



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **CONSULTANT SERVICES**

### **DEVELOPMENT OF A DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASE I OF THE RESULTING PLAN**

#### **SECTION I - INTRODUCTION**

1.1 **Purpose:** The Chesapeake Bay Trust (Trust), in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network (CBFN), is seeking consulting services to develop a comprehensive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan and implement the first phase of the developed plan.

1.2 **Need:** Many Chesapeake environmental funders acknowledge that the watershed will not be restored without a broad range of communities investing in and reaping the benefits of healthy natural resources (see, e.g., the Trust's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan). Currently, the composition of the Chesapeake Bay community does not reflect the demographic diversity of the region, though some progress has been made. Stories are emerging that demonstrate the ability of the grassroots clean water movement to meaningfully engage with underserved and diverse communities, and public opinion polling indicates a strong interest within diverse communities in environmental issues.

Engaging underserved or under-engaged audiences is important for two reasons. First, given the breadth of the natural resource restoration challenges, the participation level necessary for solutions will only be reached if more communities in the watershed are brought into the effort and natural resource stewards are developed from wider audiences. Second, given that healthy natural resources improve lives in various ways, populations who are not engaged will be at a disadvantage. Humans have capacity to improve natural resources, and natural resources have the capacity to improve human life.

To accomplish this goal, conservation leaders need significant training and support.

The Trust, CBFN and other partners have assessed these needs and have concurrently been piloting a variety of strategies to address them, listed below in the background section of this RFP. These efforts have shown the potential for shifts to occur but have been experimental in nature and have not been informed by, or part of, a long-term commitment and strategy to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into our work. This action plan calls for the development of that strategy.

1.3 **Background:** the Trust and partners have already engaged groups on this issue. A short summary of that work is as follows:

**Trust:**

- In 2006 developed a Diversity and Inclusion plan that focused both internally (policies, staff, and board) and externally (grant-making)
- Established a Diversity and Inclusion Committee to review language in Requests for Proposals
- Committed to diversity and inclusion efforts in 2015-2020 Strategic Plan
- Restructured one of our grant programs in 2016 to be focused entirely on connecting to, mentoring, and engaging new audiences
- Collects demographic information of audiences served through grant-making

**Trust on behalf of CBFN:**

- Community Organizing Training – included training in strategies and tactics to build power in communities by identifying and building trust among community leaders.
- Community Organizing Pilots (see summaries of work in Appendix A) – we provided 3 organizations with training, technical assistance and coaching to design and implement community based projects with underserved communities. In one case, this work included cultural competency training.
- Regional Capacity Building Initiative – This initiative is focused on including watershed and land use groups in the development of cross-sector networks including organizations working across issues important to communities in the region.

**Other partners, such as the Choose Clean Water Coalition:**

- Established DEI advisory committees
- Committed to DEI in strategic plans
- Launching Young Professionals of Color Mentorship Program (YPC)
- Building and promoting a Diversity toolkit - Provides organizations with step-by-step instructions on how to build diversity through governance, hiring, and communications.
- Collecting demographic data at annual conference for two consecutive years

**Chesapeake Bay Program:**

- Developed a Diversity Action Team
- Developed a diversity outcome in the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement
- Is working to identify stakeholder groups of color that are not currently represented in the leadership, decision making, and implementation of current conservation and restoration activities and create meaningful opportunities and programs to recruit and engage them in the Partnership's efforts.

## **SECTION II – SERVICES/SCOPES OF WORK**

### **2.1 Timeline and Amount Available**

Amount Available: \$50,000

Timeline: Work must be completed by December 1, 2017

### **2.2 Scope of Work: The selected Contractor shall:**

Develop a comprehensive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plan to guide future actions of the partners and implement the first phase of the plan. The development of the plan should include the following elements:

1. Assist the partners in reaching a shared vision on diversity, equity and inclusion with the goal of using these principles in our work and becoming a national leader in building a diverse and equitable community.
  - Increase our ability to effectively work and engage with people from different backgrounds.
  - Increase our ability to recognize, respond, and remove organizational barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion
2. Assess readiness to meaningfully address DEI among individual CBFN members
  - Report the results of the assessment via a written status report.
3. Collect and share lessons learned from other DEI initiatives with funders and grantees
  - Incorporate this information into written updates in a format that can be shared with the membership so that the information informs the development of the plan.
4. Engage individual CBFN members and grantees in development of DEI plan
  - Facilitate two DEI planning discussions, one among CBFN and CCWC members and one among a subset of CBFN members' grantees (to be selected by CBFN members).
  - Design and implement DEI/cultural competency workshops, potentially as part of the facilitated discussions referenced above, for members of CBFN and for a subset of the funders' grantees. Because these are different audiences and there may be existing meetings where these can occur the proposal should include design and facilitation of two separate workshops, one for CBFN members and one for the funders' grantee community (subset of grantees to be selected by CBFN members)
5. Develop DEI plan
  - The plan should include sections that are specific to both a funder and a grantee audience, including goals, commitments to achieve them, and measures of success.
  - The plan should include near term actions such as trainings, leadership development, coaching, etc. in the context of a larger, long term strategy to be implemented over time.
  - The plan should address inherent challenges faced in this region related to broad geography, groups working in a range of very rural to dense urban communities, and within what is largely a single issue coalition (e.g. water focused).
  - The plan should address both internal organizational barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion (e.g. staffing, board composition, data collection) and the external facing barriers to better serving diverse constituencies within the organization's jurisdiction.
6. Support CBFN members in a presentation of the plan and communication of next steps at their spring 2017 membership meeting.

7. Design and implement a session on this effort and DEI at two conferences widely attended by grantees of the funders: the 2017 Choose Clean Water Conference and the 2017 Chesapeake Watershed Forum
8. The Trust is the lead and main contact for changes in terms of the contract, invoices and payment related matters. The contractor should include participation in periodic planning calls with the Trust and representatives from the partner groups to report on progress and seek direction regarding next steps.

2.3 Scope of Work – Deliverables.

- Written report of the results of the readiness assessment
- Written summary aggregating lessons learned from other funder’s DEI initiatives with grantee involvement
- Draft DEI plan for review
- Final DEI plan for review
- Draft methodology for advancing phase I of the plan for review and approval
- Phase 1 of DEI plan conducted
- Summarized results and evaluation of Phase I implementation.
- Final report including the resulting plan and summarizing lessons learned from the implementation of Phase I of the plan, including recommendations for next steps and/or other actions to support increased implementation of subsequent elements of the plan.

2.4 **Trust coordination and guidance:** Chesapeake Bay Trust staff (key personnel identified in the contract) will have the following approval authority:

- a) Approving methods for plan development
- b) Approving the final plan developed for implementation
- c) Approving strategies to be implemented as part of the first phase of the plan
- d) Approving final budget.

2.5 **ADD/DEDUCT:** The Trust reserves the right to add or remove items from the base bid proposal during the contract and modify or adjust scope of work and payment as needed.

2.6 **Additional Services.** The Contract Officer may request ancillary or additional services within the capacity of the Contractor as may be useful or necessary in the interests of the Trust and the scope of work above.

### **SECTION III – OFFEROR’S MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND PROPOSAL FORMAT**

3.1 **Prospective Offerors:** An “Offeror” is a person or entity that submits a proposal in response to this RFP.

### 3.2 **Qualifications; Prior Experience:**

Offeror's personnel assigned to perform under the Contract must have the following experience:

- (i) Experience in at least three projects involving formative research and comprehensive plan development.
- (ii) Experience delivering training programs, especially in diversity, equity, and inclusion topics (preferred)
- (iii) Experience working with multiple diverse stakeholder groups; in other words experience working simultaneously with a variety of groups or organizations with an interest in a given project.

### 3.3 **Proposal Format:** Each proposal (i.e., a submission in response to each scope of work) must include responses to a-e below in a concise ( $\leq 7$ pages) description. Items f) and g) may be addressed outside of the 7-page limit and may be attached as additional pages. All material must be submitted in one electronic file.

- a) Names of individuals providing the services, key relevant qualifications, and number of years of experience in such areas.
- b) DUNS number of the organization
- c) The individual's proposal for how to address the elements of the scope(s) of work described in the services and Scope of Work section (Section 2.2 above).
- d) Names, phone numbers, and email addresses of three references.
- e) **The Offeror shall submit a budget including total number of hours and hourly rate of compensation for the services to be performed during the term of the Contract broken down by direct rate, overhead/benefit rate, profit, and direct expenses; any additional costs required to complete the project; and total compensation.** Please use the Trust budget form found at: [www.cbtrust.org/forms](http://www.cbtrust.org/forms). If using this form, the budget information will not count towards the 7-page limit. The proposed budget and rates of compensation will be irrevocable for a period of 90 days from the Closing Date, or if modified during negotiations, for a period of 90 days from the date such modified rates are proposed by the Offeror.
- f) The resume or CV of the individual(s) providing the service.
- g) Any other information which the Offeror considers relevant to a fair evaluation of its experience and capabilities.

**Subcontracting Opportunities.** If an Offeror considers subcontracting of services, such as guest lecturers, they should do so specify in the proposal and demonstrate good faith efforts to engage Minority/Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (MBE/DBE).

### 3.5 **Professional Liability Insurance:** The Offeror shall agree to maintain in full force and effect during the term of the Contract usual and customary amounts of liability insurance coverage in connection with the performance or failure to perform services under the Contract.

**3.6 Eligible Organizations:** No entity may enter into a Contract with the Chesapeake Bay Trust under this funding opportunity unless the entity has provided its DUNS number to the Trust.

**3.7 Cancellation; Discretion of Contract Officer:** This RFP may be canceled in whole or in part and any proposal may be rejected in whole or in part at the discretion of the Contract Officer. In addition, the Contract Officer has the right to negotiate separately with any Offeror in any manner which will best serve the interests of the Trust. The Contract Officer may waive any mandatory condition or minimum qualification if it is determined that such action is in the best interest of the Trust.

**3.7 Submission Instructions/Proposal Closing Date:** Offerors must submit proposals via email to [kwetzel@cbtrust.org](mailto:kwetzel@cbtrust.org) no later than **5:00 p.m. on November 14th, 2016** (the "**Closing Date**"). Requests for extensions will not be granted and late applications will not be accepted. If email confirmation of submission is not received within two business days, please contact Kacey Wetzel at 410-974-2941 x104.

Proposals are irrevocable for 90 days following the Closing Date.

## **SECTION V - EVALUATION PROCEDURE**

**4.1 Qualifying Proposals:** The Contract Officer will review each proposal for compliance with the minimum qualifications set forth in "Offeror's Minimum Qualifications."

**4.2 Deviations and Negotiation.** The Contract Officer shall have the sole right to determine whether any deviation from the requirements of this RFP is substantial in nature, and the Contract Officer may reject non-conforming proposals. In addition, the Contract Officer may waive minor irregularities in proposals, allow an Offeror to correct minor irregularities, and negotiate with responsible Offerors in any manner deemed necessary or desirable to serve the best interests of the Project.

**4.3 Evaluation.** Proposals shall be evaluated by the Contract Officer and a review committee. This evaluation will be made on the basis of the evaluation criteria discussed above and may include any oral presentation that may be required by the Contract Officer at their discretion. The Contract Officer reserves the right to recommend an Offeror for contract award based upon the Offeror's proposal without oral presentations or further discussion. However, the Contract Officer may engage in further discussion if it is deemed beneficial. In such case, the Contract Officer will notify those responsible Offerors with whom further discussion is desired. In addition, the Contract Officer may permit qualified Offerors to revise their proposals by submitting "best and final" offers.

**4.4 Evaluation Considerations:** Proposals and any oral presentation by Offerors who meet the minimum qualifications set forth in Section 2 will be evaluated on the basis of the following factors:

- A. Proposed Team (Specific Individual(s) Responsible for Performance of Contract). Evaluation of the qualifications, reputation, and compatibility with needs of the Trust and the Project of the individual or individuals who will perform the Contract;
- B. Proposed Approach. Evaluation of the work to be performed to accomplish the goals outlined in the Scopes of Work in Section 2.2;
- C. Experience of Offeror. Evaluation of the quality and quantity of the Offeror's experience and expertise in the areas proposed, supported by references;
- D. Capacity. Evaluation of the Offeror's ability and commitment to meet the timeline for the Project;
- E. Price and Hours. Total budget, hourly rate, and number of hours to be devoted to the project.

## SECTION VI: OTHER INFORMATION

### 5.1 Principal Solicitation Officer and Issuing Office:

Contract Officer: Kacey Wetzel  
Project Leader  
Telephone Number: 410-974-2941 x104  
E-Mail: kwetzel@cbtrust.org  
Address: Chesapeake Bay Trust  
60 West St., Suite 405  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The sole point of contact for the purpose of this RFP is the Contract Officer.

- 5.2 **Disclosure:** Proposals submitted in response to this RFP may be provided to government agencies and be subject to disclosure pursuant to the provisions of the Access to Public Records Act of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the "Public Information Act"). Offerors must specifically identify those portions of their proposals, if any, which they deem to contain confidential or proprietary information and must provide justification why such materials should not, upon request, be disclosed by the State under the Public Information Act.
- 5.3 **Expenses:** The Trust and the Contract Officer are not responsible for any direct or indirect expenses which an Offeror may incur in preparing and submitting a proposal, participating in the evaluation process, or in consequence of this solicitation process for any reason.
- 5.4 **Acceptance of Terms and Conditions:** By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, (A) the Offeror accepts all of the terms and conditions set forth in this RFP; (B) the Offeror, if selected for award, agrees that it will comply with all Federal, State, and local

laws applicable to its activities and obligations under the Contract; and (C) the Offeror shall be deemed to represent that it is not in arrears in the payment of any obligation due and owing the United States Government or the State of Maryland or any department or unit thereof, including, without limitation, the payment of taxes and employee benefits, and, if selected for award, that it shall not become so in arrears during the term of the Contract.

- 5.5 **Disadvantaged Business Enterprise/Minority Business Enterprise (DBE/MBE) Participation:** This RFP encourages the participation of DBE/MBE firms (members of a group as defined in the State Finance and Procurement Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the "Procurement Article"), Section 14-301(f)(i)(ii)). The Trust encourages DBE/MBE firms who meet the minimum qualifications to respond to this RFP.
- 5.6 **Parties to the Contract:** The contract to be entered into as a result of this RFP (the "Contract") shall be between the successful Offeror (the "Contractor") and the Trust
- 5.7 **Contract Documents.** The Contract shall include the following documents: this RFP, the Contractor's Proposal (to the extent not inconsistent with the RFP or the Contract), and the Contract. In the event of an inconsistency, the Contract shall have priority over the other documents and specific conditions of the Contract shall have priority over General Conditions.
- 5.8 **Contract Term.** The Contract term shall commence as of a date to be specified in the Contract and, unless sooner terminated in accordance with the Contract, shall end when all work authorized under the Contract has been successfully completed, but no later than six (6) months after the commencement date, unless the Contract is renewed or extended at the sole option of the Contract Officer.
- 5.9 **Billing Procedures and Compensation.**
- A. **Method.** Invoicing will entail monthly reporting of time and eligible expenses, or may be based upon satisfactory completion of benchmark tasks.
  - B. **Records.** The Contractor(s) shall submit invoices in a form acceptable to the Contract Officer and maintain records relating to the costs and expenses incurred by the Contractor(s) in the performance of the Contracts for a period of three years from the date of final Project payment under the Contracts.
- 5.10 **Certification.** The Offeror shall certify that, to the best of its knowledge, the price information submitted is accurate, complete, and correct as of the Closing Date, and if negotiations are conducted as of the date of "best and final offer."



- 5.11 **Branding.** All products (plan developed, outreach materials, events, etc.) will be branded with Chesapeake Bay Trust, Chesapeake Bay Funders Network, and Choose Clean Water logos.

#### Appendix A.

The chosen consultant will be expected, as part of the plan, to consider outcomes of previous work and where appropriate incorporate and implement recommendations emerging from the previous work identified above. A brief summary of that work is as follows:

#### **Summary of results and recommendations from Community Organizing Pilots:**

##### ***Results:***

*West Virginia Rivers Coalition:* The contractor engaged key community leaders in planning for and designing public forums to involve the broader community in water source protection planning. Through these forums lessons were learned with regards to how to engage decision-makers in the public forum process appropriately and culturally appropriate outreach materials were designed to advertise the meetings.

*Blue Water Baltimore:* Blue Water Baltimore staff participated in a Building Cultural Competence training to build staff knowledge and skills around cultural competence, staff immediately applied lessons learned to build deeper relationships with community leaders involved in the Deep Blue project.

*South River Federation:* The contractor helped South River Federation to design a community meeting in partnership with local community leadership in order to surface community needs (e.g., open space access and jobs) that the South River Federation can then seek to address through their creek restoration project.

##### ***Recommendations:***

*Build the internal capacity of funders and watershed organizations to address diversity, equity, and inclusion at the organizational and programmatic level.*

- a. Conduct a Building Cultural Competence training for individual CBFN members
- b. Offer regional Building Cultural Competence trainings to watershed organizations
- c. Develop a set of metrics and a self-assessment tool to help watershed organizations identify areas of strength and potential growth needs in internal, organizational structures and barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion and programmatic development to work more effectively with underserved communities. These metrics could be used to assess current needs, track progress over time and gauge readiness for various grant opportunities.

*Build the capacity of watershed organizations to build mutual relationships with underserved communities and develop and facilitate productive cross-sector networks aimed at benefiting underserved communities.*

- a. Offer training and/or guidance for watershed organizations on how to build an effective cross-sector network to support planning and implementation of goals and projects that benefit both underserved communities and watershed health.

- b. Offer trainings and/or guidance on Collaborative Problem-Solving and building consensus to help watershed organizations better understand, assess and navigate complex dynamics between underserved communities and related stakeholders (e.g., local government, adjacent communities).
- c. Provide funding or technical assistance to a pilot community to apply the cross-sector network and collaborative problem-solving tools and then summarize these tools in a case study for broader dissemination.

*Offer funding, technical assistance and other incentives to meaningfully engage underserved communities and complete projects valued by the community.*

- a. Offer grants and technical assistance for projects that specifically focus on engaging underserved communities to increase both community quality of life for underserved communities and watershed health.
- b. Seek partnerships with non-watershed funders focused on enhancing quality of life (e.g., open space, trails, urban agriculture, health infrastructure) to provide collaborative funding matches for projects that engage and benefit underserved communities.