

Request for Services: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Audit

Overview:

The Edmonton Social Planning Council has a bold vision to work towards “a community in which all people are full and valued participants.” Recognizing this vision, the Council has prioritized conducting an equity, diversity, and inclusion audit to review the current programs, policies, processes, practices and governance model of the Council. The successful consultant will work with the Council to develop a strategy that identifies areas where the organization can make sustainable and incremental improvements.

The Council is seeking an EDI consultant to support the Council by conducting an audit and, based on the audit findings, making recommendations for EDI strategies the Council should consider going forward. To that end, the Council will be approaching several vendors to request proposals. We will also be posting this Request on the Council’s website.

Background on the Edmonton Social Planning Council:

The Edmonton Social Planning Council is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan social research organization that has existed for over 80 years. Our focus is social research in areas related to poverty, food security and housing. As a source of knowledge and expertise on social issues within our community, the Council is dedicated to encouraging the adoption of equitable social policy, supporting the work of other organizations who are striving to improve the lives of Edmontonians, and educating the public on the social issues that impact them daily.

The Council is a registered charity and incorporated under the *Societies Act* with an annual operating budget of \$500,000.00 and five full-time staff. The Council is governed by a volunteer board of directors.

The Council researches and reports on a broad range of issues related to poverty, housing, and food security. The reports, blog posts, research reviews, policy statements are prepared by the Council and occasionally with partner organizations and volunteers, including the Edmonton Community Foundation’s Vital Signs series. The Council is also a founding member of the provincial Living Wage Network and calculates Edmonton’s living wage on an annual basis.

Since its inception, the Council’s research assistance services have provided valuable information to many organizations in the Edmonton area helping them to make informed decisions and develop programs addressing social challenges facing our community. The Council offers these services to non-profit organizations, researchers, public sector entities, and other community stakeholders.

Scope of Work:

The Council sees the need for and benefit of an independent view of the organization as a whole, in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion activities. We hope that an EDI audit will provide the Council with a baseline from which we can select strategies and measure progress going forward. The audit should be able to guide us in our allocation of resources and choice of EDI strategies, so that the Council gains the full advantages that come from embracing diversity and inclusion.

Given this, the major tasks (and deliverables) which fall within the scope of this Request include:

1. Provide the Council's Board and Staff with a basic level of knowledge and understanding around EDI through the delivery of training or series of workshops (ideally these will be somewhat interactive in nature, offering the added bonus of a positive team building experience as board and staff reflect on various aspects of policies, practices and structures of the organization).
2. Conduct an EDI audit that examines best practices, the Council's current governance and practices with an EDI lens at both the governance and operational level. The proposal should clearly identify the process and deliverables from this phase. The findings will be collected and reported to the Board of Directors.
3. Based on the outcomes of the EDI audit, provide specific and actionable recommendations to guide the organization including but not limited to:
 - a. Recommend Board recruitment and hiring practices consistent with a commitment to EDI
 - b. Specific policy, practice, operations and governance changes the Council should consider
 - c. Recommendations for strategies or actions moving forward to advance this work and maintain the type of organization we want to be. Include timelines and costs where appropriate.
 - d. Any additional recommendation or deliverables the Consultant feels would be beneficial.

The consultant is requested to provide a detailed breakdown of activities, including anticipated deliverables and engagement with the Council's staff and board as well as cost-breakdowns for the project.

Budget:

The Council's overall operational budget is set out above. At this point, the Council does not have a specific budget item or secured grant funding for an EDI audit. However, the Council believes it is important to do this and plans to dip into the Council's reserve funds to pay for it.

Timelines:

While the Council realizes that any timelines must be realistic, we would like to have this work completed as soon as practicable so that we can determine and implement strategies going forward. Ideally, we would like the work in the proposal to begin in May or June of 2022.

The proposal must include timelines for each of the five major tasks (i.e., start and end dates).

Vendor Selection Timelines:

The vendor selection process for this opportunity will unfold relatively briskly while allowing for dialogue with potential vendors as well as appropriate internal deliberation. Vendor selection timelines are as follows:

Opportunity posted on ESPC website	March 7, 2022
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Deadline for EDI consultants to proposal	17:00 on March 18, 2022
Review of proposals by the Council	March 21-April 1, 2022
Offer to preferred EDI consultant	By April 5, 2022
Communication to unsuccessful EDI consultants	By April 8, 2022

Requested Proposal:

Proposals submitted in response to this request must include:

- a proposed work plan outlining deliverables, major tasks and milestones to achieve the deliverables identified above, with costing for each major task and the project as a whole;
- concise information on the expertise/knowledge of the vendor, which could include descriptions of the consultant's previous completed projects and their outcomes related to EDI work in the non-profit sector;
- biographical information detailing the qualifications and experience of the consultant(s) who will be doing the work;
- a primary contact person(s) and contact information for the proposal; and
- a confirmation the consultant can complete the deliverable within the parameters of the budget.

The proposal should be formatted as follows:

- the total page count of the proposal, including supplementary information but not the cover page, must be no more than fifteen (15) pages (12 point font, 1" margins);
- two references, with contact information, must be provided; and
- electronic copies of the proposal must be submitted, in PDF, to the following e-mail address: info@edmontonsocialplanning.ca.

Proposal Assessment:

The Council will review proposals based on the following considerations:

Fit/compatibility	Does the applicant demonstrate an ability to work successfully with the Council's Board and staff? Does the applicant demonstrate an ability to work with a non-profit organization and volunteer board members?
Expertise	Does the applicant demonstrate considerable subject matter expertise, and experience in supporting organizations with equity, diversity and inclusion audits, particularly in the context of smaller organizations?
Proposed work plan	Is the work plan reasonable, feasible and realistic to achieve? Is the applicant prepared to answer probing questions about its proposed work plan?
Client knowledge	Does the applicant demonstrate knowledge of the Council and its role? Can the applicant demonstrate that its approach reflects this knowledge?

References	Do references from previous clients speak positively of the applicants work?
Cost	Does the proposal set out costs for each major task and for the project overall, including sales tax and disbursements, if any? Is there a contingency amount included? Are the costs reasonable given the overall proposal?

Contacts for Additional Information and Question:

Additional questions can be directed to:

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