



WOMEN AND GIRLS
FOUNDATION

WILL WORK FOR EQUALITY

Request for Proposal Strategic Planning

Deadline for Submission: September 19, 2008

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from consultants experienced in strategic planning to lead the Women and Girls Foundation's Board of Directors and staff through a long-range strategic planning process.

Specifically, Women and Girls Foundation is seeking a consultant to provide the following services:

- Work with a Strategic Planning Team, comprised of Board Members, Advisory Council members, as well as key management staff, to articulate a clear strategic plan for WGF for 2009-2014. This plan should identify specific fundraising, grantmaking, communication, and programming objectives for the organization to pursue over the next 5 years in pursuit of its mission.
- Conduct a small scope internal and external survey to evaluate WGF's success in achieving its goals outlined in its 2005-2008 strategic plan and conduct a general SWOT analysis of internal and external perceptions of the organization.
- Develop a timetable of implementation with specific measurable benchmarks, objectives and tasks to be accomplished to achieve goals. Identify clear, measurable outcomes for how to measure organizational and strategic effectiveness, impact, and success.
- Establish a framework and process for the organization's leadership to effectively implement the strategic plan and monitor progress toward achievement of goals and objectives.
- Facilitate all meetings and provide leadership, direction and expert consultation and advice related to the development of an effective strategic plan, including successful implementation.
- Deliverable should be a clear, easily consumed, strategic planning roadmap, accompanied by a strategic planning timeline, implementation and evaluation methodology.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Women and Girls Foundation of Southwest Pennsylvania (WGF) is an independent community-based foundation serving eleven counties in Southwest Pennsylvania. Our mission is to achieve equity for women and girls in the region. Through a combination of public advocacy, coalition building and grantmaking, WGF seeds,

supports, and strengthens efforts to achieve social and economic justice for women and girls in Southwest Pennsylvania. Through our efforts we aim to achieve equal political representation, economic and civic participation and leadership development for women and girls in all arenas.

The Foundation was established as an independent 501(c)(3) in 2002 and began operations in 2004. It has transitioned and grown from a volunteer founder-led organization in 2004 to an organization with a five member full-time staff and governing board of all non-founders. In 2004 WGF gave \$35,000 away in grants. In 2008 WGF will give away nearly \$200,000 in grants. Annual operations and revenues have grown from \$50,000 in 2004 to \$700,000 in 2008. WGF is interested in developing strategic ways to sustain this tremendous growth.

As both The University of Pittsburgh's 2004 Women's Benchmarks Report and the Institute for Women's Policy Research 2004 Status of Women in the States Report confirmed, the inequities facing women in our region are significant. More working women, single mothers, elderly women, and disabled women are suffering in poverty compared with their male counterparts. Working women are experiencing a gender gap in pay equity which is significantly more imbalanced than the national gender gap average. Women are underrepresented in high paying career fields, overrepresented in low paying career fields, and underrepresented in local and state government. Our state ranks 47th out of 50 for women's political leadership and participation. And we are ranked 45th in the nation in progress towards remedying the wage gap.

Because the social and political inequities that women and girls face in our region are more pronounced than in the nation as a whole there is a compelling need for an organization whose sole focus is building gender equity in this region.

The Women and Girls Foundation promotes social change in our region by addressing fundamental social inequalities and raising awareness of these inequities to the media, to voters, to legislators, and corporate and non-profit decision makers. By serving as an independent and clear voice, the foundation strives to bring together women and men in our region to work together to find solutions to create sustained equity for all of its citizens.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED/SCOPE OF WORK:

WGF is at an interesting point in its organizational development having successfully completed the implementation of its 2005-2008 strategic plan. In 2004, when WGF engaged in its first strategic planning process, the organization was just starting out and thus was focused on mission and programmatic development and the concerns of a new "start-up" organization. We found that strategic planning process, and the roadmap it created, to be a productive way to focus the board and staff on the tangible needs of the organization at that time.

We look forward to working on the development of our next strategic plan. Our 2004 planning process involved a nine month process and over 150 stakeholders. The process explored deep questions about what the mission, role, and work of this new organization would be. Now that we are about to celebrate our 5th Anniversary, and having successfully implemented all of the tasks and objectives outlined in our 2005-2008 plan, we look to our next plan to articulate the clear business, financial, and programmatic strategies which the organization will pursue over the next 5 years. We also expect that this process will mainly involve the Board and Staff of the organization and that the process will last no longer than three months to complete.

The challenge for the first plan was how to create a new organization which would be meaningful and relevant to our region. Having successfully achieved that objective, the challenge for our next plan is how to build on that work, and develop a sustainable financial, programmatic, staffing, and board model to ensure that this organization has sustainable success now and into the future. This plan will be focused more on the business plan that will support the organization's mission. While we would like to re-commit to our mission and values we do not expect to engage in a re-evaluation of those mission and values.

In developing the 2009-2014 plan, the applicant selected for this project will be expected to: guide the organization in establishing its Strategic Planning Team, conduct interviews and facilitate all working sessions with the Team and other key Board and staff members, and perform a SWOT analysis. Based on the analysis, specific goals will be identified and, ultimately, the consultant will develop a final strategic plan that provides WGF with clear objectives and action steps that lead to achieving organizational goals. The strategic plan will also include information on effectively monitoring progress and how and when the agency should reassess goals, objectives and action steps to make sure that they are still relevant and reflect environmental changes that may impact WGF's ability to implement plan and recommendations.

Specific areas that need to be addressed in the creation of a 3-5 year strategic plan include but may not be limited to:

- An environmental scan that examines internal and external opportunities and perceptions impacting the organization's ability to achieve mission.
- A thorough assessment of infrastructure needs including, but not limited to space, technology, human capital and financial resources
- The development of a sustainable financial and programmatic model to achieve goals.

The proposal will provide an executive summary of the work that will be performed by the consultant and a detailed work breakdown structure, with timeframes, of the steps that will be taken to develop a strategic plan.

GLOBAL PROJECT REQUIREMENTS & TIMELINE:

1. WGF is seeking proposals from applicants who are capable of addressing all of the above stated management issues and who can provide additional expertise to help the organization and the community it serves achieve a successful project outcome.
2. While WGF understands that completing this project requires significant and active Board and staff involvement, it is important to note that the applicant selected will be responsible for completing all project work products and final deliverables (e.g. writing organizational assessments, writing the actual strategic plan, etc.). The staff will not be expected to be involved in writing work project products or final project deliverables.
3. Applicants are to propose which aspects of the project will require Board and/or staff involvement and include the expected time requirements for all activities involving their participation.
4. Proposals must include a clear description of the applicant's plan to complete all of the project components (i.e. in what order will the projects be completed, how long each component will take to complete, etc.)

5. Applicants must include in their project timelines “check-in” points for WGF and funder(s) to be provided with project status updates. As work products/deliverables are completed prior to the established check-in points, applicants will be required to send WGF and the project funder(s) these materials to facilitate the status update meetings and/or conference calls. The successful applicant will be responsible for setting up the check-in meetings/calls, preparing an agenda for each meeting/call, sending out meeting invites and writing meeting minutes.
6. In addition to the check-in meetings and/or conference calls, the applicant will be expected to present a status update on her/his preliminary findings and recommendations prior to writing the final project deliverables and strategic plan.
7. WGF will be responsible for implementing the recommendations from all final deliverables; however, it is expected that the consultant selected will provide the agency with ongoing coaching and implementation support as needed, per letter of agreement.
8. It is expected that the total cost for this project **will not exceed \$20,000.**

Evaluation Criteria:

In awarding a contract for consulting services to develop a long-range strategic plan for the organization, WGF will examine a number of factors and criteria will include:

1. The extent to which the proposal addresses the stated management issues and clearly describes the scope of work
2. Specific plans or methodology to be used to perform the services
3. Qualifications and experience of consultant in providing strategic planning development
4. Availability for work to be conducted during October, November, December 2008 with strategic plan draft presented to the WGF board no later than at their January 2009 board meeting.
5. Project cost

APPLICATION PROCESS & PROCEDURES:

Please provide a complete written response to this RFP which is double-spaced and does not exceed 15 single-sided pages. Proposals should include:

1. A brief Executive Summary
2. A description of the applicant’s general approach to strategic planning consultation, including methodology, perspective, or philosophy that guides your work with organizations in this undertaking
3. A clear explanation of how the consultant will address the management issues to be examined at WGF
4. A list of project deliverables to be created with a detailed timeline for each deliverable and overall project completion
5. A detailed budget that breaks out expenses

6. Credentials and qualifications of key personnel who will take responsibility for working directly on this project, including three references
7. Example(s) of a finished strategic plan created by your company.

Applicants must submit one (1) original paper copy and one (1) electronic copy of the proposal. Please note that WGF will not return any proposals it receives and will not reimburse applicants for any costs they incur in developing their proposals.

Send completed proposals, by **September 19, 2008**, to Heather Arnet at heather@wgfpa.org and to:

The Women and Girls Foundation

Attn: Heather Arnet

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