



Request for Proposal (RFP) for  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Training

Issue Date: As listed on [crcog.bonfirehub.com](http://crcog.bonfirehub.com)

Deadline for Questions: As listed on [crcog.bonfirehub.com](http://crcog.bonfirehub.com)

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## **1 INTRODUCTION AND INTENT**

CRCOG, on behalf of its municipalities, seeks proposals from qualified and experienced firms to provide diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training. The purpose of this training is to foster an inclusive and equitable environment in accordance with the Scope of Work specified in this Request for Proposals (RFP). An award will be made to the firm that demonstrates experience and expertise in designing and conducting the training, proposes reasonable fees, and meets the requirements of this RFP.

It is CRCOG's intent to award a contract for a 3-year term, with options for additional extensions. CRCOG will hold the master contract and CRPC members will participate in the program via member side letters (Appendix A).

## **2 BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW**

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) is a voluntary Council of Governments formed to initiate and implement regional programs of benefit to the towns and the region. It is guided by the chief elected officials of our 38 Metro Hartford municipalities. The mayors, first selectmen, and town council chairmen who make up our governing Policy Board recognize that the future of our individual members is tied to the future of our region. Our members have collaborated for more than 50 years on a wide range of projects to benefit our towns individually and the region as a whole. CRCOG serves the Capitol Region and all our municipalities by:

- Helping members improve governmental efficiency and save tax dollars through shared services and other direct service initiatives;
- Promoting efficient transportation systems, responsible land use and preservation of land and natural resources and effective economic development;
- Strengthening the Capitol City of Hartford as the core of a strong region, and as our economic, social and cultural center;
- Advocating for the region and its towns with the State and Federal governments;
- Strengthening our regional community by helping coordinate regional agencies and programs; and
- Assisting local governments and citizens in articulating, advocating, and implementing the vision, needs and values of their regional community.

## **3 SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The Consultant will be expected to provide training related to DEI. Overall, CRCOG is seeking a customizable plan to meet the needs of CRCOG's member towns, including but not limited to, Avon, Bloomfield, East Hartford, Simsbury. In addition to training, the firm should provide desired outcomes from training (and workshops), and best practices.

Each town who utilizes the consultant will have a variety of needs and goals. The overall goal is to increase understanding of individual, institutional, and structural

## RFP: DEI Training

discrimination, and how all levels of discrimination impact social conditions. In addition, the DEI program should educate leaders about their responsibilities to promote DEI and prepare them to hold courageous conversations across lines of difference and share best practices with their teams.

The awarded firm should be able to provide the following:

- A. Conduct training on DEI for staff, senior leaders, and elected officials.

The training should specifically address:

- 1. Systemic Racism – what is it and how to recognize it
  - 2. Implicit/Unconscious Bias – how it shows up and how to recognize it
  - 3. How to Start to Undo Bias
  - 4. Micro-aggressions – how to recognize them and how to respond when encountering them
  - 5. Cultural Awareness & Inclusion
- B. Create a DEI training toolkit and train staff on how to facilitate dialogue on DEI
  - C. Create an evaluation plan for the individual town to measure the efficacy of training and progress of the inclusiveness initiative
  - D. Conduct community workshops focused on DEI. These workshops would be open to the public and be able to engage the community regarding DEI.

Ideally, pricing will be on an “a-la-carte” basis for municipalities to be able to choose services required and needed for the individual municipality. Additional training modules or workshop suggestions would be welcome.

## 4 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The following minimum qualifications must be present for a firm to be considered for award of a contract under this RFP:

- 1. All required licensures, registrations, and certifications to do business in the State of Connecticut.
- 2. Experience working with public entities to provide DEI training services.
- 3. Key personnel assigned to the contract must have more than five years’ experience in this industry.
- 4. Additional qualifications:
  - A. The awarded firm shall have relevant experience providing DEI training to organizations with public sector considerations.
  - B. Experience developing and conducting training and presentations on DEI for different stakeholders including elected officials, managers, and employees.

- C. Ability to provide examples of previous DEI trainings that have been successfully developed, implemented, and maintained in comparable organizations of size and scope.
- D. Staff, managerial, and fiscal resources to complete all elements of the project in accordance with the required timeline.
- E. Experience, aptitude, and strategies for developing and implementing cost-effective and impactful training and methods to evaluate its efficacy.

## 5 PREPARING A RESPONSE

By submitting a response, respondents represent that they have thoroughly examined and become familiar with the scope of services outlined in this RFP and can perform the work to achieve the objectives.

Proposals submitted in response to the RFP will be publicly available once a contract is executed or negotiations for the award of such contract have ended pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-210(b)(24). All documents that the proposer believes to be confidential trade secrets and/or commercial or financial information and except under the above statutes should be clearly marked as such to preserve the Freedom of Information Act exemption for confidential trade secrets pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (5)(A) and (5)(B).

CRCOG may provide reasonable accommodations, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, for qualified prospective firms with a disability. Prospective firms requiring accommodation shall submit requests in writing, with supporting documentation justifying the accommodation, to CRCOG at the following address:

CRCOG  
Re: Accommodation for RFP #2021-19-10  
241 Main Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Hartford, CT 06106

Requests for accommodation must be received by the Deadline for Questions as listed on [www.crcog.bonfirehub.com](http://www.crcog.bonfirehub.com). CRCOG reserves the right to grant or reject any request for accommodation.

Respondents are asked to submit all responses to the location outlined on the coversheet. Respondents must submit electronic versions of all documents in their entirety at [www.crcog.bonfirehub.com](http://www.crcog.bonfirehub.com)

Receipt of sealed proposals for furnishing the services described herein is due **no later than the proposal due date and time listed on [www.crcog.bonfirehub.com](http://www.crcog.bonfirehub.com)**. **The clock which will be used for the submission deadline will be as listed on the Bonfirehub portal.**

**A. Questionnaire.**

All vendors are required to fill out the questionnaire for this RFP. This questionnaire has 3 tabs that need to be completed. They are as follows:

- Company Information.
- Current Users and References. Submit five current clients (Note: Government references are strongly preferred). If you have additional references you would like to submit, please submit it as a separate document under Relevant Experience.
- Project Team. A list of three personnel who will be assigned to the contract. Please describe the roles and responsibilities of each team member.

**B. Project Understanding / Approach and Relevant Experience**

This is a document the vendor should submit (pdf format, please). Describe in detail your understanding of the scope of services required and your firm's ability to provide the full spectrum of needs outlined in the Scope of Service as well as your firm's relevant experience in fulfilling those needs. Describe in detail your approach to providing the desired services and highlight any relevant special services your firm provides that could be beneficial, particularly those that may not be offered by other firms. As part of your response, please specifically address:

- what makes your firm uniquely qualified to provide the services described in this RFP.
- Include specific examples of how your firm has successfully customized similar solutions to serve the unique needs of municipalities or similar public agencies

Please note, alternate proposals will be accepted for this section.

**C. Fee Proposal.**

This is an Excel spreadsheet (.xls or .xlsx) vendors are required to submit. A template is not provided.

CRCOG reserves the right to negotiate fees and project scope with the successful respondent if it is deemed to be in the agency's best interest. All proposals submitted shall be considered valid for at least one hundred and twenty (120) days from the opening date.

Please note, alternate proposals will be accepted for this section.

**D. Insurance.**

All respondents are required to submit, with their responses, a copy of the cover sheet from their insurance policy(ies) (or an equivalent piece of documentation) which demonstrates the firm's current coverages and limits for General Liability, Automobile Liability, Professional Liability and Worker's Compensation Insurance as appropriate for the project work required herein.

**E. Additional Required Data.**

The vendor should also submit the following:

- A statement accepting of all terms, conditions and requirements contained in the RFP. If you do not accept all terms, conditions, and requirements, please submit a separate document that details an explanation.
- Statement stating you are legally licensed/registered to do business in Connecticut.
- Non-Collusion Certification: The company should certify that this RFP is being submitted without any collusion, communication, or agreement as to any matter related to the RFP with any other respondent or competitor.

Responses must be submitted no later than the time and date outlined on the coversheet. Responses should be submitted as outlined on the coversheet.

Any responses received after this date and time will not be considered.

## **6 QUESTIONS**

Questions shall be submitted only via CRCOG's bonfire portal at [crocog.bonfirehub.com](http://crocog.bonfirehub.com) **by the time and date listed at [www.crocog.bonfirehub.com](http://www.crocog.bonfirehub.com)** . No oral interpretations shall be provided. Responses shall be posted as addenda at [crocog.bonfirehub.com](http://crocog.bonfirehub.com). It is the respondent's responsibility to check the website for addenda prior to submission of any proposal.

Prospective firms shall not attempt to communicate with, in writing, electronically or orally, any CRCOG official, employee or member town other than the method listed in this section, above. Prospective firms shall not contact any other CRCOG officials or member towns in an attempt to gather information regarding this RFP, or in an attempt to influence CRCOG's consideration of its proposal. All inappropriate communications with CRCOG employees, officials or member towns will be forwarded to the proposal evaluation team. Inappropriate communications by a prospective contractor may, at the discretion of the evaluation team, constitute grounds for disqualification of that prospective firm's proposal. Alternatively, the evaluation team may, at its discretion, consider such inappropriate communications when evaluating and scoring proposals.

## **7 RFP GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **A. Acceptance or Rejection by the Capitol Region Council of Governments**

The CRCOG reserves the right to accept and or reject any or all proposals submitted for consideration or to negotiate separately in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of the CRCOG and its members. Respondents whose proposals are not accepted shall be notified in writing.

### **B. Ownership of Proposals**

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of CRCOG and shall be subject to the provisions of Section 1-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes (re: Freedom of Information).

### **C. Changes to Proposals**

No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submittal.

### **D. Contract Requirements**

A formal contractual arrangement will be entered into with the consultant, selected as per the CRCOG standard form of agreement. The contents of the proposal submitted by the successful respondent and the RFP will become part of any Contract award.

### **E. Amending or Canceling Request**

CRCOG reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP, prior to the due date and time, if it is deemed to be in its best interest to do so.

### **F. Waiver of Informalities**

The Capitol Region Council of Governments reserves the right to accept or reject any and all responses to this Request for Proposals, or any part thereof, and to waive any informalities and/or technicalities that are deemed to be in its best interest.

### **G. Collusion**

By responding, the firm implicitly states: that his/her proposal has not been made in connection with any other competing firm submitting a separate response to this RFP; is in all respects fair; and has been submitted without collusion or fraud. It is further implied that the firm did not participate in the RFP development process, had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP before its issuance, and that no employee of CRCOG either directly or indirectly assisted in the vendor's proposal preparation.

### **H. Assigning/ Transferring of Agreement**

Any successful firm is prohibited from assigning, transferring, conveying, subletting, or otherwise disposing of the resulting agreement or its rights, title, or interest therein or its power to execute such an agreement to any other person, company or corporation without prior consent and approval in writing from CRCOG.



**I. Termination**

CRCOG may terminate any contract(s) or any part of any contracts resulting from this process at any time for: cause, default, or negligence on the part of the vendor; or if the vendor fails, in the opinion of the Agency, to meet the general terms and conditions of any resulting contract or to provide a level of service that is deemed to be in the best interest of the Agency.

**J. Severability**

If any terms or provisions of this Request for Proposal shall be found to be illegal or unenforceable, then such term or provision shall be deemed stricken and the remaining portions of this document shall remain in full force and effect.

**K. Affirmative Action**

The Towns participating in this RFP are equal opportunity employers and require an affirmative action policy from all firms and vendors as a condition of doing business with the towns, as per Federal Order 11246. By signing the proposal sheet for this bid, all vendors and contractor agree to this condition of doing business with the towns and should the towns choose to audit their compliance, the vendor agrees to cooperate fully.

**L. Insurance Requirements**

The Respondent shall, at its own expense and cost, obtain and keep in force during the entire transition and contract period the following insurance coverages covering the Respondent and all its agents, employees and sub-firms and other providers of services, and shall name the Capitol Region Council of Governments and its employees and agents as an Additional Insured on a primary and non-contributory basis to the Respondent's Commercial General Liability and Automobile Liability policies. These requirements shall be clearly stated in the remarks section on the Respondent's Certificate of Insurance. In addition:

1. All policy forms shall be on the occurrence form.
2. Acceptable evidence of coverage will be on the ACORD form or a form with the same format.
3. All renewal certificates shall be furnished at least 10 days prior to policy expiration.
4. Each certificate shall contain a 30-day notice of cancellation.
5. Insurance shall be issued by an insurance company licensed to conduct business in the State of Connecticut which has at least an "A-" policy holders rating according to Best Publications latest edition Key Rating Guide.

Required insurance coverage:

1. **Professional Liability Insurance** with limits up to \$2,000,000 aggregate limit issued on claims made basis for the term of the contract and continuing for two years following the completion of the contract at the Vendor's cost.
2. **Comprehensive General Liability Insurance:** Vendor shall, at its own cost and expense, obtain and keep in force during the Term of the Agreement general liability insurance with minimum limits of 1 million per occurrence/ 2 million aggregate and shall name the CRCOG and their respective officers, officials, employees, agents, boards, and commissions as Additional Insureds on a primary and non-contributory basis. There shall be no special limitations on the scope of protection afforded to the CRCOG. Vendor shall assume any and all deductibles in the described insurance policies and Vendor's insurer shall have no right of recovery or subrogation against CRCOG. These requirements shall be clearly stated in the remarks section on Vendor's Certificate of Insurance. Insurance shall be written with insurance carriers approved in the State of Connecticut and with a minimum Best's Rating of A- and all deductibles, if any, are the sole responsibility of Vendor.
3. **Automobile Liability Insurance** including non-owned and hired vehicles in the same limits as indicated above.
4. **Workers' Compensation Insurance** at the Connecticut statutory limit including Employers' Liability with limits of \$100,000 each accident, \$500,000 for each disease/policy limit, and \$100,000 for disease for each employee.
5. **Excess Liability Umbrella Form** over sections B, C, and D-Employers' Liability with limits up to \$4,000,000.

**M. Hold Harmless and Indemnification**

In addition to its obligation to provide insurance as specified above, the Vendor, its agents and assignees shall indemnify and hold harmless the Capitol Region Council of Governments and its member municipalities, including but not limited to, its elected officials, and its officers, from any and all claims made against the CRCOG, including but not limited to, damages, awards, costs and reasonable attorney's fees, to the extent any such claim directly and proximately results from the negligent acts, errors, or omissions in performance of services by the Vendor during the Vendor's performance of this Agreement or any other Agreements of the Vendor entered into by reason thereof. CRCOG agrees to give the Vendor prompt notice of any such claim and absent a conflict of interest, an opportunity to control the defense thereof.

**8 RFP EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS**

The following is a general description of the process by which a firm will be selected for award of a contract to perform the services described in this RFP:

1. Request for Proposals (RFP) is released to prospective firms.
2. All questions regarding this RFP, as well as the CRCOG's responses to the questions, will be posted as an addendum to the RFP.

3. All proposals must be received by CRCOG no later than the date and time specified on the cover sheet of this RFP. Late proposals will not be considered or reviewed.
4. Following the due date and time when proposals are due, the [envelope or package containing the proposals from each responding firm will be opened by CRCOG personnel/the submitted proposals will be downloaded from Bonfire.]  
**The opening of the proposals is not open to prospective firms or the public.**
5. CRCOG’s evaluation team expects to take the following actions to determine the merits of the proposals that are submitted:

- a. **Review of Proposals:** Review the proposals to determine whether they are responsive to the RFP and that they were submitted by responsible companies.
- b. **Evaluation of Proposals:** Proposals shall be evaluated by using the following criteria:

| Element                                     | Weighting |
|---|-----------|
| Overall strength of proposal and experience | 20        |
| Project Understanding / Approach            | 40        |
| Quality of References                       | 20        |
| Fee Proposal                                | 20        |
| Minimum Requirements Met                    | Pass/Fail |
| Non-Collusion Statement Answered as True    | Pass/Fail |

- c. **Selection:** Selection shall be made of one or more respondents deemed to be fully qualified and best suited among those submitting proposals on the basis of the evaluation factors included in the Request for Proposals.
- d. **Oral Presentation:** At the option of the evaluation team, the evaluators may request oral presentations by any number of the finalists for the purpose of clarification and amplification of the materials presented in any part of the proposal. The evaluators may also request best and final offers (BAFOs) from one or more prospective firms. However, prospective firms are cautioned that the evaluators are not required to invite oral presentations, request clarification, or conduct negotiations and may award a contract based on the original proposal. Therefore, all initial proposals should be complete and reflect the firm’s most favorable terms.
- e. **Negotiation:** At the discretion of the evaluation team, negotiations shall be conducted with the respondent(s) so selected. After negotiations have been conducted with the respondent so selected, the CRCOG shall select the respondent which, in its opinion, has made the best proposal, and shall award the contract to that respondent if it so chooses.
- f. **Award or Non-Award:** Should CRCOG determine in its sole discretion that only one respondent is fully qualified, or that one respondent is clearly more highly qualified than the others under consideration, a contract

may be negotiated and awarded to that respondent. The award document will be a contract incorporating by reference all the requirements, terms and conditions of the solicitation and the firm's proposal as negotiated. CRCOG reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all proposals when such rejection is deemed to be in its best interest.