



DEI Consultant Request for Proposals

Released January 20, 2021

Deadline: March 1, 2021

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is further information available about the staff survey and/or SWOT analysis mentioned in the document? Have DEI assessments been completed for any or all 3 organizations?

- a. The Parks Conservancy conducted a SWOT analysis in 2018 and DEI was identified as a top priority. Areas of focus include: 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.
- b. In 2020, Venture Outdoors completed two organizational assessments; Transforming Organizational Culture Assessment tool (TOCA) and the Multicultural Organizational Development evaluation (MCOD) to identify areas for organizational growth.

2. In the RFP, it specifically calls out a focus on supporting Black Pittsburghers. Have you gathered data that identified that particular population does not engage with PPC? Are there other initiatives that look at additional historically marginalized populations such as differently abled visitors?

- a. The Parks Conservancy has consulted publicly available data that reflects the negative health outcomes associated with being a person of color in the City of Pittsburgh ("[Pittsburgh's Inequality Across Gender and Race](#)", Pittsburgh Gender Equity Commission, 2019). In 2019, The Parks Conservancy created a community need scoring system to better identify priorities for park investment, based on park and community need. In this process, it was identified that the highest scoring parks of need also intersected with communities that are majority Black.

The Parks Conservancy has a high level of commitment to DEI generally. This first phase of work with a consultant will focus on racial equity. This is being prioritized directly, in order to boldly confront and combat the racism that continues to plague our society and our public institutions. Our long-term plan is to focus on all areas, including racial, ethnic and multicultural diversity, physical and cognitive disability and neuro diverse populations, and the LGBTQIA community. Background information about our previous and ongoing efforts to engage historically marginalized populations will be made available to the selected consultant.

- b. Venture Outdoors has gathered historical data across programs to identify gaps in service. Data and ability-based programs information will be shared with the selected consultant.
- 3. Are you able to share more information about the employees who would take part in this project? Are there additional employees who would be included in the training components when incorporating Venture Outdoors and Grow Pittsburgh?**
 - a. Employees from all three organizations will participate in training. More information about the staffing structure of each organization can be found on the staff section of our websites. In addition to our full and part time staff, the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy seasonally hires summer camp counselors, carousel workers, facilities assistants, and administrative staff who may also participate in different components of the trainings.
 - b. Venture Outdoors will have all full-time staff participate within the trainings along with the Board of Directors and Junior Board.
- 4. What is the timeline for consultant selection and the work to begin?**
 - 3/1- Proposals Due
 - 3/1-3/5 internal selection committee reviews proposals
 - 3/8-3/12 meet to discuss findings and vote on top three finalists
 - (3/15– 3/19) Meet with finalists
 - (3/22 – 3/26) Vote on final consultant
 - (3/26) Inform Forbes Funds of consultant selection
 - (4/5/2021- 4/2022) First year of DEI work
- 5. Is the expectation for only one consultant deliver all trainings? Or can we bring in different consultants based on need?**
 - a. Subcontractors may be used at the discretion of the chosen individual or firm. Once a firm or individual is selected, that firm will be held accountable/responsible for the completion of the project expectations.
- 6. Is there a staff person or person that is dedicated to DEI work within your organization?**
 - a. The Parks Conservancy’s Director of Human Resources as well as the Director of Education serve as the main point of contacts for DEI initiatives and trainings. There is a voluntary staff working group that is dedicated to creating space for conversation and learning, around DEI topics.
 - b. Marcus Shoffner is the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Venture Outdoors. In addition, the organization collaboratively engages in DEI initiatives through the internal DEI group open to staff, board, and part-time employees.
- 7. What is the current relationship between the PPC, Grow Pittsburgh, and Venture Outdoors.**
 - a. PPC and Grow Pittsburgh have been working together on various educational initiatives for the past few years. Our most recent collaboration involved the formation of a

regional collaboration, focused on better addressing issues affecting students of color within environmental education.

PPC, Grow Pittsburgh and Venture Outdoors, all participate in the Outdoor Inclusion Coalition, a newly formed advocacy group that is dedicated to addressing issues related to DEI in the outdoor recreation field.

8. Are you trying to focus on current partners and communities or incorporate new partners?

- a. We are focused on better serving our existing partners and constituents as well as gaining tools that will inform new partnerships. We are also focused on diverse staff recruitment and retention.

9. For those who already submitted proposals after the initial RFP went out, what are key differences between the initial RFP and current RFP?

- a. The initial RFP included Phase 1 and Phase 2. After reviewing, we narrowed the focus by creating phases to the overall project. The revised current RFP only reflects expectations for Phase 1. The budget is also clearly stated.

10. What DEI efforts have worked well? What DEI efforts have been challenging?

- a. *Things that have gone well:* creating a space within our organization for conversations and group learnings on specific DEI topics. For example, PPC has had optional Anti-racist Discussion Groups.

Challenges: In the past, we have had DEI trainings that have been reactionary, one-off or disjointed. It has been difficult to identify actionable measures and operationalize them in a systematic way. It has also been a challenge to gain full staff buy in.

- b. Venture Outdoors has seen success in the realm of staff education. The gap of understanding when it relates to inequities and inherent barriers has begun to shrink as the organization is sharing more resources internally and speaking with more intention around DEI work.

When the organization completed the strategic plan in 2019, the initiatives related to DEI were not well defined. Organizationally, it has been challenging to redefine the goals and establish a plan that's representative of the organization.

- c. Grow Pittsburgh finished new Strategic Plan with DEI in mind, but what has not determined what next.