

EQUITY CONSULTANT Request for Proposals

INVITATION:

The following is a Request for Proposals for a lead consultant to develop an equity framework for Findhelp|211. The consultant will also support the operationalization of the framework, which will serve as the foundation for the organization's equity strategy.

BACKGROUND:

Findhelp|211 Central acts as the front door into community social services and we do this by taking a person-centred approach to our work. Throughout our history, Findhelp|211 has engaged in various equity-related initiatives that impact staff and communities we serve. This includes the development of an Anti-Black racism toolkit and implementation of focus groups to learn more about the experiences of Black communities when engaging with Findhelp|211 services. Findhelp|211 has also participated in a data equity pilot which was focused on building organizational capacity to collect socio-demographic data in order to better support equity-deserving communities.

PURPOSE OF AN EQUITY FRAMEWORK:

Findhelp|211 Central seeks to develop an organizational wide equity framework to strengthen its strategic priorities - improving services and access to the most vulnerable members of our community. The intent is that equity considerations can be more strategically implemented both within the organization as well as to better support equity-deserving communities, including people with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, immigrants, refugees, youth and racialized communities. Note that given Indigenous communities are seeking sovereignty, this warrants an additional engagement process which will be taking place within the context of reconciliation. With this in mind, the processes involved with development and operationalization of the equity framework will support Findhelp|211's work related to reconciliation.

The equity framework will be used internally to inform decision-making regarding the restructuring of Findhelp|211's information & referrals infrastructure and organizational operations. More broadly, the framework will inform change management processes such that an equity lens can be incorporated into the culture of the organization. The framework will also be shared externally, for community stakeholders and the broader social services sector to understand Findhelp|211's equity strategy.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

Some of the key questions for the consultant to provide guidance on are as follows:

- What are the policies and practices that will inform the broader priorities of the equity framework?
- How do existing equity initiatives align with organizational priorities and what is missing?
- What are the key steps in operationalizing an equity framework and what is needed to get there?

- What considerations are needed for creating accountability when embedding equity into Findhelp|211's practices and policies?

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Incorporate an intersectional analysis that centers the lived experiences and expertise of equity deserving communities in development and operationalization of equity framework
- Review of existing policies, practices and equity initiatives of Findhelp
- Research best practices for an Anti-Black Racism strategy and related work to inform framework development
- Develop a plan to assess organizational readiness including strengths and opportunities as it pertains to addressing equity-related issues
- Develop stakeholder engagement tools
- Engage with Findhelp's Anti-Black Racism sub-committee to co-create an equity framework
- Engage in consultations with the Board of Directors, Directors, Managers, Coordinators, Service Navigators, volunteers, relevant community partners and other identified stakeholders
- Develop recommendations for an equity framework informed by organizational context and learnings from consultations
- Develop organizational processes that ensure accountability to the staff, stakeholders and communities throughout the equity process
- Develop an equity framework and facilitating dialogue to inform refinement of the framework
- Develop a complementary action plan to support operationalizing the equity framework
- Develop a strategy for communicating and socializing the equity framework
- Engage with identified stakeholders to socialize the equity framework

KEY DELIVERABLES:

- Interim report to support dissemination of learnings from engagement with Findhelp stakeholders
- Organization-wide equity framework
- Complementary action plan with strategy to support operationalization of the equity framework

SELECTION CRITERIA:

The successful application must have experience developing equity frameworks with the non-profit sector, as well as experience engaging various stakeholders within an organization to come to a shared understanding of an equity framework that can be operationalized.

Preference will be given to consultants with lived experience as a Black, Indigenous, or other racialized person, a person with disabilities, or a 2SLGBTQIA+ person who can acknowledge and speak to the impact of systemic racism and oppression.

CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS:

- Develop plan for project, which incorporates goals, timing, methodology and key deliverables
- In-depth knowledge of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) principles
- Experience applying DEI principles and working with an anti-oppression and anti-racism framework within the non-profit sector
- Ability to use an intersectionality, trauma-informed, strengths-based lens
- Strong understanding of the systemic barriers experienced by marginalized communities to accessing community services, including disproportionate racism experienced by Black communities and Indigenous communities
- Knowledge of the community social services sector in Findhelp's service regions of Toronto and Peel, York and Durham regions
- Demonstrated experience in developing equity frameworks, including supporting organizations through this process
- Demonstrated knowledge of planning and implementing equity-related practices within a non-profit organizational context
- Demonstrated ability to engage with and facilitate dialogue with stakeholders at different levels of an organization

The planning and development of an equity framework will take place from January 2022 to May 2022.

BUDGET:

The maximum budget for this project is \$25,000.

SELECTION TIMELINE:

- Request for Proposal released – November 15, 2021
- Last day for questions from applicants – November 25, 2021
- Proposal submission – November 26, 2021
- Zoom interview of candidates – December 1 – December 7, 2021
- Selection and awarding of contract – December 15, 2021

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:

The proposal should not exceed 3,000 words in total, including details on how the budget will be used, but excluding appendices (CV, writing samples, references, etc.).

Type size should be 12 pt.

The following specific content is required to be included in the proposal:

a) Name and contact information

b) Reference Information

- Description of the applicant's work, including experience in projects involving the community and public benefit sector. Attach a separate CV, if needed.
- List of similar projects currently or previously undertaken.

- Names and contact information of at least two references for whom the applicant has completed relevant projects
- 1-2 examples of executive summaries or a full report written by the applicant of other equity framework strategies the firm has completed in the past

c) Proposal

- Overview of the applicant's understanding of the scope and requirements of the project, and the approach that the applicant will take
- A work plan that considers the deliverables and implementation timelines including stipends/honoraria for expert speakers or service users who will complete the survey.
- A clear breakdown of the tasks, showing the amount of time each member of the consultant team will spend on this project
- A budget for the total cost of the work, including all personnel, materials, and other expenditures
- Budget maximum of \$25,000 with justification through daily consultancy rates

DEADLINE:

Please submit one (1) electronic copy of your proposal **before 5 p.m. on November 26, 2021** to:

Mythri Vijendran

Email: mvijendran@findhelp.ca

Subject/Reference: Findhelp Equity Consultant

Questions/inquiries regarding this RFP please contact Mythri Vijendran at mvijendran@findhelp.ca

Findhelp | 211 Central believes in a workplace culture of inclusion that is welcoming, respectful, safe and empowering for all staff. It is critical to our success to eliminate barriers and promote the inclusion of equity groups. Equity groups have been, and continue to be, underrepresented and marginalized in the workforce, leadership roles, and in some specific occupations. Equity groups include but may not be limited to Indigenous persons, racialized people, gender diverse people, 2SLGBTQIA+ people and persons with disabilities.

If you require accommodation at any stage during the hiring process, please inform us.

Accommodations are available on request for candidates taking part in all aspects of the selection process. Please send your request to HR at job@findhelp.ca.