity building
  - Group facilitation
  - Collaborative leadership
- Understanding of the model and proposed implementation approach
- Overall value of fractional leadership proposal