

Request for Proposals

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Organizational Assessment and Action Plan

**Island County, Washington
County Administration**

March 1, 2024

A. INTRODUCTION

Island County is seeking a qualified consultant to assess the Island County workplace regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), to provide a report of findings, and to prepare an action plan or strategy that provides recommendations for developing greater equity and improving inclusion in the workplace and to prepare personnel to provide government services in a more equitable and inclusive manner.

Island County is comprised of 21 offices of elected officials and departments and has approximately 500 regular employees working at 23 facilities covering both Whidbey and Camano Islands. The County's current population is 87,000 residents. More information about the range of services and activities can be found at <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/157/Departments-Offices>.

B. PURPOSE

The County is at the early stages of actively promoting DEI in the workplace and the community. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is being released to invite qualified companies and professionals to prepare and submit proposals to provide consulting services in accordance with the instructions provided. Written proposals will be evaluated by the County based upon the consultant's qualifications, structure and completeness of the submittal, perceived understanding of the project, and the ability to perform the services required under the contract.

C. CONSULTING SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work shall consist of analysis of the workplace culture through methods determined by the consultant, which is anticipated to include meetings with personnel at all levels of the organization and other research methods such as surveys. The analysis will provide information for the drafting of an organizational assessment that describes the current situation, as well as the preparation of and delivery of an oral report to leadership on the findings. The project also includes a written strategy with proposed action steps to improve the current environment regarding DEI factors. The written strategy will be used as the foundation for near-term actions including training, education, policy amendments, and operational changes.

Project Scope

1. Work with the County Administrator to refine the scope of work for the assessment and report.
2. Conduct an analysis by:
 - a. Review of existing data, including such things as survey data from a 2022 DEI survey conducted by the County, review of County personnel policies and procedures, and job postings.
 - b. Interviewing County personnel including elected officials, department heads, supervisors and line employees in a wide range of service areas.

- c. Other investigative methods determined appropriate by the consultant and County Administrator.
3. Draft a written report of findings, including:
 - a. At least one administrative draft, and
 - b. A final draft.
4. Prepare and deliver a presentation to elected officials and department heads of the findings.
[Note: Anticipate that this will be expected to occur on-site in Coupeville, WA.]
5. Develop a report outlining recommendations for action to be taken by the County to promote DEI in the organization. This is expected to primarily be focused on the workplace.
[Note: It is anticipated that later work by the County is likely to include broader community work but is not within the scope of this project.]
Include:
 - a. At least one administrative draft, and
 - b. A final draft of written recommendations/action plan.

There will be limited support provided by the County staff. The consultant is expected to independently organize and schedule interviews, organize and host any group sessions, develop questions and conduct any surveys, and analyze data substantially without support by County staff.

County staff will provide existing resource documents and data, provide employee contact information, organize for on-campus meeting space (as may be needed) and will post to the County's employee intranet site (as may be needed). County staff will be available for interview, and for consultation during preparation of the report of findings, leadership team presentation content, and report of recommendations.

D. BUDGET

Island County has estimated that the cost for consulting services being sought in this RFP will be \$20,000 to \$30,000. Final budget will be established in the selection process based on final negotiated scope of work.

E. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Island County will select the Proposal that is, in Island County's judgment, the most advantageous proposal to Island County, which successfully demonstrates the qualifications and ability to meet the required elements of the scope of work in an efficient, cost-effective manner. Acceptance of the proposal is contingent upon the successful agreement and execution of a contract. To be successful, a proposal must:

- 1) Provide all the required information and meet minimum qualifications as set forth in this Request for Proposals.
- 2) Demonstrate a successful history of providing like or similar services to local governments to support the conclusion that the consultant has the ability and operational capacity to provide the services required under this contract.

- 3) Demonstrate to the County's satisfaction that the consultant has the organizational staff capacity to successfully fulfill the contract based on the education and professional experience of the consultant's team.
- 4) Apparent ability to establish and maintain positive working relationships with Island County elected officials, employees and other personnel that may be involved in this project as can be illustrated by recommendations from past clients and form performance in the selection process.
- 5) Demonstrate the ability to meet the required elements of the scope of work in an efficient, cost-effective manner.

F. COMMUNICATIONS

It is the responsibility of the Consultant to read and understand all parts of the Request for Proposals. All communications regarding this Request for Proposals from interested parties must be directed through:

Michael Jones
 County Administrator
 1 NE 7th Street
 Coupeville, WA 98239
 (360) 679-7311
countyadministration@islandcountywa.gov

The individual identified above is the sole point of contact for any inquiries or information pertaining to this RFP. Consultants who request a clarification of the RFP requirements may submit written questions to the RFP contact person by the date and time specified in the following Schedule. Island County reserves the right to update RFP requirements. Island County will use email to notify Consultants of RFP questions and/or changes.

G. SCHEDULE

This request for proposals will be managed according to the following schedule:

Event	Due Date
Issue RFP via website, newspaper, other	3/1/24
Deadline to receive Consultant Questions	3/15/24 (4:30pm)
Deadline for Response to Consultant Questions	3/22/24
Deadline for receiving Consultant's Proposal	4/5/24 (4:30pm)
Anticipated Consultant Interview	Week of April 15
Anticipated Final Consultant Selection	4/19/24

H. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS, FORMAT CONTENT AND SUBMISSION

Submission of Proposal. Consultants must include responses to all of the provisions and items of this RFP using the instructions provided herein for their responses.

- 1) Submission Deadline. All Consultant responses and proposals must be received no later than the date indicated in Section G. Late or incomplete proposals may be rejected. Consultants should note that this is a firm deadline. Island County does not contemplate any extension of the deadline noted herein.
- 2) Responses must mirror the numbering order used throughout this RFP.
- 3) All proposals MUST BE SENT BY EMAIL to county and must be time stamped by Island County's system as received by the submission deadline. Each submitted proposal shall identify the electronic submission by submitting the proposal with the phrase "Island County DEI Project Consultant" in the Subject area of the email. Once your proposal is received, you will receive a confirmation via email. Island County assumes no responsibility for delays caused by delivery service.
- 4) Proposals must be in Adobe PDF format.
- 5) Each of the major sections identified below should be separately labeled for ease of identification. Every page of the proposal must be numbered sequentially, including attachments and appendices.
- 6) Prospective Consultants must provide the following materials as part of their proposal:
 - a. Cover Letter.
 - b. Completed proposal as specified in section "I. Proposal Content."
- 7) Proposals must be written in English and are expected to be legible and reasonably organized.

I. PROPOSAL CONTENT

Proposals will be evaluated upon the quality of the proposed solution described in the response to this solicitation document. It is in the Consultant's best interest, therefore, to be thorough and fully responsive in preparing its solutions (answers) to these requirements.

- 1) Cover Letter.
- 2) Local Government Experience. Describe your experience in providing consulting services to local government agencies, including those of a similar size as Island County.
Limit to 1 page.
- 3) Similar Engagement Experience. Describe your experience and expertise in providing similar services necessary to perform the services defined in Section C Consulting Scope of Work.
Limit to 1 page.
- 4) Proposed Staffing. Discuss how your organization will staff the project to promote accountability for carrying out required services and responsiveness to timelines. Provide a detailed listing of the key person or persons that you propose for this project, including the titles of staff, team roles (if applicable), and a current resume/curricula vita of each person proposed.
Limit to 1 page, excluding resumes/curricula vitae.
- 5) Client References. Provide client references for projects where you have provided consulting services that are similar to those identified in this document. Include client name, client contact,

telephone number, the type of work conducted.

Provide a minimum of three and a maximum of ten references.

- 6) Proposed Actions Outline. Describe the steps to be taken to undertake the work including estimated hours spent and project outcomes/work product (reference project scope of work). This should align with the proposed budget and project timeline. May be combined with either or both budget and project timeline as a single submittal component. No page limit.
- 7) Proposed Budget. Provide a detailed project budget based upon specific deliverables. [NOTE: Travel expenses, necessary tools, equipment, and supplies should all be anticipated in the development of the proposed budget.]
No page limit.
- 8) Proposed Project Timeline. Provide a detailed schedule for project tasks from contracting/start of work through delivery of final action plan.
No page limit.

J. RFP AND PROPOSAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 1) Right to Withdraw Proposals. Proposals may be withdrawn at any time before proposal deadline.
- 2) Right to Reject/Accept Proposals. Island County reserves the right to accept any proposal or, at its discretion, reject any or all proposals.
- 3) Right to Modify Proposals. Island County reserves the right to, but is not obligated to, modify minor irregularities in proposals received. If discrepancies between sections or other errors are found in a proposal, Island County may reject the proposal. Consultants are responsible for all errors or omissions in their proposals, and any such errors or omissions will not serve to diminish Consultants obligations to Island County.
- 4) Non Collusion. Submittal of a proposal constitutes a representation by the offeror that the offer is genuine and not a sham or collusive, and not made in the interest of any person not named, and that the offeror has not induced or solicited others to submit a sham offer, or to refrain from proposing.
- 5) Errors and Omissions. The County will not consider a claim of an error in offer, unless the claim is presented in writing with 24 hours (or the next working day) after the offer is received.
- 6) Non-responsive Submittals. Any response that does not reasonably comply with the instructions, in the County's sole judgment, may be rejected as incomplete, and may be declared unresponsive.
- 7) Additional Information. Island County reserves the right to request and/or obtain additional information as required.
- 8) Island County Not Responsible for Proposal Expenses. Receipt of a proposal does not obligate Island County to pay any expenses incurred by the Consultant in the preparation of proposal or obligate Island County in any other respect.
- 9) Public Information. Submittals will be considered public information once an award is made. It is the County's policy to make documents that are subject to the WA State Public Records Act (see RCW Chapter 42.17), available for review upon final award. The County's policy is to retain without disclosure all documents received until award is made and while the County is utilizing those documents for negotiations and/or considerations in order to assure that such disclosures will not affect cost to the County. Any information contained in the proposal that is proprietary must be clearly designated. Even if information in a proposal is marked "confidential" or "proprietary", such information may be subject to public disclosure pursuant to applicable law (including, but not

limited to RCW 42.56). Marking the entire proposal as “proprietary” or “confidential” will neither be accepted nor honored. If a public records request is received for a Consultant’s proposal, Island County will comply according to the Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 Revised Code of Washington (RCW). By submitting a proposal, all Consultants recognize and agree that any proposal, information, documents, data, etc. provided to the County may be subject to disclosure pursuant to applicable law (including, but not limited to RCW 42.56), and any Consultant submitting a proposal expressly waives any claim(s) for damages against the County arising from and/or related to the release of any information provided to the County which is subject to public disclosure (as determined by the County, at the County’s sole judgment and discretion), even if such information is arguably exempt from disclosure pursuant to applicable law.

- 10) RFP, Proposals Do Not Obligate. Neither the publication nor distribution of the RFP, or the receipt of proposals, constitutes any obligation or commitment on the part of Island County.
- 11) Proposal Evaluation and Project Consultant Selection. The proposals will be evaluated by a team from Island County Government. Island County will initially check the Consultant’s proposal to validate all information required to conform to this RFP is included. Absence of required information may be cause for rejection.
- 12) Evaluations and Final Selection. Island County will select the Proposal that has, in Island County’s judgment, the most advantageous proposal to Island County. The selected respondent will be notified in writing or email by the date indicated in the Schedule. Island County will start contract negotiation with the successful respondent.
- 13) Negotiations. Island County will enter into negotiations with the selected respondent as a result of the evaluation process. The negotiations may cover cost, technical, financial, contractual or other clarifications needed to make a decision. Island County reserves the right to also negotiate with the other top rated respondents in the event it is determined by Island County that the selected respondent and Island County cannot agree to contracting terms.
- 14) Final Authority. The final authority to award contracts as a result of this RFP rests solely with Island County. All submittals become the property of Island County.