



MINNESOTA COUNCIL  
ON FOUNDATIONS

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): DEI CONSULTANT

## Purpose of Request

Following a long-time commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion which was carried out variously by the organization's leader, shared staff capacity, and a DEI committee, in 2019 the Minnesota Council on Foundations created a full-time DEI Director position. This position is currently open. The organization seeks to retain a consultant with significant DEI expertise to assist with updating, and potentially restructuring the role with an emphasis on MCF's commitment to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism within MCF and throughout the philanthropic community.

Consultant activities and deliverables are expected to include:

1. Interviews with interested parties such as staff, DEI committee leaders, board members and member organizations
2. MCF member focus group(s)
3. Environmental scan of related roles, including in Minnesota's nonprofit and philanthropic sectors, and within MCF's national network of Philanthropy Serving Organizations
4. Recommendations for staffing strategies

Prospective consultants are welcome to contact MCF president Susie Brown for further information and discussion of the opportunity. She can be reached at [sbrown@mcf.org](mailto:sbrown@mcf.org) or 612-335-3557.

Please deliver proposals to MCF president Susie Brown at [sbrown@mcf.org](mailto:sbrown@mcf.org).

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## RFP TIMELINE

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<b>May 9, 2023</b>	RFP announced
<b>June 9, 2023</b>	Proposals due
<b>Mid June, 2023</b>	Review of proposals, interviews and reference checks
<b>Late June, 2023</b>	We aim to select the consultant before June 30
<b>September, 2023</b>	Project concludes around Labor Day

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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The Minnesota Council on Foundations (MCF) is an association of grantmakers working to advance prosperity and equity through connecting, strengthening and mobilizing the field of philanthropy in Minnesota. The organization's 150 members represent grantmaking throughout the state, annually providing millions of dollars and non-financial resources to nonprofits. Members include family and independent foundations, community foundations, grantmaking public charities, and corporate foundations and giving programs.

MCF has had a long commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. The emphasis of this work has taken many forms over the years, including a focus on trainings and workshops, purchasing through diverse vendors, an emphasis on philanthropy's role as employers, and providing a fellowship which created opportunities for professionals of color to work in philanthropy, among other strategies. Since 2019, the focus has included: updating organizational definitions of diversity, equity and inclusion; implementing a commitment to being an anti-racist organization; updating employment policies with an equity lens; including DEI and anti-racism in all employee job descriptions, goals and annual reviews; including DEI and anti-racism in annual board goals; examining organizational culture by using the Transforming Organizational Culture Assessment; developing and offering to members the Transforming Philanthropy curriculum (adapted from the Transforming White Privilege curriculum); hosting the People of Color network for members; incorporating equity and justice into updated Principles for Philanthropy; engaging in regular staff learning opportunities; adding the chair of the DEI committee to the Executive Committee; codifying "advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism within MCF and throughout the philanthropic community" in MCF's updated strategic framework; and more. The emphasis has been significantly, but not exclusively, internal in nature. Today we recognize the importance of updating the position to continue MCF's internal growth and learning, while expanding our impact in the broader philanthropic community. We understand that there may be a new way to staff MCF's DEI efforts toward impact.

Note: While MCF has historically used the terms diversity, equity and inclusion to represent this body of work, it recognizes that different or additional terms (such as justice, belonging, etc.) are also frequently used. The organization will use DEI for this engagement but is open to changing the way it describes the work in the future.

**Current Opportunity:** We seek a consultant who will assist MCF in updating its DEI staff structure and capacity. Specifically, through the consultant's work, MCF will gain insights about how to re-structure the open DEI director role for maximum relevance and impact. It will draw on insights of staff, board and members, with an emphasis on maximizing MCF's unique role and opportunity to advance diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism within MCF and throughout the philanthropic community. This is expected to be a largely remote engagement, but some in-person activities may be necessary.

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## QUALIFICATIONS + SERVICES REQUESTED

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MCF seeks a consultant who brings the following to this engagement:

- Deep expertise in: diversity, equity and inclusion; intercultural competency; and/or anti-racism work in organizations.
- An understanding of philanthropy, and its role and relationships in the community.
- Experience analyzing and/or developing staffing models and strategies.
- Comfort using a wide range of engagement tools and approaches.
- Experience collecting input through interviews, focus groups, surveys, and other methods.
- Excellent facilitation skills and ability to carry them out both in-person and in remote settings.
- Ability to engage with people and groups who represent a variety of roles, including staff, the board of directors, members/grantmakers, and community members.
- Experience in Minnesota (desired, but not required).

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## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

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MCF's president, and a small group of staff and/or board members, will review proposals and engage in further discussion with those that seem to be best aligned with the organization's needs. They seek to understand the following information from prospective consultants, which can be presented by answering these questions directly and in this order, or another way, if preferred. Answers may be any length that best represents interest and experience. Proposals can be delivered in a word or pdf document, or a short video, attached to an email. Those who have barriers to providing their response in one of these formats may contact Susie Brown at 612-335-3557 to discuss alternatives.

- A. Why are you interested in working with the Minnesota Council on Foundations at this time?
- B. Share your experience doing DEI and/or anti-racism work. If applicable, elaborate on your experience with DEI staffing strategies and role development.
- C. Describe your experience gathering stakeholder input using varied tools, or your relationship with a partner whose experience you will rely on for this engagement.
- D. Share the ways you bring diverse thought, perspectives and/or lived experience to this engagement, particularly in the areas of: race/ethnicity; gender; sexual orientation; ability; rural geography.
- E. Tell us how you will structure your fees for this project and, given the expectations of this engagement, what you estimate the cost to be. Note: MCF has budgeted up to \$15,000 for this engagement.
- F. Feel free to add anything else that you wish to have considered.

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## SELECTION CRITERIA

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Proposals will be evaluated by MCF's president and other members of the staff and board. All proposals will be evaluated using the same criteria, as follows:

- **Ability to Be Successful** — MCF will consider the answers to common questions, and any other material prospective consultants wish to submit for consideration, to determine the ability to be successful in this engagement.
- **Diversity** – MCF seeks diversity of lived experience, thought and perspective in all roles, including consultants and vendors, particularly in the areas of: race/ethnicity; gender; sexual orientation; ability; rural geography. MCF also values experience working with organizations on: diversity, equity and inclusion; intercultural competence; and/or anti-racism.
- **References**— For those consultants most aligned with the needs of this project, we will contact three references provided by the prospective consultant. We may consider reputation, knowledge of prior work, and informal feedback from peers, when applicable.
- **Interviews**—MCF may conduct interviews as part of the selection process.

The decision to engage a particular consultant to work with MCF will be based on many factors detailed in the request for proposal. No single factor will determine the final decision.

The Minnesota Council on Foundations connects, strengthens and mobilizes Minnesota's vibrant philanthropic community to advance prosperity and equity. Learn more at [mcf.org](https://mcf.org) **#WeAreMCF**

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*May 2023*