

Request for Proposals for Consultant:

Organizational Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Application Deadline: Friday, January 21 by Noon E.S.T.

Food Bank of South Jersey (FBSJ) invites proposals from qualified applicants interested in entering into a contract to perform consulting and training services related to organizational diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) transformation. We are seeking services that will help members of our staff and board build skills and competencies as FBSJ strives to further operationalize diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Background

Marking its 36th year in 2021, the Food Bank of South Jersey (FBSJ) is the leader in providing safe and nutritional food to people in need throughout South Jersey. FBSJ distributes food, provides nutrition education and cooking courses, and helps food-insecure families and seniors find sustainable ways to improve their lives. During 2020, with COVID-19 bringing school closures, stay-at-home orders, record-breaking unemployment and rising poverty, FBSJ distributed more than 22.5 million pounds of food – the equivalent of over 18.7 million meals – throughout four-county region of impact, increasing its partner agency network to over 200 and serving over 95,000 food-insecure South Jersey residents each month, including the distribution of nearly one million nutritious breakfasts and lunches to South Jersey's food-insecure children and youths.

While our journey to becoming a more equitable organization continues as we become more intentional and deliberate with our programming and practices, we recognize that facets of the FBSJ organization are not representative of our county demographics or communities we serve and that change entails significant responsibilities as well as challenges. FBSJ is committed to enabling a culture of participation that embodies best practices around diversity, equity, and inclusion to best promote the richness and complexity of our community while working to address underlying systemic root causes of hunger which include racism and poverty.

The proposed planning phase led by the successful consultant will advise our work to focus on enriching the third pillar of our mission: helping people in need to find sustainable ways to improve their lives. As defined in our Equity Statement, this means fulfilling our goal to take action and make impactful contributions through our programs, public positions and people.

As a first step, we are looking for a consultant to facilitate an exploration of our own personal and institutional assumptions and biases with a robust assessment process and then a co-developed plan with staff, board members and agency partners to further operationalize diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout all of our programs, policies, practices and guiding

documents over time that will allow us to help raise people out of poverty and ultimately Shorten the Line.

We recognize this work necessitates the interrogation of our own personal and institutional assumptions and biases as well as engagement in purposeful dialogues both internally and externally with organizational and community stakeholders.

FBSJ has assembled a leadership team of board and staff members to guide this work and share it with the entire staff, making it a core tenet of our organization. The team anticipates working closely with the selected consultant to facilitate the work and process.

RFP Details

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from qualified applicants with experience in guiding organizations through successful equity, diversity, and inclusion assessments, training and implementation of improved policies and practices. Qualified applicants should have a proven record that reflects their ability to obtain the following long-term outcomes:

1. Build organizational commitment, consensus and infrastructure across functions of Board, staff, agency partners and other stakeholders to intentionally and demonstrably advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.
2. Develop a diversity, equity, and inclusion action plan that builds upon elements of FBSJ's Strategic Plan; development of performance measurements related to integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion internally and externally.
3. Identify and use assessments, tools and training opportunities that develop a shared understanding of and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion across the organization.

FBSJ believes this work will engage all levels and areas of the organization, beginning with our board and staff and ultimately expanding to include volunteers, partner agencies and participants. However, we do not assume that the plan developed for staff and board members will be the same. We also do not assume that the work outlined will be sequential; rather, we believe it will likely begin and end at different times and may be revisited as our organizational needs evolve over time. We also acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic might alter timelines and we will be flexible in our expectations during this unprecedented time. However, we are eager to start and believe that much of this work can be completed regardless of where our staff, board and audiences are located physically.

We also recognize that this work will be ongoing and will necessitate years of investment. As a first step we have identified deliverables described below to be undertaken and dates to be negotiated. Ideally we would launch this work in early 2022 (Q12022).

Deliverables include:

Working with staff to develop a DEI plan for 2022 to serve as an augmentation of our existing Strategic Plan. This will include:

- Providing knowledge and insight on best diversity, equity, and inclusion practices in the field.
- Undertake an analysis/assessment of existing organizational strengths and gaps with clear recommendations on how best to build upon strengths that will encourage anti-racism, equity, diversity and inclusion in all areas of our organization and community. Explicitly identify opportunities for improvement with suggestions regarding how to prioritize and operationalize those improvements.
- In collaboration with staff and board develop comprehensive plans and a unified long-term vision of equity, diversity, equity, and inclusion goals that inform FBSJ's strategic plan and which are interwoven throughout all of FBSJ's programs and communications. The plan should include methods of both short- and long-term monitoring and evaluation that consider several areas, including but not limited to internal staffing practices, policies and procedures, community partnership and engagement, board recruitment, advocacy to address disproportionality, two-way communication with all stakeholders and ongoing education for the board and staff.

Budget

To accomplish the outlined scope of work we have budgeted \$20,000 in associated fees, with travel and related costs negotiable.

Qualifications and Proposal

The consultant, either an individual or a team from an organization, will have experience in organizational diversity, equity, and inclusion. The consultant will have an understanding of racial equity and be able to conduct this work through a racial equity lens. The consultant should have a demonstrable track record of facilitating organizations successfully through a strategic plan road map.

Please send a complete proposal to Janet Kotsakis, HR Director at FBSJ at jkotsakis@foodbanksj.org by Noon EST. on January 21, 2022. Proposals should be submitted in PDF format and must include the following elements:

1. CONTACT INFORMATION Provide the applicant's full name; organization (if appropriate); contact information, including business address, phone number, email; and website (if appropriate).
2. ORGANIZATIONAL DIVERSITY, EQUITY, and INCLUSION EXPERIENCE
 - a. Describe why the applicant wishes to work with FBSJ in this process.

b. Describe education strategies/timelines/ schedules/curriculum used with other organizations of similar size and scope.

c. Provide brief narrative examples of the applicant's experience with other organizations seeking this training or organizations of similar size or with a focus in the human services sector.

3. **SCOPE OF WORK** Outline how the applicant intends to provide the services requested in this RFP. Describe the process for analyzing existing organizational strengths and gaps and the development of appropriate education curriculum and plan with a timeline for completion by the end of August in order to align with the parallel strategic planning process underway at FBSJ.

4. **COST** Provide a proposed budget for the scope of work, including an estimated number of hours. As part of the proposed budget, list each individual that may perform services and their title, the proposed hourly or project rate, and the level of involvement anticipated for each component.

5. **RÉSUMÉ** Append résumés of each individual who will provide services under the proposal, as well as a written description of the individual's work and lived experience and role in the work to be done.

6. **REFERENCES** Include names and contact information for three professional references, preferably clients who have utilized the applicant's services on matters related to organizational equity, diversity and inclusion transformation.

Evaluation

FBSJ shall evaluate each proposal that is properly submitted. After submission and review of proposals, interviews (phone or over virtual conference) will likely be requested beginning **January 24, 2022**

Selection of a consultant to oversee FBSJ's organizational diversity, equity, and inclusion will be based on the following criteria:

1. Work experience, lived experience and qualifications of the applicant in performing diversity, equity, and inclusion consultation and training for organizations of similar size.
2. Familiarity with communities, demographics, and challenges like those found in Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Salem Counties
3. A demonstrated knowledge of our mission, vision and programs.
4. Clarity, thoroughness and responsiveness to RFP requirements.

5. Timeline and work plan demonstrates capacity and commitment to complete the proposed scope of work and engage collaboratively with strategic planning.

6. Budget

FBSJ acknowledges that selecting an effective contractor primarily requires a balanced combination of reasonable rates as well as strong experience and demonstrated expertise in providing organizational equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging consultation and training.

Please submit RFP responses to the attention of Janet Kotsakis, Director of Human Resources, FBSJ using jkotsakis@foodbanksj.org

Summary of Key Dates RFP announcement:

Proposal deadline: **Friday, January 21, 2022 at Noon E.S.T.**

Consultant Interviews held and final decision to be made during this week: **January 31, 2022**

Work period commences: **February, 2022**