



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

For

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consultant

October 14, 2020

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (PPC) is soliciting proposals to establish a contract with one (1) qualified and experienced Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Consultant. The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is seeking a DEI consultant to lead the staff team in a two-year process to address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion at the organization, with particular focus on racial equity and guidance on how to best support Black Pittsburghers and park users. PPC will be partnering with Venture Outdoors and Grow Pittsburgh for the first phase of work. This request for proposals outlines the goals and Scope of Work for a consultant and provides background about the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and our prior work with diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Proposal Submission:

- Qualified firms are invited to submit a proposal meeting the requirements described herein. Hard copy or digital proposals will be accepted. All proposals, including mailed proposals, must be received by the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy no later than 4:00 p.m. ET on October 29, 2020 .
- Hard copy proposals will be accepted by mail to:

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy
Attn: Ashley Carvalho
45 S 23rd Street
Pittsburgh PA 15203

- Digital proposals must be submitted in a pdf format to: acarvalho@pittsburghparks.org with a subject line: DEI RFP

Failure to clearly label proposals as directed may result in premature disclosure of your proposal. It is the responsibility of the Bidder to ensure that proposals are received by the above directions and by the above deadline. Late proposals will not be considered.

Questions:

Direct all questions regarding this RFP to Ashley Carvalho via email: acarvalho@pittsburghparks.org by 4:00 p.m. ET on October 27, 2020. The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy will not accept questions after 4:00 p.m. ET on October 27, 2020.

This Request for Proposal does not commit the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal in response to this request. The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy reserves the right to accept the proposal that it considers to be in its best interest, reject any and all proposals, or request modifications to any proposals. The PPC will be the sole judge in making this determination. All materials submitted to PPC by firms in response to this RFP become the sole property of PPC and will be used at its discretion unless the proposer clearly identifies any trademarks or patents that protect products submitted. Selection and/or rejection of the firm(s) is at the sole discretion of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy.

Thank you for your interest in working with Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy.

Ashley Carvalho,

Human Resources Director

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy



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About Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (PPC):

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is a non-profit entity that was founded in December 1996 by a group of citizens concerned with the deteriorating conditions of Pittsburgh's historic city parks. The Parks Conservancy has worked closely with the City of Pittsburgh since 1998 under an official public interest partnership agreement to restore the city's parks. To date, the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy has raised over \$127 million for parks and has completed 21 major improvement projects. Currently active in 22 parks, the Parks Conservancy has expanded into community and neighborhood parks throughout Pittsburgh. Capital improvement projects continue to be a focus of the Conservancy's work, while the Conservancy has expanded its role to include providing extensive environmental education programs, other public programs and events, restoration and ecology work. The Conservancy holds regular fundraising events to support Pittsburgh parks. Currently we have approximately 45 employees, with another 20+ seasonal employees.

Response Format:

Responses should be concise and include the materials which are requested within this RFP. Generic marketing and promotional materials are neither required nor desired. Responding companies should concisely but completely describe the scope of services they feel are appropriate to Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy. **See Proposal Submission Specifications section for detailed submission requirements.**

Consultant Role and Qualifications:

We look to a consultant to work with and provide guidance to the Diversity and Inclusion subcommittee and the Leadership Team to meet the project goals described in the Scope of Work below and to provide training for Conservancy staff. We are looking for applicants who demonstrate the following:

- At least 5 years' experience in the field of inclusiveness and diversity training.
- Experience working with non-profit organizations, civic engagement and public service, and/or with environmental/park professionals
- Thorough understanding of issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity, including deep awareness and analysis of systems of oppression, power, and privilege and use of research-based strategies to transform work environments
- Proven knowledge of, and successful implementation of, diversity, inclusion, and equity work with diverse groups, teams, and/or organizations
- Strong communication skills, particularly in working with diverse populations
- Commitment to social change work
- Located in the Pittsburgh Area - travel expenses should be included in the proposed budget.

PROJECT GOALS

We are looking to hire a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultant to work with us over two years toward the following goals:

Phase One - Work with Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, Venture Outdoors and Grow Pittsburgh

1. Create a space for each partner organization where staff can reflect and learn about the diversity of its colleagues and community at large.
2. Provide tools and training to significantly shift how systemic racism is identified and then removed internally and externally. Specifically, allow staff to make the shift from being a place that lacks diversity to a safe space that welcomes a diverse group of employees, participants/clients and partners.
3. Allow partnering organizations to provide programs and services that meet the needs of populations who have not had the opportunity to participate in public programming.

4. Create the necessary changes within the organization, so that Black Pittsburghers and other groups, that can be classified as “diverse”, feel included and safe when participating in outdoor experiences and programming, as well as employment at each organization.
5. Create an “allyship” among the collective organizations about shared goals.

Phase Two - Continued Work with Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

6. Increase individual understanding for Conservancy staff of what diversity, inclusion, and equity mean, inequities in Pittsburgh, and how each plays a role in their lives, both professionally and personally, and development of skills and strategies for staff to employ.
7. Identify areas of growth and change at the organizational level around practices, policies, and processes to become more diverse, inclusive, and equitable as a workplace.
8. Assist with the development of policy, employee training modules, and a framework to carry forward this work in the future.
9. Execute an organization-wide racial equity audit of the internal documents, data, policies, and external communications as they reflect and/or pertain to The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy’s goal to eliminate institutional bias and build equitable policies and language.
10. Identify areas of growth and change around practices, policies and processes that impact our constituents, with a particular focus on Black communities given Pittsburgh’s historical and current inequities.

An overall desired outcome of this work is for the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy to move toward an inclusive, “WE” identity where shared values and commitments are clear and articulated. We hope to strengthen the spirit of collegiality, and to continue building a culture of trust and connection through this work. Additionally, we hope the work we do with a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultant builds our capacity to serve our constituents and community partners.

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy seeks to engage a qualified consultant to: a) conduct an organizational assessment of agency practices and internal climate around diversity, equity and inclusion (“DEI”), building from prior work described in the Addendum; b) create a DEI plan which would provide the organizational assessments’ findings and a short and long-term roadmap for making concrete improvements in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion; and c) provide education and trainings for staff.

The scope of work is outlined below.

SCOPE OF WORK

Phase One

1) Work Plan/ Project Implementation Outline

Create a work plan describing a strategy for participation and communication with Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, in partnership with Venture Outdoors and Grow Pittsburgh.

- Strategy must ensure full staff participation of each organization and engage all levels of staff from each org in an efficient and effective manner
- Work plan must include timeline that includes periodic progress updates to leadership team and frequent updates to all participants
- Work plan must include list of items needed from each organization for consultant to complete 2) Agency Assessments & Deliverables and strategies/ tools (workshops, surveys, interviews, videos, etc.) for completing 2) Agency Assessments & Deliverables

Timeframe: No more than 2 Months

2) Agency Assessments and Deliverables

***Refer to Addendum for information about each organization. This information should be used to inform the assessment and create the deliverables.**

- An assessment of each organization's current DEI practices and procedures, including, but not limited to: human resources, internal and external communications, overall agency culture, professional development opportunities, etc. This assessment should include organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for improvement, and threats.
 - While PPC expects that there will be several forms of assessment including surveys, focus groups, group interviews, PPC is looking for a proposed assessment structure in the proposal.
- These assessments should, at a minimum:
 - Quantify DEI experiences across staff, generating an organizational baseline for ongoing measurement. Staff from all levels should be included in this assessment.
 - Identify educational and training opportunities to provide staff with an understanding and awareness of DEI, with possible tiers of training to address varying levels of understanding within the staff.
 - Identify processes and procedures that are serving as a barrier to an inclusive and equitable workplace.
 - Identify areas of growth and change around practices, policies, and processes that impact our constituents, with a focus on Black communities, recognizing Pittsburgh's historical and current inequities.
 - Assess external work practices (programming, community engagement)

Phase Two

The scope of work for Phase Two is confirmed for Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy; but it has not yet been decided for the partnering organizations: Venture Outdoors and Grow Pittsburgh. The extent of inclusion for all organizations to participate in Phase Two will be determined by success during Phase One and cost. Therefore, the proposal submission must include the proposed cost (quote) for Phase Two using each of the following possible scenarios. We realize that the quote represents estimated costs with the absence of unusual, unforeseen circumstances and/ or a price range.

One Year of work= minimum of 4 trainings & 1 evaluation document (PPC together with other org(s))

Quote 1	Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy	Description of specialized education & training TBD based upon outcomes & assessment at conclusion of Phase 1
Quote 2	Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy + 1 organization	
Quote 3	Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy + 2 organizations	

One Year of work= minimum of 4 trainings & 1 evaluation documents (each org alone)

Quote 1	Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy	Description of specialized education & training TBD based upon outcomes & assessment at conclusion of Phase 1
Quote 2	Venture Outdoors	
Quote 3	Grow Pittsburgh	

1) Specialized Education and Training

- Develop and implement a plan that includes a minimum of four specialized, in-depth trainings for organization's staff with the goal of providing a “deeper dive” continuum of learning and opportunities for improvement in areas as determined by assessment, education/ training and evaluation outcomes completed during Phase 1

Deliverable: Work Plan to be approved by org leadership prior to implementation

2) Evaluation

- Provide quantitative and qualitative evaluation that determines what progress, if any, has been made towards reaching the goals outlined in the RFP which were used as the basis for the project: progress and areas for growth

Deliverable: Evaluation/ assessment document that summarizes, and details as necessary, all work completed, outcomes and suggestions for continuous improvement

Timeframe: 12 months

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION SPECIFICATIONS/ SCORING CRITERIA

Responses to this RFP must cover the following components: the number shown in parentheses is the weighting that component will receive in the rating matrix:

1. Firm Background Information

- Firm Name
- Home Office Address
- Website
- Contact Information
 - Name and Title
 - Phone
 - Fax
 - Email

2. Firm Structure and Experience (5 points)

- Describe the ownership and structure of your firm.
- Number of years in existence.
- List your firm's lines of business (including affiliated companies).
- Describe your firm's expertise in each of the following areas:
 - Inclusiveness and diversity training
 - Working with non-profit organizations, civic engagement and public service, and/or with environmental/park professionals
 - Issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity, including deep awareness and analysis of systems of oppression, power, and privilege and use of research-based strategies to transform work environments
 - Knowledge of, and successful implementation of, diversity, inclusion, and equity work with diverse groups, teams, and/or organizations
- Provide your privacy policy with regards to sharing client and account information with outside parties.
- Provide a conflict of interest statement that your firm; associate firms and/or key staff may have regarding these services. The statement should not only include actual conflicts, but also any working relationships that may be perceived by disinterested parties as a conflict. If no potential conflicts of interest are identified, state so.
- Provide proof of insurances carried for errors and omissions and fiduciary liability.

3. Relevant Expertise / Client References (10 points)

- Provide three examples of DEI assessments and plans your firm has developed, and three examples of education and/or trainings your firm has provided on DEI topics.
- Provide two specific examples of ways in which your company's services have made a positive change on an organization you supported over the past 24 months.

- List three clients, preferably non-profit organizations, whom we may contact as references. Please also include the number of years you have been working (or worked) with them.

4. Proposed Service Approach (30 points)

Please address the following questions in your proposal. Do not be limited by these questions but make sure to address them in your overall proposal.

- Describe your understanding of desired services.
- Please describe your approach to diversity, equity and inclusion training and include the following:
 - Guiding principles, frameworks, values, and research that guide your work.
 - Sample workshop description and short outline that reflects your pedagogy.
 - Your approach to working with **an organization made up of individuals at varying levels of understanding and/or perspectives.**
- Please describe your approach to identifying areas of growth and change around practices, policies, and processes at the organizational level. How will you connect and incorporate the work with public service and community engagement?
- Please include a proposed timeline of how frequently you would meet with staff, in various groupings. Please include timing on both staff training and organizational level work. Staff would be able to commit 2.5 hours per month or a half day each quarter for engagement in formal training/ conversations.
- State any difficulties foreseen in fulfilling the Scope of Work and how you might address them.

5. Service Team (15 points)

- Describe the proposed team such as:
 - Name(s) of each team member
 - Job title(s) of each team member
 - Location(s) of each team member
 - Education of each team member
 - Current responsibilities and area of expertise of each team member
 - Number of years of each team member with your firm
 - Professional affiliations of each team member
 - Professional qualifications of each team member (such as: certifications, designations, other credentials)
- Supply an outline of key milestones to implement services and what team members will be responsible for completion of each milestone.
- Provide a list and description of any current or pending administrative, legal or similar actions against your or your firm or an affirmative statement that there are none.

6. Small, Women, Disabled Veteran, or Minority-owned Business (10 points)

Efforts will be made to utilize small, women, disabled veteran, and minority-owned businesses, with the consideration that the primary responsibility is the most favorable return to PPC. If applicable, provide publicly certified documentation or a self-certification statement that is subject to examination. If not applicable, please state.

7. Proposed Fee Structure / Pricing (30 points)

The cost of services is one of the factors that will be considered in awarding this contract. The information requested in this section is required to support the reasonableness of your fees. Please provide a cost proposal for providing the Scope of Work, with cost breakdowns for each portion of the scope and broken into two phases. The cost proposal should include:

- itemized breakdown of billing rates and hourly costs
- list of key personnel and their hourly rates
- additional costs for services that may be requested in addition

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is not obligated to select the firm with the lowest fee proposal to perform these professional services.

Patent Indemnity

The Bidder shall hold Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, its officers, agents, and employees, harmless from liabilities of any nature or kind on account of use of any copyrighted or uncopyrighted composition, secret process, patented or unpatented invention, article of appliance furnished or used under this RFP.

Proprietary Proposal Material

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy respects your professional privacy, any proprietary information revealed in the proposal should, therefore, be clearly identified as such.

Respondents are advised that all submissions (including those not selected for engagement) may be made available to the public on request upon completion of the process and award of a contract(s).

Equal Opportunity Compliance

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy requires all vendors to comply with Federal, State, and Local policies and regulations concerning equal opportunity and agrees not to discriminate in its employment because of the employee's or applicant's race, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical handicap or any other trait or characteristic protected by law.

Selection Process

All eligible proposals will be reviewed by a committee and rated for their qualifications, experience, price, and suitability to complete the Scope of Work for this RFP. Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, at its discretion, may request presentations and interviews with the selection committee from a short list of firms and/or request additional clarification information from any or all Bidders. Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals submitted. Therefore, proposals should be submitted initially with the most favorable terms, from technical, customer service, and price standpoints, which the Bidder can propose. All bids are subject to approval by the Pittsburgh Parks

Conservancy Board of Directors. Notice to selected bidder to proceed with scope of work is anticipated by November 20, 2020.

Initial proposal evaluation shall be based solely on the information provided in the proposal submittal package. Be sure to include all relevant information and evidence of your firm's record of performance and ability to perform the work.

Right to Reject:

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP. The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy reserves the right to request modifications to any and all proposals to meet the needs of the Conservancy. A contract for the accepted proposal will be based upon the factors described in this RFP. Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy reserves the right to waive informalities or irregularities in bids. In case of deviation from enclosed specifications, the bidders shall indicate in writing the exception(s) from the specifications. If no exception(s) is noted, it is understood that the specification will be complied within detail as requested WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

AUTHORIZATION:

The undersigned hereby asserts that he/she is duly authorized to submit this proposal, that all information contained in it is true, correct and complete, and that the undersigned is authorized to enter into a contract with the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy should he/she be selected and approved for services, as negotiated.

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy_____

Name of Firm

Ashley Carvalho_____

Name of Principal/Owner Print Signature

Human Resources Director _____ 2059132743 _____

Title Phone

45 S 23rd Street _____ Pittsburgh PA 15203 _____

Address City/State/Zip

_____ 10/14/20 _____

Date License # (if applicable)

Addendum - Organizational Descriptions



PittsburghParks.org

About Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (PPC)

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is a non-profit entity that was founded in December 1996 by a group of citizens concerned with the deteriorating conditions of Pittsburgh's historic city parks. The Parks Conservancy has worked closely with the City of Pittsburgh since 1998 under an official public interest partnership agreement to restore the city's parks. To date, the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy has raised over \$127 million for parks and has completed 21 major improvement projects. Currently active in 22 parks, the Parks Conservancy has expanded into community and neighborhood parks throughout Pittsburgh. Capital improvement projects continue to be a focus of the Conservancy's work, while the Conservancy has expanded its role to include providing extensive environmental education programs, other public programs and events, restoration and ecology work. The Conservancy holds regular fundraising events to support Pittsburgh parks.

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, currently has over 40 staff members, and Conservancy educational programming and events reach around 20,000 students and community members a year. Additionally, 20+ temporary staff are hired annually to contribute to our work throughout the year.

The following are regularly scheduled meetings and discussion spaces that happen at the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy:

- All-staff meeting - updates meetings once a week for an hour
- Selective Departmental Monthly brown-bag discussions - staff-led topics for an hour
- Leadership team meetings - once a week for leadership
- Program team meetings and standing subcommittee meetings - meet on a regular basis based on each team

Here are core aspects of our work (please refer to our website for more in-depth descriptions):

- Our mission is to improve the quality of life for the people of Pittsburgh by restoring the park system to excellence in partnership with government and the community. Projects and programs are conducted with respect for the environment, historic design, and the needs of our diverse region.
- [Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Strategic Plan](#)
- [Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy 2018 Annual Report](#)

Recent Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work at the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy:

In 2017, PPC worked with a DEI consultant for one-time trainings on topics such as equity, implicit bias, microaggressions, cycle of racism, and personal experiences with racism. However, staff feedback has shown that everyone is looking for deeper and more sustained dialogue about topics having to do with systems of oppression and related issues with the goals of increasing individual understanding and awareness as well as equipping us to work with colleagues, students, and community partners.

In 2019, PPC staff conducted a SWOT analysis and executive leadership created a plan to work on areas identified in the SWOT. Additionally, a consultant completed an organizational assessment focused on change management.

Results from a recent staff survey indicate a strong desire among staff to strengthen organizational practices and processes regarding equity and inclusion. The survey will provide a helpful starting point for a consultant to help us acknowledge and celebrate what is going well and then hone in on areas that could use improvement or change. We are especially looking to a consultant to provide concrete recommendations of how to make improvements and changes within a realistic and attainable timeline. Some potential areas of focus include, but are not limited to: a) Recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion practices and policies; b) Onboarding processes; c) Staff appreciation and acknowledgement practices; and d) Role and work of a Diversity and Inclusion subcommittee.



About Grow Pittsburgh

Growing food is a key factor in building and supporting healthy and equitable communities in Pittsburgh. Grow Pittsburgh is a nonprofit that serves as a resource and guide for backyard, school and community gardeners, as well as urban farmers across the Greater Pittsburgh region. Our mission is to teach people how to grow food and to promote the benefits that gardens bring to our neighborhoods.

Founded in 2005 by three urban farmers, we have grown and adapted our programs over the years to meet the changing landscape and community-identified needs and priorities for growing food in our neighborhoods.

Today, we build and support [school](#) and [community gardens](#) by working with novice groups who have dreams of starting a garden, as well as with established school and community gardeners who are looking for additional resources or trainings to make their garden programs more sustainable. In our school gardens, we integrate garden and cooking activities into the regular classroom curriculum to support the development and education of the whole child. We aim to teach students to grow, cook and eat fresh food while celebrating the cultures and experiences of our students and our city.

We manage two larger farm sites in Braddock and Point Breeze that serve a dual purpose of being production growing sites and educational hubs. Growing more than 15,000 pounds of produce yearly, these sites provide access to fresh fruits and vegetables for our neighbors at weekly farm stands. Both [Braddock Farms](#) and [Shiloh Farm](#) also demonstrate what is possible for urban farming in our region, as we host regular tours for the public and conduct workforce development programs on these sites.

Backyard gardeners in Pittsburgh enjoy regular garden workshops throughout the growing season, as well as access to our [Info Hub](#) with key gardening topics and best practices covered specifically for our region and growing conditions. Our Garden Resource Center, a tool lending library and resource depot, makes gardening more accessible and affordable to all of our neighbors.

Through our active participation in the Food Policy Council, we continue to advocate to make food growing a regional priority and accessible to all. Community Participation is one of our core organizational values, and we welcome all of our neighbors to get involved and start growing with us today.



About Venture Outdoors

Venture Outdoors updated their mission statement in 2020 to reflect an ongoing commitment to outdoor diversity: "Inspire. Educate. Equip. We remove barriers and create access to outdoor experiences." Its programs promote the region's unique amenities while fostering a greater appreciation for the environment and inspiring an active lifestyle. Venture Outdoors offers a range of outings for all ages and skill levels, including hiking, biking, kayaking, and fishing. Venture Outdoors owns and operates Kayak Pittsburgh, a three-location concession stand where people rent kayaks, paddleboards, and canoes on the waterways of Pittsburgh. We execute about 1,100 outings every year and more than 35,000 paddled at one of the Kayak Pittsburgh locations.