



## **Request for Proposals:** Consultant for staff development in constructive conflict

### **Purpose**

The Bush Foundation is requesting proposals for a consulting partner to support and build skills for engaging in courageous conversations and constructive conflict, with the goal of increasing psychological safety and advancing our goals to be an equitable and anti-racist organization.

### **About the Bush Foundation**

The Bush Foundation invests in great ideas and the people who power them in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and the 23 Native nations that share the same geography. Established in 1953 by 3M Executive Archibald Bush and his wife Edyth, the Foundation supports organizations and people to think bigger and think differently about what is possible in their communities. We work to inspire and support creative problem solving — within and across sectors — to make our region better for everyone.

This project is led by our internal Equity Team which was created in 2017 to support and encourage broad ownership of equity work and deep intercultural competence across the Foundation. The Equity Team is co-led by Gao Lee and Eileen Briggs and includes four additional members from across the Foundation. The Team works in close partnership with our Talent Development team and Foundation leaders.

There are currently thirty-three staff members at the Foundation, all working remotely for the time being, at least through June 2021.

### **Project Background**

In 2013, the Foundation began a more intentional focus on building our internal equity skills. We have built collective knowledge and created pathways for individual development and growth, with that work now led by the internal Equity Team. The members of the team serve as ambassadors and champions of the Foundation's equity and anti-racism work. In addition, The team fosters a supportive environment for learning, conversation and organizational change; in 2018 their work included introducing psychological safety concepts and practices.

The Foundation has worked to embed racial equity and utilized tools such as the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) across the foundation. We invite applicants to learn more about the Foundation's equity efforts and approach here: <https://www.bushfoundation.org/our-equity-work>.

In 2020, our focus on racial equity gained new urgency with the killing of George Floyd and the racial reckoning that ignited and illustrated our need for collective and continued skill development. Our staff engaged in learning sessions and on-going conversations on racism and together, we reflected on our internal culture and named where white supremacy norms showed up in our day-to-day work. During this time our staff identified developing

### **Our Operating Values**

#### **Spread Optimism.**

We encourage individuals and organizations to think bigger and think differently about what is possible. We are positive and supportive in our internal and external interactions.

#### **Work Beyond Ourselves.**

We actively seek opportunities to work in true collaboration with others to have more impact. We are willing to both lead and follow. We candidly share what we learn with others.

#### **Everybody Matters.**

We are a champion for both excellence and equity inside and out of the Foundation. We have fair, open, and inclusive processes. We work to raise overall quality of life while also closing opportunity and achievement gaps.

#### **Steward Well.**

We demonstrate appreciation for the Foundation's history and thoughtfully build on its legacy. We hold ourselves to high standards of integrity and accountability and conduct ourselves in a way we hope would make our founders proud.

#### **More Good. Every Year.**

We are a true learning organization and work to be smarter and more effective every year. We never lose sight of the reason we exist: to do the most possible good with the resources left to the community by Archibald G. Bush.

skills for courageous conversations and how to raise tough issues and work through conflict constructively as a priority and goal for the coming year.

### **Project**

The Foundation is seeking consulting services to facilitate staff conversations, lead trainings and skill-building sessions, and provide guidance and support to more effectively address conflict and build trust.

The consulting partner will bring skills and expertise to help the Foundation live its commitment to anti-racism. We see building a greater sense of psychological safety among our staff as an important goal for being an anti-racist organization and building the skills to disagree and raise concerns constructively is a key element of this.

The primary points of contact will be the Equity Team co-leads Gao Lee, Talent Development Coordinator and Eileen Briggs, Nation Building Portfolio Director with regular involvement of Equity Team members and Foundation leaders.

### **Scope of Work**

We anticipate the project will be between four to six months.

Scope of Services includes:

1. Learn about the Foundation's work culture and equity needs and approach
  - a. Meet virtually with project team leads Gao Lee and Eileen Briggs
  - b. Meet virtually with Equity Team and Management Team
  - c. Meet virtually with key organization leaders
2. Create and facilitate staff learning plan
  - a. Work with project leads to assess knowledge and what specific skills staff and leaders need and co-design a learning plan and timeline
  - b. Meet with project team leads and/or Equity Team for progress check-ins and planning meetings on a regular agreed upon schedule
  - c. Virtually facilitate small group and all-staff learning sessions to build common knowledge, skills, and practices for conducting courageous conversations and engaging in constructive conflict
  - d. Be available for one-on-one and small group coaching sessions as needed
3. Guide Equity Team and organization leaders in actions and strategies that can help to create psychological safety through skill building and practice.

### **Selection Criteria**

Decisions will be made based on how well respondents can demonstrate:

- Expertise with building psychological safety, conflict resolution and cross-cultural communication skills.
- Experience working with philanthropic and nonprofit clients on similar work.
- Expertise and commitment to equity and anti-racism in their own operations and how they approach consulting projects.
- Staff assigned to this project have the experience needed for this specific work.
- Ability to meet the timeline and outcomes within a reasonable budget.

- Experience working collaboratively and with flexibility with Foundation staff, other vendors and partners.
- Values and actions that align with the Foundation's operating values: <https://www.bushfoundation.org/our-values>

Knowledge and understanding of the Foundation's region is a benefit but not a requirement.

### **Proposal Requirements**

Please respond to this RFP by preparing a proposal, no more than eight pages that addresses the following issues. If you would like to include prepared or promotional materials, you are welcome to do so, but please know that the specific answers to these questions will be required in order for your proposal to be complete.

*Tell us about your team and your organization.*

- Mission, vision and values
- Description of equity and anti-racism work in your organization, including a description of how you believe these concepts and values apply to this engagement
- Resume and relevant professional or consulting experience of the individuals that would work on this project
- Complete the vendor information form: <http://bfdn.org/VendorForm> (PDF). This form does not count towards the eight-page limit

*Tell us about your experience and expertise.*

- Examples of similar work that you've completed successfully, organizations highlighting any experience with nonprofit or philanthropic organizations.
- Description of interest or experience that make you or your firm particularly qualified for partnering, facilitating conversations around managing conflict and building participant skills in this work.
- Description of how your team stays connected and up to date on organizational change and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) trends and innovations.
- At least one specific example of collaborative work with clients where an idea has evolved and changed as you have moved through the engagement.

*Share your proposed timeline and communication plan.*

- Outline key milestones.
- Specify expectations for coordination and communication with the project leads.

*References and budget*

- Provide emails and phone numbers for three references who can speak to your experience doing similar work.
- Provide a cost estimate for the proposed work, based on the timeline and level of staff engagement described. We anticipate the range for this work to be about \$15,000 - \$20,000. We realize that there may be a tradeoff between the speed of the engagement and the cost, we invite respondents to identify cost drivers that would change if either the timeline or level of staff engagement were modified.

### **How to Apply**

Proposals are due by 12:00 p.m. Central time on Friday, February 12, 2021. Send your proposal and Vendor Demographic Form (<http://bfdn.org/VendorForm>) via email to

[talent@bushfoundation.org](mailto:talent@bushfoundation.org). Please include 'RFP response: [insert your organization's name here]' in the subject line.

If you have any questions, please contact Eileen Briggs and Gao Lee, Equity Team co-chairs and project leads at [talent@bushfoundation.org](mailto:talent@bushfoundation.org) or (651) 379-2253. Thank you in advance for your response and your interest in working with the Bush Foundation.

**Selection and Timing**

- Foundation staff will review all proposals and select finalists after this RFP closes on February 12 at noon Central.
- All applicants will be notified by email whether they are moving forward in the process by the end of February.
- Foundation staff will schedule calls with finalists to learn more about their proposal and conduct reference calls. These calls are tentatively scheduled in early March.
- Finalists will be notified whether they have been selected as a partner by the end of March.
- We anticipate that work will begin in April and conclude by October 2021.