



City of Hendersonville, NC

Request for Proposal # 20221002002

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consultancy Services

Date Issued: January 7, 2022

Bid Opening Date: February 28, 2022

Direct all inquiries concerning this RFP to:

Logan Hickey

Procurement and Contract Administrator

160 6th Avenue East

828-233-3203



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I. Purpose and Background

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to obtain proposals from qualified Diversity, Equity and Inclusion consulting teams or a consultant to 1) provide a comprehensive strategic assessment and to 2) develop a strategic plan that will guide executive leadership in developing, planning and implementing a comprehensive strategy to increase diversity, equity and inclusion that will continue to embrace employees through education, training and outreach. This initiative aligns with our strategic objectives with a focus on support for all employees, residents, and the local business community.

The contract will be awarded to the vendor deemed to have submitted the best overall proposal based on the factors included in this RFP. This service is intended for use by the city’s Administrative Department for the previously described purpose above. The City may cancel this RFP or reject proposals at any time prior to an award and is not required to furnish a statement of the reason why a particular proposal was not deemed to be the most advantageous. The award document will be a contract incorporating by reference all the requirements, items, and conditions of the RFP. **The City of Hendersonville reserves the right to reject any and all submissions.**

The City Manager’s Office will serve as the point of contact for setup, implementation, maintenance, use, account questions, and billing.

II. Procurement Process

2.A Timeline/Schedule

- Release of RFQ: January 7, 2022
- Deadline for Vendor Questions: February 14, 2022
- RFP Due Date: February 28, 2022 at 10 AM EST
- Notification of Short-Listed Offerors: March 18, 2022
- Interviews with Short Listed Offerors: March 21- April 1, 2022
- Anticipated Award Date: April 7, 2022
- Effective Contract Date: April 14, 2022



2.B Interpretations and Clarifications

Requests for information or clarification of this RFP must be made in writing and addressed to John Connet, City Manager at the address or e-mail address listed below. E-mail is the preferred method of communication. RFP Number, Page Number (if applicable), and Topic of Question should be addressed.

Logan Hickey
Procurement and Contract Administrator
160 6th Avenue E
Hendersonville, NC 28792
E-mail: lhickey@hvlnc.gov

Per Section A, all questions must be received by 5:00 PM EST on February 14, 2022. The answers to questions submitted that require a response will be available to all vendors in the form of an addendum via e-mail. **February 21, 2022 will be the last date of addendum for this solicitation.**

2.C Submission of RFP

One (1) original and one electronic file (either on media submitted with the proposal or by email prior to the deadline) of the proposal shall be submitted by 2:00 PM on Monday, February 28, 2022 to:

Logan Hickey
Procurement and Contract Administrator
160 6th Avenue East
Hendersonville, NC 28793
E-mail: lhickey@hvlnc.gov

- Proposals should be clearly marked "RFP for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consultant" .
- When received, all proposals and supporting materials, as well as correspondence relating to the RFP, shall become the property of the City of Hendersonville. Proposals sent by fax will not be accepted.
- Proposals will not be made available to inspect or copy until the contract has been awarded.



- In submitting a proposal, it is understood by the vendor that the City of Hendersonville reserves the right to accept any proposal IN WHOLE OR IN PART, to reject any and all proposals as non-responsive, and to waive any irregularities or informalities in proposals when to do so is in the best interest of the City.
- Any proposal may be withdrawn or modified by written request of the vendor, provided such request is received by the City at the designated address prior to the date and time set for receipt of proposals.
- If a proposal includes any proprietary data or information, such data or information must be specifically identified as such on every page on which it is found. Data or information so identified will remain confidential to the extent allowed by North Carolina law pursuant to GS 132-1.2 and will be used by City personnel solely for the purposes of evaluating proposals and conducting contract negotiations. The practice of labeling unqualified pages as confidential, including the bid form, may result in a proposal being dismissed from evaluation.
- All proposing firms or individuals shall comply with all conditions, requirements, and specifications contained herein, with any departure constituting sufficient cause for rejection of the proposal. However, the City reserves the right to change the conditions, requirements, and specifications as it deems necessary.
- No proposals will be accepted from any person or organization that is in arrears for any obligation to the City, or that otherwise may be deemed irresponsible or unresponsive by City staff or the City of Hendersonville City Council.
- All prices quoted must be firm for a period of 90 (ninety) days following the proposal deadline to allow for evaluation and a contract award period.
- The cost of preparing a response to the RFP will not be reimbursed by the City.
- All proposals must include all necessary brochures of proposed service, platform, and related software.
- No agreements with any selected vendor shall be binding until a contract is signed and executed by City Council or City Manager and authorized representatives of the vendor.

2.D Proposal Format/Content

Offerors should prepare their proposals in accordance with the instructions outlined in this section. Each offeror is required to submit the proposal following the instructions listed in Section "2.C Submission of RFP". Proposals should be prepared as simply as possible and provide a straightforward, concise description of the proposer's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP.

Vendor Name:

The successful offeror's proposal must include all responses to the requirements contained within this RFP and all appendices (if applicable) must be completed in their entirety.

By submitting a proposal, the successful offeror's firm agrees to all applicable provisions, terms and conditions associated with this RFP.

This RFP, the successful bidder's submitted proposal, all appendices, and attachments (if applicable), and stated terms and conditions may become part of the resulting contract.

Utmost attention should be given to accuracy, completeness, and clarity of content. All parts, pages, figures, or tables should be numbered and clearly labeled. Response information should be limited to pertinent information only. Marketing and sales type information is not to be included. Proposals shall be 8 1/2" x 11" with one (1) inch margins with Arial or Times New Roman font and text size minimum of eleven (11) points. Charts and screenshots are not restricted to formatting requirements; however, please use your judgment for decipherability.

The proposal should be organized into sections:

- **Tab A** – Cover Letter
- **Tab B** – Company Background/Experience
- **Tab C** – Capability Statement
- **Tab D** – DEI Work Samples
- **Tab E** – Project Team/Staff
- **Tab F** – Price Information
- **Tab G** – Required Signature Forms; Appendix A - Proposal Submission Form and Appendix B - Addenda Receipt and Anti-Collusion

2.D.1 Tab A Cover Letter Contents

Provide an overview to include company name, corporate history, and number of years in business under the current organizational name and structure, services offered, location of principal place of business and evidence of authority to do business in North Carolina. Specifically, state if you are submitting a proposal as a consulting firm, independent consultant or joint proposal. Describe your interest in this project and the unique advantage your firm and team bring to the project. The cover letter may be a maximum of three (3) pages.

Provide the following information about your company. Respond to each item and provide supporting documentation and/or exhibits as requested or desired.

- Full Legal Company Name (and indicate whether company operates under any assumed names)
 - Address
 - Telephone Number
 - Fax Number
 - E-mail Address
 - Name of Single Point of Contact

Vendor Name:

- Name of Person with binding authority to enter into contracts
- List the type of firm or organization (corporation, partnership, joint venture, etc.) that will serve as the prime contracting party.
- Describe your company's purpose, mission and values and explain how they will support the relationship with the City by providing the services listed in this RFP.
- Make the following representations and warranty in the cover letter, the falsity of which might result in rejection of its proposal: "The information contained in this proposal or any part thereof, including any exhibits, schedules, and other documents and instruments delivered or to be delivered to the City, is true, accurate, and complete."

2.D.2 Tab B Company Background/Experience

This section provides each company with the opportunity of demonstrating how its history, organization and experience qualify your company for this project. Careful attention should be paid to providing information relevant to the City needs as described in the RFP.

- History and Profile
 - Provide a concise profile of the offeror's organization to include the following:
 - Corporate history, and number of years in business under the current organizational name, structure and services offered.
 - Summarize the firms work on projects similar in size and complexity.
 - Share history of meeting project deadlines.
 - Are audited or otherwise verifiable financial statements available upon request?
 - Is the bidder's organization involved in any pending litigation that may affect its ability to provide the consulting services for this project?
- References
 - Fill out Section VI to provide contact information for three of your current (last 3 years) customers including organization name and the following:
 - Company Name
 - Name of Contact
 - Phone Number
 - Email Address
 - Title of Project

2.D.3 Tab C Capacity Statement

- Provide a Capability statement that demonstrates your organization's ability to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion services as described in the scope of work section for this RFP.
- Summarize how your firm would approach meeting the requirements listed in scope of work section.
- Provide a summary implementation that aligns with the scope of work.



- Provide a draft timeline that aligns with completing the requested DEI assessment and implementation as described in the scope of work.

2.D.4 Tab D DEI Work Samples

- Provide evidence of prior experience or a sample DEI plan that your firm developed, performed a comprehensive DEI assessment, and implemented the approved plan. If your firm is responding to a portion of this RFP provide the requested sample accordingly.
- Provide evidence of prior experience or a sample plan on developing and implementing a DEI training and education strategy to increase organizational and individual awareness, knowledge, and skills.

2.D.5 Tab E Project Team/Staff

- List the number of staff assigned to this project.
- Provide resumes for the Project Manager and for other team member assigned to this project (up to 2 pages per resume).
- List the percentage of time each team member will dedicate to this project
 - Briefly describe the role and percentage of time the team member will spend on this project.
- Include name(s) of sub-consultant and list their role (if applicable)

2.D.6 Tab F Price Information

- Include all cost associated with preparing and completing this project as described in this RFP.
- Include hourly rate information for assigned staff.
- The City may request additional price information as needed.

2.D.7 Tab G Required Forms

Include complete and signed Section VII in your response.

2.E Pricing

Vendor must provide a list of all known and anticipated costs for each service provided. The vendor should complete each of the proposal terms included in this proposal.

Requirements:

- Upgrades and requested options shall be specifically identified the first month of the addition to the City invoice.
- No third-party billing will be acceptable.
- All additions later in the contract term will be at the same price, term, and conditions of the original award.



- The vendor must identify in the proposal all occasions when charges are not covered by the contract and present a proposed range of charges.
- The vendor may not increase pricing at any time during the contract. However, the vendor may at any time evaluate the usage and offer a lower rate.

2.F Other Process Note

- It is the desire of the City of Hendersonville to contract with vendors within the City and Henderson County whenever possible. The City has a responsibility to its citizens and local businesses; however, the City must ensure taxpayer money is spent with prudence. The City will not award this contract based on the location of the vendor; however, every effort will be made to encourage qualified local vendors and suppliers to compete for City business.

III. Selection Process

3.A Purpose

- The purpose of the RFP is to select a vendor to provide consultancy services of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the City of Hendersonville, NC.
- Upon review of proposals, the City will select a single vendor to provide the services sought within the content of this RFP. If awarded, the City will award a contract to the vendor that submits the best overall proposal, as determined by the City. Negotiations may be undertaken with the vendor whose proposal is the best overall and whose understanding, qualifications, experience, technical approach, and financial terms show them to be qualified, responsible, and capable of providing the services.
- The contract awarded as a result of this RFP will be selected based on the most advantageous to the City and best meeting the needs of the City. The contract will not necessarily be awarded to the respondent with the lowest overall cost proposal.

3.B Selection Criteria

A weighted analysis of the evaluation criteria will be utilized to determine the vendor that represents the best value solution for the City.

In the evaluation and score/ranking of Offerors, the Owner will consider the information submitted in the proposal as well as the meetings with respect to the evaluation criteria set forth in the RFP.

The initial evaluation criteria/factors and relative weights listed below will be used to



recommend selection of the Proposed Offeror or for the purpose of selecting Short-Listed Offerors. The City may choose to award without engaging in interview discussion.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored by a committee consisting of City administration and members of the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee on the basis of the following criteria in combination with a scoring matrix.

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Company Background and Experience	20%
Capability Statement and DEI Work Samples	35%
Project Team/Staff	25%
Price Information and Compliance with RFP Requirements	20%

After identification of Short-Listed Offerors, the Owner may or may not decide to invite Short-Listed firms to interview. If interviews are scheduled with the Short-Listed Offerors, previous evaluation and rankings are not carried forward. For the purpose of selecting a Preferred Offeror, the evaluation criteria will be given the following relative weights.

Interview Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Technical Approach, Capability and Project Team/Staffing	60%
Price, Quality and Relevance of Interviews/Presentation as it relates to the Scope of the RFP	40%

The City will make a final selection based on the evaluation committee’s recommendation and such other factors as the City deems to be in its best interest, which factors shall be recorded.

3.C Award Procedures

The City reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals received. Therefore, it is important that the proposal be submitted initially on the most favorable terms. It is understood that any proposal submitted will become part of the public record.

A proposal may be rejected if it is incomplete. The City may reject any or all proposals and may waive any immaterial deviation in a proposal.

The City may accept that proposal that best serves its needs, as determined by City officials in their sole discretion.

More than one proposal from an individual, firm, partnership, corporation or association under the same or different names, will not be considered.

At the Owner’s discretion, it will initiate negotiations with the Preferred Offeror. The “Preferred Offeror” is the Offeror that the Owner determines achieves the apparent best overall



score/ranking. If the Owner is unable to execute a contract with the Preferred Offeror, negotiations with the Preferred Offeror may be terminated, and provided that such negotiation are terminated in writing, the Owner may proceed to negotiate with the next Preferred Offeror. The Owner will continue in accordance with this procedure until a contract agreement is reached or the selection process is terminated. Negotiations are at the Owner's sole discretion.

The award document will be a Contract incorporating, by reference, all the requirements, terms and conditions of the solicitation and the Offeror's proposal as negotiated.

IV. Preferred Specifications/Requirements

4.A General Information

The City of Hendersonville is committed to creating a culture that is inclusive and promotes a collective mixture of similarities and differences. We are conducting a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) assessment to assist the City with developing a comprehensive DEI Strategic Plan that will align with the City's strategic objectives. The scope of this assessment will be comprehensive. At a minimum, the scope will include a review of operational and comparative measures, opinions, and industry applicable analysis. The analysis and assessment will:

1. Include the review of the culture of current operations.
2. Address racial, gender, identity, age, and other inequities that may impact the workforce.
3. Identify industry best practice models.
4. Include benchmarks for the future
5. Identify the City's strengths and areas of opportunity to assist with developing DEI strategies that supports workforce diversity and organizational strengthening.

The comprehensive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) assessment should include the information listed below and other applicable industry best practices that will provide the City with a high-quality DEI Strategic Plan.

6. Conduct pre-assessment activities/meetings with Executive Leadership.
7. Work with leadership and other designated staff to develop DEI goals, objectives, and strategies.
8. Integrate DEI into internal processes across the organization to support the City's strategic objectives.
9. Identify gaps in workforce engagement involving diversity, equity and inclusion and recommend how to improve/close the gaps.



10. Use information from the assessment to assist with determining what areas need culturally specific trainings and employee engagement. Example: the construct of race and racism, understanding the LGBTQ community, and inclusion of all regardless of their abilities or disabilities.
11. Ensure that the City understands the importance of having a diverse and inclusive culture that supports all residents.
12. Provide guidance to assist the City with attracting and retaining a talented and diverse workforce with the ability to work collaboratively across differences to achieve organizational objectives.
13. Assist the City in learning how to establish and implement a comprehensive DEI program infrastructure that creates and sustains an inclusive workplace that embraces diversity.
14. Assist the City with developing agency wide metrics to track the impact and effectiveness of DEI strategies on the City's workforce culture.
15. Provide a resource plan that includes identifying staff, finances, technology, and operational resources needed to implement the DEI Strategic Plan

Implementation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan will occur after the assessment process has been successfully completed. The implementation of a strategic plan may or may not be implemented by the same company that conducts the DEI assessment.

16. Collaborate with the City's Administration department to develop and implement a DEI Marketing campaign.
17. Assist the organization with implementing industry best practices as it relates to workforce DEI employee resource groups, mentoring and coaching.
18. Provide technical assistance to Executive Leadership and Directors to establish DEI Performance measures, strategies or programs that address identified gaps that align with the City's strategic objectives.
19. Provide guidance on the development of key performance indicators, and analyze and share observations regarding programmatic practice, internal and external diversity and inclusion metrics, and organizational culture and practice.
20. Assist the City with implementing an employee led DEI Committee comprised of department representatives. This committee would provide ongoing awareness of bias and present recommendations on how to resolve issues.
21. Assist the organization with the implementation of a dashboard/scorecard to report progress



4.B DE&I Training Plan

Assist Human Resources staff with developing an accessible and usable DEI training plan that the City can commit to for continuous learning that includes, at a minimum, the following topics:

22. Understanding implicit bias and its effects.
23. Building a common language and shared knowledge of DEI.
24. The importance of building an inclusive workplace and facilitating/fostering workplace change.

Use information from the assessment to assist with developing Training plans for the workforce to support the DEI Strategic Plan.

Implement training listed in the DEI Strategic Plan and other comparable training as needed.

4.C Deliverables

25. A project plan with timelines that includes cost.
26. Develop a comprehensive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion analyses of the organization.
27. A comprehensive DEI Strategic Plan.
28. A leadership readiness assessment that is conducted analyzed and interpreted.
29. Organizational needs assessment that is conducted.
30. Conduct Leadership DEI education workshops.
31. Develop and execute (if applicable) a training and education strategy that will increase the awareness, knowledge, and skills of our staff as it pertains to DEI.
32. Identify opportunities for improvements with suggestions regarding how to operationalize those improvements.
33. Provide knowledge and insight on best inclusion practices in the field.
34. Communications and marketing plan.
35. Develop and implement DEI dashboard/performance measures.
36. Develop a strategy and plan for implementation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee
37. Develop a long-term DEI roadmap that is aligned with the City's strategic objectives and will ensure that barriers to inclusion continue to decrease, while internal awareness, knowledge and skills continue to increase.

4.D Other Information

Interested firms or consultant(s) are encouraged to submit a proposal covering all areas listed in the scope of work section of this RFP. However, the City of Hendersonville will consider proposals from offerors for separate segments of the project scope. It is the responsibility of each offeror to clearly state if their proposal is for the full scope or segments (list each) of the scope.



- Insurance for all vehicles used in the performance of this contract must be in place at minimum in amounts of at least \$300,000.00 per person and \$500,000.00 per occurrence for personal injury and wrongful death; and at least \$100,000 for property damage; and medical payment coverage of at least \$5,000.00 per occurrence.
- Professional Insurance
 - Contractor shall also maintain professional liability insurance with minimum limits of \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence, combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage coverage, and shall include premises and operations, independent contractors, products and completed operations, contractual liability, and broad form property damage. The City shall be named as an additional insured on each of said insurance policies. Contractor shall furnish copies of all such policies and all renewals, terminations, and alterations to the City on a current basis.

5.B Certificates and Notice of Cancellation

Before commencing work under this contract, Contractor shall furnish City with certificates of all insurance required below. Certificates shall indicate the type, amount, class of operations covered, effective date and expiration date of all policies, and shall contain the following statement:

"The insurance covered by this certificate must have a notice endorsement providing that insurance will not be cancelled or materially altered, **except after thirty (30) days written notice** has been received by City".

5.C Indemnify the City

Contractor agrees to protect, defend, indemnify and hold the City, and its officers, employees and agents free and harmless from and against any and all losses, penalties, damages, settlements, recoveries, costs, charges, and other expenses or liability of every kind and character arising out of or relating to any and all claims, liens, demands, obligations, actions, proceedings or causes of action of every kind and character in connection with or arising directly or indirectly out of this agreement and or the performance hereof. Contractor further agrees to investigate, handle, respond to and provide defense for any such claim at his sole expense.

5.D Termination of the Contract

The City reserves the right to cancel the contract by giving a sixty-day written notice. This is in addition to a fiscal year end cancellation caused by lack of funding. Any cancellation as described herein will not be considered a breach of contract and will not be subject to penalty payments other than removal charges.



5.E Administrative Requirements

- Vendor must provide a single designated account manager to work with the City as a point of contact who will have full authority over the contract, equipment and personnel who will be assigned to the City. This individual should have experience in the copier business with a background in service, sales, and management. Also, include the number of additional personnel and their responsibilities who will be assigned to the City.
 - Designated Account Point of Contact:
 - Name: _____
 - Phone: _____
 - Email: _____
- The vendor must provide one invoice emailed to the appointed City Contact. The City prefers to be billed on a monthly basis for all transaction costs and related fees. The invoice shall at minimum include the following info:
 1. Invoice number
 2. Bill date
 3. Department Name and Location

VI. Reference List

References for which you have done business in the last (3) three years. Preferred consideration will be made for City/City entities).

Name of Contact	Company Name	Phone #	Email Address	Title of Project
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



VII. Bid Response Sheet

Electronic Payment System/Service
Service Agreement
City of Hendersonville, North Carolina

Bid furnished by: _____

Address: _____

Telephone #: _____ Fax# _____

Tax ID# _____

I (we) have carefully examined the Bid Information, reviewed the Bid Specifications, and all Addenda and therefore furnish the bid proposal as shown below.

The City will not award this contract based on the location of the vendor; however, every effort will be made to encourage qualified local vendors and suppliers to compete for City business.

Please attach additional proposals as separate pages added to the bid response. Include both a summary and detail.

Name of Point of Contact dedicated to the City of Hendersonville:

_____	_____	_____	_____
Name	Phone Number	Email Address	Title

Additional personnel and responsibilities who will be dedicated to the City:

_____	_____	_____	_____
Name	Phone Number	Email Address	Responsibility



Date of Bid Proposal: _____

By: _____
Authorized signature

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

The following signatures acknowledges vendor receipt of all RFP addenda. Failure to sign this portion of the bid will result in an irresponsive bid proposal.

By: _____
Authorized signature

Date of Signature: _____