



Request for Proposals: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Consultant

Dependency Advocacy Center (DAC) is seeking DEI Consultants to finalize and implement its newly developed DEI strategic plan and conduct all staff DEI trainings.

Organization Description

DAC, a nonprofit organization, provides interdisciplinary family defense legal services to indigent parents and children involved with Santa Clara County's child welfare system and the juvenile dependency court. Our adult clients face the risk of permanent separation from their children due to allegations of abuse and neglect. Substance use disorder, intimate partner violence, and mental health concerns are commonly presenting issues, often rooted in the layered effects of poverty, marginalization, and intergenerational trauma. Our approach to holistic family defense utilizes an interdisciplinary team of attorneys, social workers, and mentor parents to create client-centered legal strategies designed to support the family's long-term success.

Founded in 2008, DAC consists of 40 employees from varied disciplines and backgrounds. DAC's offices are in downtown San Jose. Along with this location, staff work in the community, at the courthouse, and have the option to work from home when appropriate.

Project Overview

A staff-driven DEI Committee is leading efforts for DAC to become an actively anti-racist organization and a strong ally to the communities we serve. We recognize the importance of intentional efforts to support individuals of diverse ethnicities, abilities, genders, ages, and sexual orientations. The mission is to create an inclusive and equitable environment where respect, kindness, and empathy guide all interactions with staff, stakeholders, and clients. To that end an organizational assessment with respect to DEI matters was conducted in 2023 and the committee is finalizing a DEI strategic plan. A grant has been secured for the coming year to implement the plan and conduct further DEI trainings.

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit and select a forward-thinking, solutions-driven DEI consultant to conduct either or both of the following:

1. Provide guidance and implementation expertise for DAC's DEI strategic plan.
2. Conduct staff-wide DEI trainings.

DAC's plan for the coming year is to move forward its much-needed DEI initiatives. Internally, DAC's staff come from a wide array of backgrounds including those with lived experience and from the communities our clients come from. While this diversity adds to the richness of the organization, it poses challenges as well regarding communication styles, implicit biases, microaggressions, isolation, etc. Externally, our clients come from marginalized communities and are

disproportionately people of color. Having a tailored implementation of the DEI strategic plan aspires to address both internal dynamics as well as client service delivery. Planned internal issues to address include hiring and onboarding practices, how employees communicate and interact with each other, and creating safe spaces for staff to dialogue. External issues to address include having a better understanding of our clients' circumstances and developing communication skills to better serve our clients. Overall, outcomes we hope to achieve are a better employee experience at the organization and for clients, a better experience of service.

Scope of Work and Deliverables

The following scope of work represents the anticipated activities and deliverables to be conducted by the consultant(s):

- **DEI Strategic Plan Implementation:**
 - Provide guidance and facilitation to DAC's DEI committee, management team, and staff groups.
 - Provide clarity, structure, direction, and accountability to guide DAC's DEI efforts.
 - Finalize DAC's DEI Strategic Plan.
 - Based upon review the 2023 organizational assessment, the finalized DEI strategic plan, and discussions with the DEI Committee/Executive Team, create a detailed implementation plan.
 - Execute the implementation plan.
 - Lead the evaluation component of the grant activities.
 - Create a sustainability plan for DAC to continue its DEI efforts beyond the consultant's work.
- **DEI Trainings for All Staff**
 - Design a minimum of two in-person trainings for all staff consulting with the DAC DEI committee and executive management team.
 - Prepare materials/media for the all-staff trainings.
 - Facilitate/deliver trainings to all staff.
 - Garner feedback from trainings and debrief with the DAC DEI committee and executive management team.

Timeline and Budget

The DEI grant DAC has secured is for 4/1/24 to 3/31/25. The grant allows for time for ramp up and consultant selection. We are looking for creative proposals that can deliver the scope of work in a cost-effective way without compromising quality. All proposals should include a proposed budget and timeline.

There are two components to the RFP (see Scope of Work and Deliverables section) -- proposals will be accepted for either or both parts:

1. **DEI Strategic Plan Implementation**
 - Timeline: we anticipate the implementation consultant engagement will be for approximately 10-12 months.
 - Budget: up to \$60,000.00
2. **DEI Trainings for All Staff**
 - Timeline: a minimum of a two in-person all staff trainings to take place prior to 3/31/25.
 - Budget: up to \$10,000.00

Proposal Instructions

Proposals submitted must include the following information:

1. Name of the proposed independent consultant and name of the representative submitting the proposal. Include all contact information.
2. Identify which component(s) you are proposing to complete.
3. Describe your expertise and specific consulting approach when partnering with a small to medium sized non-profit organization. Please articulate what makes your approach unique and effective. Describe your expertise specifically in review, recommendation of, and implementation of DEI initiatives for organizations in their initial engagement with DEI.
4. Describe the DEI-related work you have most recently completed for organizations like DAC.
5. Identify a minimum of two other organizations that engaged you as a DEI consultant, to serve as business references for your services.
6. Provide a timeline and fees schedule.
7. Proposals submission deadline is 3/31/24.

Evaluation Criteria

The proposals received will be evaluated based on the following criteria to determine each respondent's qualifications. The order does not indicate relative ranking.

1. Demonstration of competence, technical expertise, and experience in implementing DEI initiatives and strategies.
2. Demonstrated record of responsiveness and quality of services provided to prior organizations as provided through feedback from business references.
3. Estimated level of effort, total cost, and a proposed timeline to complete the deliverables, as well as the willingness to offer flexible fee arrangements.
4. Responsiveness to the RFP, including clarity and organization of responses, clear presentation of experience and approach to ensuring the items listed in the scope of work and deliverables are fully met.

Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by DAC to award a contract. DAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or portions of bids received in response to this RFP, to request modification or clarification of any part of a proposal, or to cancel this RFP if it is in the best interest of DAC to do so. DAC may reject any bid if it is considered incomplete or conditional, contains irregularities, or does not meet qualifications, requirements, or specifications. Failure to furnish all information may disqualify the proposal.

Upon selection of a consultant, a contract containing the scope of services, project timeline, and fee schedule will be negotiated.

Proposal Submissions

Interested consultants are asked to submit their proposals via email to Nicole Radden at nradden@sccdac.org. Proposals submission deadline is 3/31/24.