

**IOWA COMMISSION ON VOLUNTEER SERVICE
INFORMAL COMPETITIVE SOLICITATION for
NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINER ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION (DEI)**

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the informal competition procedures provided for in 11 Iowa Administrative Code rule 106.9, the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service (Volunteer Iowa) is seeking a qualified service provider(s) (Service Provider) to provide training and technical assistance in summer and/or fall of 2023 to Iowa AmeriCorps State program staff and host site supervisors with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) including common human resources challenges that relate to DEI. For these services, Volunteer Iowa desires a Service Provider who is culturally competent and familiar with common DEI challenges in national service programming.

Training topics may include:

- how to mediate between AmeriCorps members and staff at their host sites on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- inclusion best practices that can lead to greater program performance and member retention;
- reviewing current program policies and procedures with a DEI lens;
- communicating expectations to members and host site staff regarding nondiscrimination and what to do if a DEI-related issue arises;
- onboarding and supporting a diverse member corps, including reasonable accommodations for members with disabilities;
- or other AmeriCorps-specific DEI topics.

Volunteer Iowa will consider proposals for both virtual training sessions that would be accessible to a larger group of program staff and host site staff located statewide and for in-person training that would be provided to program staff only (approximately 35-45 individuals) at our program launch in Des Moines, Iowa, on October 18-19, 2023; or a combination of both. All work must be concluded by November 30, 2023. Volunteer Iowa prefers proposals that lead staff through a learning program or process with related pre-work or homework, rather than a one-time introductory level training. This could include offering a mix of live and recorded training or tasks within a learning management system. The selected provider will be expected to work with Volunteer Iowa to ensure that any training offered conforms to Iowa-specific requirements for AmeriCorps programs.

Volunteer Iowa anticipates that the term of any resulting contract will be approximately five months beginning on or around June 30, 2023. Service Providers interested in providing these services should submit proposals to Volunteer Iowa. They may be emailed to americorps@volunteeriowa.org, provided the proposal is provided in a PDF or Microsoft Word format; however, Volunteer Iowa shall not be responsible for any proposals not received due to spam filters or other electronic intercepts. Proposals may also be submitted at 1963 Bell Avenue Suite 200, Des Moines, IA 50315, Attention: Volunteer Iowa Senior Program & Development Officer. Proposals must be submitted to Volunteer Iowa no later than 3:00 p.m. (local time) on June 7, 2023. Any proposal received after this deadline will be rejected and returned to the Service Provider.

Proposals should include the Service Provider’s cost proposal and sufficient information regarding the Service Provider’s skills to enable Volunteer Iowa to make a judgment about the Service Provider’s ability to perform the activities identified in the Scope of Services. The Service Provider should also include references with the proposal.

The dates set forth below are for informational planning purposes only. Volunteer Iowa reserves the right to change the dates:

May 22, 2023	Submit Informal Competitive Solicitation to Targeted Small Business (TSB) web page
May 24, 2023	Submit Informal Competitive Solicitation to at least three potential Service Providers
June 7, 2023	Proposals due (3 p.m.)
June 14, 2023	Select successful Service Provider(s)
June 30, 2023	Deadline for executing contract

Volunteer Iowa will utilize an evaluation committee made up of employees and/or commissioners of Volunteer Iowa to evaluate the proposals. **From the date of issuance of this Informal Competitive Solicitation until announcement of the successful Service Provider, Service Providers may not contact any employee of the State of Iowa other than the identified contact person about this RFP.** Service Providers may contact Jamie Orozco Nagel, Senior Policy & Development Officer, in writing at jamie.nagel@volunteeriowa.org with questions related to the interpretation of this Informal Competitive Solicitation and the procurement process. Written responses to all questions received may be provided to all potential Service Providers. If a Service Provider or someone acting on a Service Provider’s behalf attempts to discuss this RFP orally or in writing with any members of the evaluation committee, or any employee of the State of Iowa, other than through the contact noted within this request, the Service Provider may be disqualified.

Volunteer Iowa reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part; to advertise for new proposals; to abandon the need for such services; and to cancel this Informal Competitive Solicitation at any time prior to the execution of the written contract.

All information submitted by a Service Provider may be treated as a public record by Volunteer Iowa unless the Service Provider properly requests that the information be treated as confidential information in accordance with the public records laws of the State of Iowa at the time its proposal is submitted. The costs of preparation and delivery of the bid proposal are solely the responsibility of the Service Provider. By submitting a proposal, the Service Provider agrees that Volunteer Iowa may copy the proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation of the proposal or to respond to requests for public records and represents that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party. By submitting a proposal, the Service Provider agrees that it will not bring any claim or have any cause of action against Volunteer Iowa based on any misunderstanding concerning the information provided herein or concerning Volunteer Iowa’s failure, negligent or otherwise, to provide the bidder with pertinent information as intended by this Informal Competitive Solicitation.

Notice of intent to award the contract will be sent by mail or email to all Service Providers submitting a timely proposal. Negotiation and execution of contract with the successful Service Provider shall be completed no later than June 30, 2023, though all Service Providers submitting a proposal shall hold their price open until July 15, 2023. If the apparent successful Service Provider fails to negotiate and deliver an executed contract by that date, Volunteer Iowa may, in its sole discretion, cancel the award and award the contract to the next highest ranked Service Provider.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

In evaluating their qualifications and developing their proposal, the successful Service Provider should address the following expectations:

Required timeline: The provider must work with Volunteer Iowa staff to agree upon a timeline for training delivery, with sessions to be offered as early as July 2023 and with all contract activities to be completed by the end of the contract period, but no later than November 30, 2023. Development and presentation of training and guidance may take place throughout the contract period, as agreed-upon by Volunteer Iowa and Service Provider. Exact frequency and format of training and technical assistance activities will be discussed during contract negotiations with Volunteer Iowa. The provider must be available for regular communication with Volunteer Iowa staff during the contract period to arrange details of the training and technical assistance.

Required skills: Prior experience providing human resources consultation to mediate personnel issues. Demonstrated ability to work with difficult situations with multiple interests/parties involved. Demonstrated knowledge and expertise of DEI topics in human resources, particularly for national service programs. Excellent oral and written communication skills to effectively communicate with AmeriCorps members, programs, and host sites. Access to and ability to manage technology effectively for conducting virtual consultation and/or training. Ability to travel as needed to provide in-person services.

Desired skills: Prior experience, either formal or informal, providing DEI consultation services. Prior experience working with AmeriCorps members or programs. Familiarity with other Corporation for National and Community Service and Volunteer Iowa programs.

Desired traits: Self-motivated, hands-on, organized professional with a positive attitude. Ability to work with a variety of organizations and individuals from diverse backgrounds. Willing to provide honest feedback and meaningful recommendations for program improvements. Flexibility, focus and commitment to the goals of advancing service and volunteerism as a strategy. Effective communication, ability to work within established timelines and follow-through.

The successful Service Provider will work with Volunteer Iowa, by:

1. Developing a mutually agreed upon training and technical assistance plan and training content.
2. Delivering the training and technical assistance to host site and program staff, virtually and/or in-person.
3. Maintaining any training or technical assistance platforms required for delivery of the training and technical assistance. Providing Volunteer Iowa staff access to such platforms.
4. Being available to Volunteer Iowa staff for necessary communication during the contract period.
5. Providing other ongoing consultation services on related DEI/human resource topics to Volunteer Iowa, AmeriCorps State programs, host sites, and members (such as affinity group facilitation or one-on-one technical assistance). Other ongoing consultation services will be agreed upon in writing.

6. Submitting a written summary report of professional services provided at the conclusion of the contract period.

CONTENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

Proposals should demonstrate a clear plan for how Service Provider intends to conduct the work proposed. The Proposal should also provide a budget for such services, broken down by activity and including adequate basis for such fee. In addition, the Proposal should include a description of the key personnel who will be responsible to complete any services as well as their relevant experience, education, and, if applicable, any relevant certification(s) held by them. The Proposal should be written with a font size of not less than 11 point, and the entire Proposal should not exceed eight (8) regular letter-sized (8.5" x 11") pages. The Proposal must be accompanied by a transmittal letter signed by an authorized representative of the Service Provider that certifies the Service Provider understands the terms and conditions of this Informal Competitive Solicitation and intends to be bound by them. In addition, the provider must include a resume and/or curriculum vitae (CV). Such letter and resume (or CV) shall not count against the page count.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed by the evaluation committee comprised of Volunteer Iowa staff and/or Commissioners. The committee will consider all information provided in the proposal when making its recommendation and may consider relevant information from other sources. ***The evaluation committee will award the contract to the responsible Service Provider submitting the best proposal. The lowest priced proposal is not necessarily the best proposal.*** The evaluation committee's selection will be subject to the final approval of Volunteer Iowa.

The proposals will be evaluated, and a recommendation will be made using the following criteria, which are listed in no particular order:

- a. Cost;
- b. Past performance of work that is identical or similar to the scope of services identified;
- c. Experience and references that demonstrate, to the satisfaction of Volunteer Iowa, the expertise and ability of the Service Provider to provide the Scope of Services described in the Informal Competitive Solicitation; and
- d. The capacity of the Service Provider to complete responsibilities described in the Scope of Services.

If there is a tie for the best proposal and only one of the Service Providers is an Iowa business, the Iowa business shall be given preference over the out of state Service Providers.

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