

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
Humanities Planning Consultant
Request for Proposals (RFP)

I. Summary

The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs seeks proposals from qualified consultants to assist in carrying out research, planning and public engagement activities related to preparations for the department's role as the new interim state humanities council for Iowa.

The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, a state agency, will work in partnership with the National Endowment for the Humanities, a federal agency, to undergo a comprehensive planning process which has been funded through a National Endowment for the Humanities Chairman's Planning Grant.

The selected consultant will be required to provide an in-depth report summarizing their methods and outcomes of the work. The report must be developed with significant public input and must represent the interests of various stakeholders from across the humanities community in Iowa and nationally.

II. Background Information

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) designated the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs (IDCA) as the interim state humanities council partner in November 2020.

Acting as Iowa's state humanities council with federal-state partnership funding from the NEH, the IDCA expects to 1) administer one or more grant programs and make subawards to support eligible Iowa humanities entities and programs during state fiscal year 2022; and 2) develop a robust portfolio of public programming that fosters discussion, promotes civic engagement and inspires learning through the humanities.

III. About the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs

The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs empowers Iowans to build and sustain culturally vibrant communities by connecting to the people, places and points of pride that define our state. Through its divisions — the Iowa Arts Council; the State Historical Society of Iowa and State Historic Preservation Office; and Produce Iowa, the state office of film and media production — the department helps Iowans use art, history, film and culture to boost the creative economy and make Iowa an attractive place to visit, live, work and play.

IV. Scope of Work

a. Period of Performance

The performance period for this project is estimated to take place between April 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021. This period of performance, along with key project milestones, are subject to adjustment by the department.

b. Services

Working in partnership with the IDCA, the selected consultant will be expected to:

- 1) Review and comment on any humanities survey questions drafted by the IDCA;
- 2) Assist in the facilitation of public meetings and listening sessions to gain information about the Iowa humanities' community wants and needs;
- 3) Prepare a comprehensive final report that summarizes the outcomes of the work (see Deliverables);
- 4) Facilitate the development of the organizational framework for a new state humanities council including mission, vision, and values; identify key audiences.

c. Deliverables and Services

Working in partnership with the IDCA, the selected consultant must summarize all research findings and synthesize all public input in a final report that includes the following required elements:

- 1) Summary of research findings and quantitative data on the state of the humanities field in Iowa;
- 2) Qualitative feedback from the Iowa humanities field to ensure that any grantmaking activity and humanities programming undertaken with NEH funding is tailored to the current needs, interests and concerns of Iowans;
- 3) A list of all key stakeholders that participated, including names, roles, professional title/affiliations, and how they participated;
- 4) Methods used in the research, such as meetings, surveys, questions asked;
- 5) Significant findings or learnings from the research;
- 6) Relevant action steps based on the findings.
 - a) The findings should shed light on the cultural landscape of the state, including identifying state leaders in the field of the humanities (archives, historical societies, libraries, universities, museums, filmmakers, authors, speakers, etc.), what those entities' major outputs are (festivals, collection development, public programs, informal education activities K-12 and beyond, etc.), and how IDCA can best serve them through NEH funding.
- 7) Information gained from research into the activities of other state humanities councils and interviews with their leadership into the final report.

Tasks that are the responsibility of the IDCA include:

- Gather basic information about other state humanities councils' (SHC) current grants and programmatic activities to further inform our planning and to form a benchmark against which our progress, as an interim SHC, may be measured;
- Schedule and conduct interviews with the leadership of at least 10 other SHC to better understand the current humanities landscape and challenges and opportunities facing the field;
- Perform an analysis of previous state and federal funding of the humanities in Iowa, identifying any clear gaps or needs that should be addressed by future funding;
- Manage all aspects of federal-state relationship with NEH;
- Define new humanities programs and grants and related funding policies, priorities and guidelines;
- Creation of survey content;
- Public relations and any promotional activities connected to the planning activities;
- Meeting logistics and scheduling.

Note: While it is a goal to have some meetings in person, due to COVID-19 and the need to socially distance, the department is currently planning to host public meetings virtually (online). Any legitimate travel expenses incurred by the Contractor in the course of performing the work will be covered under the terms of a Not to Exceed estimate, in accordance with the Contractor's proposal and fees.

V. Milestones

The following list includes key milestones and deadlines connected to the development of both plans. This list is subject to adjustment:

RFP posted	4/2/2021
RFP questions due to DCA	4/16/2021
RFP answers posted by DCA	4/16/2021 - 4/19/2021
All RFP submissions due	4/23/2021
RFP awarded to contractor	4/30/2021
Meeting with DCA Leadership	May 2021
Public Meetings	May, June, July
Review draft themes and findings from Public Meetings with Departmental	July

Leadership/Planning Team to inform Public Survey questions	
Public Survey	August 1 - September 1
Draft goals and strategies, organizational framework	September
Review draft goals and strategies, and organizational framework with Departmental Leadership/Planning Team	By September 30
Further plan development / public comment period	October, November, December
DCA presentation to relevant Boards and Commissions	December 2021

VI. Required Proposal Elements

Respondents shall be required to provide the following information:

1. Contact Information
 - 1.1. Name, address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address of the Respondent including all d/b/a's or assumed names or other operating names of the Respondent and any local addresses and phone numbers.
 - 1.2. Type of business entity
 - 1.3. State of incorporation, state of formation, or state of organization.
 - 1.4. The location(s) including address and telephone numbers of the offices and other facilities that relate to the Respondent's performance under the terms of this RFP.
 - 1.5. Number of employees.
 - 1.6. Name, address and telephone number of the Respondent's representative to contact regarding all contractual and technical matters concerning the Proposal.
 - 1.7. Name, address and telephone number of the Respondent's representative to contact regarding scheduling and other arrangements.
 - 1.8. Name, contact information and qualifications of any subcontractors who will be involved with this project the Respondent proposes to use and the nature of the goods and/or services the subcontractor would perform.
 - 1.9. The successful Respondent will be required to register to do business in Iowa before payments can be made. For vendor registration documents, go to:
<https://das.iowa.gov/procurement/vendors/how-do-business>

2. Experience

- 2.1. Number of years of experience with providing the types of goods and/or services sought by the RFP.
 - 2.2. The level of technical experience in providing the types of goods and/or services sought by the RFP.
 - 2.3. A list of all goods and/or services similar to those sought by this RFP that the Respondent has provided to other businesses or governmental entities.
 - 2.4. Letters of reference from three (3) previous customers or clients knowledgeable of the Respondent's performance in providing goods and/or services similar to the goods and/or services described in this RFP and a contact person and telephone number for each reference.
3. Key Project Personnel
 - 3.1. Full name
 - 3.2. Education
 - 3.3. Years of experience and employment history particularly as it relates to the specifications of the RFP. The Respondent must provide resumes for all key personnel who will be involved in providing the goods and/or services contemplated by this RFP. The following information must be included in the resumes:
4. Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

By submitting a Proposal, Respondent acknowledges its acceptance of the terms and conditions of the RFP and the General Terms and Conditions without change except as otherwise expressly stated in its Proposal. If the Respondent takes exception to a provision, it must identify it by page and section number, state the reason for the exception, and set forth in its Proposal the specific RFP or General Terms and Conditions language it proposes to include in place of the provision. If Respondent's exceptions or responses materially alter the RFP, or if the Respondent submits its own terms and conditions or otherwise fails to follow the process described herein, the Agency may reject the Proposal, in its sole discretion.
5. Certification Letter
 - 5.1. The Respondent shall sign and submit with the Proposal, the document included as Attachment #1 (Certification Letter) in which the Respondent shall make the certifications included in Attachment #1.
6. Authorization to Release Information
 - 6.1. The Respondent shall sign and submit with the Proposal the document included as Attachment #2 (Authorization to Release Information Letter) in which the Respondent authorizes the release of information to the Agency.
7. Firm Proposal Terms

- 7.1. The Respondent shall guarantee in writing the goods and/or services offered in the Proposal are currently available and that all Proposal terms, including price, will remain firm for the number days indicated on the RFP cover sheet following the deadline for submitting Proposals.
8. Fee Amount
 - 8.1. Based on an understanding of the deliverables, the Respondent must provide a fee amount with their Proposal. The Proposal may include information related to how the fee amount was determined, including a fee schedule or typical hourly rate, but must specify an exact fee amount.

VII. Payment Methods and Terms

The method of payment will be at the sole determination of the State of Iowa. Payment will generally be made through EFT/ACH, if the required form is completed by the Contractor, or State Warrant. Per Iowa Code 8A.514 the State of Iowa is allowed sixty (60) days to pay an invoice submitted by a Contractor.

VIII. Selection Criteria

Proposals shall be evaluated on:

- Qualifications and work experience in the field
- Education and training
- Previous strategic planning experience and work
- References
- Fee Amount
- Ability to complete project within timeline