

City of Clemson, South Carolina

Request for Proposals

Diversity Equity and Inclusion Assessment and Program Development



Scope of Services and Desired Outcomes

Summary

Like many communities, the City of Clemson has challenges related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Localized small steps have not resulted in significant changes to job candidate pools, public commission membership, and public perception. We recognize that larger efforts are required, and that these efforts should permeate local ordinances, infrastructure improvements, marketing and hiring, public events, and appointments to commissions and boards.

The City of Clemson seeks to hire professionals who will assist the City administration in a) conducting an audit of current practices and public perception; b) training personnel in practices and policies related to DEI; and c) developing a long-term strategy to assimilate the new practices into City policies and actions.

For our purposes, we define DEI so that we include race, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical and mental disabilities, age, and income.

It is hoped that the process will include multiple in-person discussions, focus groups, and exercises that involve as many stakeholders as possible. At the conclusion of the contract period, we seek to establish equitable practices.

The DEI Audit

The DEI audit should include a review of existing documents regarding program information and evaluation, surveys, human resource policies and procedures, marketing materials, the City website, and other pertinent documents to develop a comprehensive picture of the organizational climate in relation to its goal of racial equity. It will be helpful to include samples of policies and activities in other communities.

This work may be completed before or during the DEI program development, as recommended by the consultant. Audit elements are expected to include, at a minimum:

- Assessments of programs, policies, structures, practices, and culture resulting in qualitative and quantitative data regarding the current work and workplace of the City of Clemson, as well as stakeholder perspectives and expectations for future organizational culture change in relation to racial equity programming and practice.
- A comprehensive written report of the audit detailing its process, key themes, analysis of the gaps and disconnects between the current and future/desired state of the organization, and opportunities to build upon. The report should include recommendations for embedding new inclusive policies and practices into the organization's culture and into all function areas (as noted earlier) of the City, including achievable short-term action steps and sustainable, long-term goals.
- A field scan of complementary efforts done by other cities and municipalities.

Once material is collected and analyzed, the consultants will prepare a detailed summary report, including but not limited to an analysis outlining key themes, recommendations for incorporating action steps into administrative and programmatic areas, and a compilation of racial equity programs of similar organizations.

DEI Program

Assessment

In conjunction with designated city staff, assess the City of Clemson's culture to determine employee and management competencies in the areas of DEI. Evaluate opportunities and challenges using this assessment and use it as the basis to develop program and training recommendations.

Data Analysis

Provide aid in reviewing and interpreting available demographic data for the City in relation to our workforce and the community we serve. Review data on services provided by the City to understand patterns in services, funding, and opportunities relative to traditionally underserved neighborhoods. Recommend additional data that could be developed to inform City practices moving forward.

Policy Review

Review existing City-wide and Departmental-specific policies and procedures with a DEI lens and make recommendations for updates or creation of new ones. Review community and elected official involvement and participation in City activities and make recommendations to ensure City activities align with community goals. Review City housing and employment data and City land use policies to recommend policy options to create a diverse, vibrant community.

Recommendations

Development of recommendation(s) for a comprehensive DEI program for the City, which we expect to include components of in-person and online training for all staff and elected officials. The City also seeks recommendations for training opportunities for the City's volunteer boards and commissions.

Recommendations should address how to build stakeholder and community engagement processes into our work and ensure that each of our steps and actions include an element of capacity building. Other components to include:

- Conduct outreach to and communication with key community partners on issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). Communicate findings both positive and negative, and need for adjustments to approach and operations, to citizens through the City's boards and commissions, and other civic and neighborhood partners.
- Recommend any external citizen/community-oriented DEI activities needed to complement and enhance City of Clemson work.
- Advise on the formation of a Diversity Advisory Council (DAC), which would be appointed by City Council and consist of community members and city staff. The DAC would work to meet the diversity and human rights goals established by City Council and the needs of the City, both as a municipality and as a community.
- The Consultant would provide the first sessions of training for City staff with a goal of training an internal employee to conduct future sessions.

Program Structure

We expect the proposed program to address, at a minimum, the following elements:

- DEI lenses addressing socioeconomic status, implicit bias, gender, LGBTQIA, race, language, ethnicity, and religion;
- City-wide housing, transportation and economic issues/policies influencing community diversity;
- Identification of internal systems to support integration and continued growth of DEI culture within the City of Clemson post-training.
- Development and implementation of strategies to increase workforce and advisory committee diversity (e.g. recruitment and interviewing processes, retention strategies, professional development, etc.). Development of internal programs and external communication strategies to inform diverse populations of the City's activities and invite them to participate.

Integration

Recommendations and/or suggestions on ways to integrate and expand the program into one that is outward facing and addressing the DEI needs of our patrons, community partners and the diverse populations we serve.

Aim to build stakeholder and community engagement processes into the work and ensure that each of our steps and actions include an element of capacity building.

- Conduct outreach to and communication with key community partners on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Communicate findings both positive and negative, and need for adjustments to approach and operations, to citizens through the City's boards and commissions and other civic and neighborhood partners.
- Recommend city-wide DEI activities needed to coordinate with the City's efforts

Evaluation

Recommendations and implementation of methods to evaluate program success, including post-training cultural survey and final report on project. Recommendations on steps needed to ensure the program is a part of City culture for the long term.

Responders should include a statement regarding how they will approach the project and why this approach is beneficial. Responders should also provide a timeline and cost for each process used to achieve the goals of the RFP.

Any transformative change effort and commitment comes from the inside-out. Responders should outline who they anticipate would need to be involved in the effort from the City, what their expectations are for their partnership with the City, including how much time is anticipated for each internal partner to commit to the work.

Selection Process:

The City will use a two-step process in making its selection.

1. An RFP, as the first step, will be issued to all parties who respond to South Carolina Business Opportunities (SCBO) notice advising of the proposed project or who otherwise learn of the project and register their interest as instructed.
2. After an evaluation of all RFP submittals received, the City intends to invite a short list of respondents to make presentations to the selection committee. The selection of the short-listed firms will be based on the criteria established in this RFP. Firms not short-listed will be notified. Selection/advancement to the short-list will be made at the City's sole discretion.

Evaluation Criteria:

The criteria used to evaluate the RFP responses will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Qualifications of the Respondent, specifically as they relate to this Project.
- Experience and qualifications of the Respondent on similar projects and the individuals who would be assigned to this Project.
- Public participation strategies and past participation results from similar projects.
- Available resources to complete the project
- Responsiveness to the RFP
- References
- Body of work, both completed and ongoing.

(Items listed above are not necessarily listed in order of importance)

Submission and Delivery:

Firm(s) interested in being considered for this project should submit seven (7) bound copies and one (1) electronic copy via email no later than 2:00 P.M. on May 5, 2023.

Proposals should be delivered to the attention of:

David A. Blondeau
City Administrator
City of Clemson
1250 Tiger Blvd. Suite 1
Clemson, SC 29631
Email: ablondeau@cityofclemson.org
Office: 864-653-2072

Additional Questions, Notifications, and Information:

1. Any attempt by a Respondent to influence the selection process by any means, other than disclosure of qualifications and credentials, will be grounds for exclusion from the selection process.
2. By submitting a response, respondents represent and warrant to the City that all information provided in the response submitted shall be true, correct, and complete.

3. Respondents who provide false, misleading, or incomplete information, whether intentional or not, in any of the documents presented to the City for consideration in the selection process shall be excluded.
4. Respondents who are “short-listed” should expect and anticipate questions that will most likely focus not only on the Respondent team’s stated approach to the project but also on an appraisal of the professionals who would be directly involved in the Project.
5. Do not contact the Mayor, City Council, or the Selection Panel to make inquiries about the progress of the selection process. Respondents will be contacted when it is appropriate to do so.
6. The City will not be responsible for the costs incurred by anyone in the development of the submittal of RFP responses to this solicitation or responses to the short-list RFP. No submittal documents will be returned.
7. This RFP is not to be construed as a contract or as a commitment of any kind. If this RFP results in a contract offer by the City, the specific scope of work, associated fees, and other contractual matters will be confirmed during contract negotiations.
8. The City reserves the right to evaluate the responses submitted, waive any irregularities therein, select candidates for the submittal of more detailed or alternate proposals, accept any submittal or portion of submittal, and reject any or all Respondents submitting responses should it be deemed in the City’s best interest, or cancel the entire process.
9. The Respondent shall have in effect, for the duration of the contract period, the appropriate liability insurance written by an insurer authorized to transact insurance in the State of South Carolina.
10. All parties in a Response shall, if applicable, be duly licensed to offer said services in the State of South Carolina or be capable of obtaining such license before entering into the contract.

Please direct all inquiries to:

David A. Blondeau
City Administrator
City of Clemson
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Clemson, SC 29631
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Office: 864-653-2072



All inquiries must be submitted by April 20, 2023. All inquiries will be answered via addendum. Proposers should sign all addenda and include them in the RFP.