Request for Proposal
Consultant to guide and support the development of STRIVE’s Racial Equity in Workforce Initiative for 2020 and beyond.

Contact:
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Email: ADesilva@strive.org and GWise@strive.org

Organizational Overview
STRIVE is a leading national workforce development solution for individuals facing some of the highest barriers to employment, including intergenerational poverty, housing and food insecurity, and a history of incarceration. Our proven model propels students into careers that lead to the promise and hope of inclusion in the American Dream. Established in East Harlem, NY in 1984, STRIVE has helped more than 75,000 graduates prepare for career success through employment programs and a holistic array of support services.

STRIVE operates in New York City and through partners in cities across the country. In 2019, STRIVE embarked on an ambitious growth plan expanding our impact in current and new cities, including Atlanta, in late 2020.

Scope of Work:
STRIVE is seeking a thought partner to guide the development and deployment of an intentional racial equity strategy that will allow us to integrate explicit racial equity approaches into our core workforce development strategies for students and developing staff members of color into leadership positions in the agency.

STRIVE’s priority is to develop a long term plan for proactively applying a racial equity lens to all of STRIVE’s operations, programming, and with internal and external stakeholders.

Timeline and Budget:
- **Phase I (Nov. – Feb. 2020)** → Organizational Assessment, Strategic Planning, and Foundational Trainings: $25,000
- **Phase II (Mar. 2021 – TBD)** → Plan Implementation and Ongoing Training and Support: TBD based on recommendations from Phase I
- **Phase III (Ongoing)** → Continuing the journey (*evaluate, assess, and improve*) and sharing lessons learned with the field
**Phase I:**

**Goals and Deliverables**

**Overview—**

1. Develop an inclusive process for the creation of an organizational vision statement that incorporates explicit racial equity perspectives that helps anchor and guide the work through an inclusive process.

2. Working with STRIVE Staff, Racial Equity Working Group, Executive Team, and Board to complete a holistic review/assessment of current practices, internal and external policies, culture, and systems and to develop a set of recommendations/strategic plan re: how to create and implement organizational Racial Equity priorities and initiatives.

3. Establish clear metrics of success for our internal equity and inclusion strategies.

4. Provide in-depth training to all Staff, Working Group, Executive Team, and Board to ensure that everyone is operating with a similar baseline understanding that prepares us to implement an organizational-wide racial equity strategy. Topics to include, but not limited to:
   - Anti-racism
   - Anti-oppression
   - White privilege and Dominant Culture Norms
   - Racial healing and Trauma
   - Leadership advancement for people of color in the nonprofit sector
   - Deficit-based Language, Stereotypes, and Narratives
   - Racial Wealth Gap

5. Internal Operations
   a) Work with the staff working group to complete a holistic review/assessment of current practices, policies, culture and systems and to develop a set of recommendations/strategic plan regarding how to best create and implement internal organizational equity initiatives.
   b) Staff recruitment and compensation practices and policies
   c) Develop recommendations for plan to build a clear strategy for promoting inclusion and equity at all staff levels.
6. Language and Advocacy
   a. Assess and recommend opportunities to best align STRIVE’s philanthropic and communications activities to support DEI priorities and initiatives.
   b. Recommend a structure for STRIVE to engage with our affiliate network on this journey in conjunction with our internal process.
   c. Identify appropriate roles that STRIVE can play for advancing racial equity in the workforce development field at large, with funders, employers, local and state legislatures.

7. Programming
   a. Develop a process for greater inclusion for all prospective students and alumni and their unique experiences.
   b. Establish clear metrics of success for our programs that acknowledges and addresses the intersection of racial equity and economic justice strategies.
   c. Review of program models, structure, delivery channels, curriculum, and goals to ensure an asset-based approach and the incorporation of a racial equity lens.

Expectations of Engagement:

- Initial engagement and organizational assessment.
- Recommendations for full organization engagement in the journey.
- Frequent updates on observations, lessons learned, and recommendations, and cataloging of deliverables mentioned above.
- Presentation of learnings from Phase I engagement and recommendations for the path forward for Phase II and the implementation plan to the STRIVE Staff, Working Group, Executive Team, and Board.

WHO MAY RESPOND

STRIVE seeks vendors who represent the racial and cultural experience of its staff and student body. In addition, we seek partners who have deep respect for and demonstrated expertise in:

   a. The diverse and complex communities we represent and serve;
   b. Advancing DEI principles and practices within communities and workplaces experiencing significant organizational and cultural changes;
   c. Working with large, social sector organizations with offices throughout the country.
d. Addressing and dismantling of white supremacist culture; Offering a diverse and experienced team of facilitators for on- and off-site trainings who are patient with people with different learning styles; and
e. Offering an inclusive, welcoming, and expansive definition of diversity that is both inclusive and intersectional.

The proposal should include:

A. Description of Your Organization

1. Describe the general nature of your work and how the diversity of your team creates greater value, insights, and viewpoints in the work you produce for your clients.
2. Provide examples of similar work, along with contact information for organizations you have served.
3. Describe the qualifications and experience of staff who will be assigned to this project. Provide additional information on the proposed project manager/director, including their CV.
4. Tell us about a situation where you encountered challenges with a client in developing a shared plan for racial equity work, what happened, what you learned and how you were able to change course successfully.

B. Statement of Proposed Work

1. Methodology: Detail what your approach will be for gathering data on STRIVE’s current operations and how you will continue to collect information once the contract is awarded.
2. Work plan: Propose how you would phase this project, propose a timeline, and estimate how many hours will be needed to complete this project.
3. Budget and deliverables: Provide a detailed budget, description of the specific deliverables that will be produced and estimated delivery dates.
## STRIVE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RFP Issued:</strong></td>
<td>September 21, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions may be submitted to:</td>
<td>October 2, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong><a href="mailto:ADesilva@strive.org">ADesilva@strive.org</a></strong> and <strong>G <a href="mailto:Wise@strive.org">Wise@strive.org</a></strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Answers to all questions will be distributed to all parties that have</td>
<td>October 9, 2020</td>
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<td>expressed interest in the RFP:</td>
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<td>Proposals should be submitted in <strong>.pdf</strong> format to: <strong><a href="mailto:ADesilva@strive.org">ADesilva@strive.org</a></strong> and <strong><a href="mailto:GWise@strive.org">GWise@strive.org</a></strong></td>
<td>October 16, 2020</td>
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<td>Internal review process and virtual interviews with top respondents:</td>
<td>October 19 – 30, 2020</td>
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<td>Contract Awarded and unsuccessful respondents notified by:</td>
<td>November 9th, 2020</td>
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<td>Initial internal interviews and discovery begins</td>
<td>November 12th, 2020</td>
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