



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS: COLLABORATIVE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION CONSULTANT

Questions and Responses

Questions are noted in black font, and responses in blue font.

Posted on the City of Highland Park Web Site on Monday March 18, 2024

- 1. Regarding task #1 'Conduct a survey of the workplaces to obtain stakeholder feedback':** Would you prefer to utilize a survey instrument you've used previously for the Village of Glencoe, City of Highland Park, and Village of Wilmette municipality surveys, if any, or are you open to using ones I've developed specifically tailored for conducting climate for diversity or equity audits? Respondents should identify the survey instrument(s) they propose for this task. The Clients do not have a shared or preferred survey instrument.
- 2. Regarding task #9 'Present findings to the Clients' DEI working group (composed of team members from each organization)':** What is the typical composition of the DEI working group in terms of the number of clients and their roles, including any involvement of external organizations or stakeholders? The DEI working group consists of the City/Village Managers from Glencoe, Highland Park and Wilmette or their designees, plus approximately two other staff members including but not limited to assistant managers, human resource professionals and analysts.
- 3. Based on the nine specific work requirements,** what would be the ideal timeframe for completion? Typically, I allocate a longer-term period (1-2 years) for clients with comparable diversity objectives. Respondents should identify the suggested time frame to advance the various tasks outlined in the scope of work, either individually or collectively. There is not ideal time frame established by the Clients.
- 4. Can you provide your budget for the project or an approximate amount you're aiming to allocate?** This information will assist me in preparing the cost estimate for the services outlined in the Scope of Work, enabling me to consider my hourly rate and the estimated hours based on your budget. I understand if you're unable to share this information at this stage, though your input would be greatly appreciated as I start to craft the 'Request for Qualifications' Proposal. Respondents should identify the cost estimate for services outlined in the RFP. Work initiatives could be itemized with specific costs assigned for each task in order for the Clients to prioritize the work and the timing of each.
- 5. Is the scope of work exclusively remote,** or do you anticipate any in-person requirements where the consultant would need to travel to the Midwest? It is possible that a presentation to our respective corporate authorizes at a public meeting may be requested which would require travel; otherwise, the vast majority of the work may be done remotely with conferences scheduled via Zoom or comparable platform.

6. **What is the estimated budget?** Per the RFQ, Scope of Work section #7, the Consultant will - Provide a written report which includes the costs and timelines to implement and address the tasks set forth in the RFQ.
7. **What is the duration of this Project?**
Per the RFQ, Scope of Work section #7, the Consultant will - Provide a written report which includes the costs and timelines to implement and address tasks set forth in the RFQ. In addition, Responses to the RFQ must be in writing and include a cost estimate and timeline.....
8. **Is Subcontracting allowed in this Project?**
Clients are receptive to subcontracting; the proposer should include the subcontractor recommended and the work they will be tasked to carryout.
9. **Why are you coming together for this RFP?** As our three communities are somewhat similar in size, form of government, proximity, and values, we identified a partnership opportunity for implementing a DEI Program and Services that was consistent and at the same time would provide cost sharing/savings.
 - **What was the impetus for doing it collectively?** See the aforementioned question and response.
 - **What are examples of other initiatives or projects that these communities have participated in together?** Our communities regularly share information; participate in the same professional development organizations; conduct joint training and pursue other initiatives.
 - What have you learned about how to ensure success in these joint endeavors? The value of relationship building, partnerships with stakeholders, transparency, pro-active communications, efficiency and improved effectiveness.
10. **We understand the mission of the communities lends itself to a common assessment. Is your vision of DEI in your organizations, what you mean by DEI, and desired outcomes also aligned and consistent?** Yes, as indicated in the DEI RFQs Purpose Section, the Clients believe a (external) holistic review of our respective organizations is consistent with our respective missions, and will enhance our workplaces and communities as we foster inclusion, equity, and value diversity.
11. **Are you hoping recommendations be applicable across the *North Shore* communities, or that are appropriate for the three communities participating in the RFP?**
 - **Are you expecting recommendations on specific policies and/or practices?** As indicated in the DEI RFQ- Scope of Work, Clients are seeking guidance to expand policies and actions with regards to diversity, equity, and inclusion internally to our organizations and workplaces and in certain public-facing administrative processes. See page 6 of the RFQ for further.
 - **What does “Broad recommendations to the Northshore,” mean or what is the expectation here?** Clients desire partnering with each other and a DEI Consultant to obtain guidance and general “best practices” as opposed to specific to one community over another.
12. **Tell us more about the Learning and Operationalizing Racial Equity (LORE) Pilot Project through the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Metropolitan Mayors’ Caucus?** Please refer to the following internet link for related information: <https://mayorscaucus.org/operationalizing-dei/>

- Is Highland Park also involved or just Glencoe and Wilmette? As indicated in the DEI RFQ, the Villages of Glencoe and Wilmette participated in the LORE Pilot Project. The City of Highland Park also participated in the LORE Pilot Project through the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Metropolitan Mayors' Caucus. The City Manager was the principal participant and brought back learned information to the balance of the organization.
 - **Who are the staff members (i.e., role/position) involved in the pilot program and will the Consultant work with them?** The city/village managers of each community, assistant managers and other staff. The Consultant will have a primary point of contact at each municipality.
13. **What is the budget ceiling for this project?** As indicated in the DEI RFQ, the Consultant is to include a cost estimate for their services and the project.
14. **How are you structuring this project across the three municipalities?** The three Client communities are partnering in this initiative and communicating with each other as needed.
- **Who will be the primary contracting organization?** Clients will negotiate with the selected consultant after an evaluation process for the purposes of establishing contracts with each respective entity.
 - **Will there be an overall project lead or will coordination have to happen independently with each community?** At this time, Highland Park Management Analyst Chris O'Neill is the lead contact for the project. Staff from each community will be identified and assigned to the project as appropriate. They will work together on the project as needed and will collectively work the selected Consultant.
 - **Does the DEI Committee already exist? How many members are on the committee?** Each community is already doing work as it pertains to DEI. As work progresses, staff members and various groups such as DEI Committees, Senior Staff/Directors, and others will be included as appropriate.
15. **Are you expecting any public or community input?** See Section #6 of the DEI RFQ.
16. **Is there a collective NTE budget for this work across the 3 municipalities?** As indicated in the DEI RFQ, the Consultant is to include a cost estimate for their services and the project.
17. **Is there a timeframe by which this work must be completed for budgeting or grant reasons?** Per the RFQ, Scope of Work section #7, the Consultant will - Provide a written report which includes the costs and timelines to implement and address the initiatives outlined in the RFQ.
18. **In what ways will the SOW or body of work need to go before the (3) council/boards in public meetings? (we just like to understand the process when it includes public comment and board discussion, etc).** Each municipality will identify the frequency of public updates for their respective corporate authority. The Consultant should plan on one public presentation per Client. Additional meetings may be requested and would be filled and organized accordingly between the Client and Consultant.
19. **Regarding this solicitation, please let me know if there is a budget cap and what that cap is.** As indicated in the DEI RFQ, the Consultant is to include a cost estimate for their services and the project.
20. **Has the organization identified a timeline for total completion or is that a part of the discussion and agreement points?** Respondents should identify the suggested time frame to advance the various tasks

outlined in the scope of work, either individually or collectively. There is not an ideal time frame established by the Clients at this time.

21. As there are three municipalities engaged in the collaborative approach, is the expectation that all activities, policy reviews, stakeholder meetings. etc. be done with all three at the same time or is that determined upon discussion and agreement? The Clients desire to undertake comparable work for maximum efficiency. The Clients are flexible in terms of timing and will work with the Consultant for strategy and timelines.

22. Lastly, is it possible to engage in a quick phone conversation relevant to the questions above or is email the preferred communication method? Clients and their staff are unable to conduct one-on-one phone conversations with Consultants regarding DEI RFQ questions during this process. The City of Highland Park will post DEI RFQ related questions on its website: www.cityhpil.com on Monday 03/18/2024 as indicated in the DEI RFQ. Further dialogue will take place with selected respondents as part of the interview phase of this RFQ evaluation.

23. Can each municipality share the status of its DEI plans? Very preliminary work has been conducted by each municipalities, including but not limited to employee training, updating job descriptions, reviewing policies, evaluating communications, and implementing preliminary work plans.

24. What types of activities are included in reference to "initial work"? See above.

Ideally, when would the municipalities like for the consulting work to be completed? Per the RFQ, Scope of Work section #7, the Consultant will, "Provide a written report which includes the costs and **timelines** to implement and address the following.....".

25. Is the completion timeline dependent or critical to any other initiatives or projects? Not at this time.

26. Can you share the names of previous DEI consultants who have worked with each municipality? Highland Park has not engaged in an initiative of this nature in the past. Wilmette and Glencoe have utilized DEI consultant Terri Johnson with C-Change as a subcontractor. In addition, Glencoe has engaged with the Walker Thomas Group on training relative to workplace inclusion and belonging.

What is your estimated budget to perform the DEI consulting services described in the scope of work? Per the RFQ, Scope of Work section #7, the Consultant will, "Provide a written report which includes the **costs** and timelines to implement and address the following...".

In addition, "Responses to the RFQ must be in writing and **include a cost estimate** and timeline...".

27. Do the municipalities have a supplier diversity program? If yes, have the municipalities conducted a disparity study? No

28. Do the municipalities have procurement policies that provide bidding preferences to local businesses, small businesses and/or minority/women businesses? Municipality procurement policies vary by community, however, generally, municipalities pursue agreements and contracts based on the lowest and most responsible bidder. Preference may be given to local-owned businesses.

- 29. Which municipal departments are represented in the DEI working group?** City/Village managements and other staff as needed. See the DEI RFQ Scope of Work Section for related general information.
- 30. What support does each municipality receive from their governing bodies for this initiative?** The corporate authorities of each participating municipality support this initiative.
- 31. Describe the staff's attitude and approach towards this initiative.** Our staff teams look forward to working on this endeavor together and with the selected consultant. We are interested and committed to on-going learning, striving to provide professional, quality work, and being inclusive while valuing diversity in our communities and the region.
- 32. What is your preferred timeline for completing this project?** Per the RFQ, Scope of Work section #7, the Consultant will, "Provide a written report which includes the costs and **timelines** to implement and address the following...".
- In addition, "Responses to the RFQ must be in writing and include a cost estimate and **timeline...**".
- 33. What obstacles do you perceive in moving forward with this initiative?** We understand there is a wealth of opportunities relating to this subject and our greatest obstacle will be accomplishing as much as we can effectively and efficiently.
- 34. Identify the strengths of each municipality in advancing this initiative.** Our organizations are committed to advancing this initiative and dedicating staff resources and time to ensure initiatives as advanced most effectively.
- 35. What qualities or characteristics are essential in selecting a consultant partner for this project?** See Evaluation Criteria set forth in the RFQ.
- 36. What fears, if any are associated with this effort?** Not applicable.
- 37. Are there any existing affinity groups, currently?** n/a
- 38. Are you open to having the consultant onsite to evaluate organizational culture?** Yes, this is strongly encouraged.
- 39. What is the expected number of stakeholders to administer the survey to?** May vary by community, however, it may be of value to interview various governmental, private and local entities, their staff and members of the public to evaluate related client performance.
- 40. Are there any interview expectations for this engagement?** Yes, interviews may be scheduled in accordance with the timeline set forth in the RFQ. Interviews may be coordinated by Zoom if needed.
- 41. Is there any in-person/on-site work expected?** It is possible that a presentation to our respective corporate authorizes at a public meeting may be requested which would require travel; otherwise, the vast majority of the work may be done remotely with conferences scheduled via Zoom or comparable platform.