

Request for Information

1. Clean Water Services

Clean Water Services (CWS) (www.cleanwaterservices.org) is a water resources management utility that combines science and nature to clean water and return it to the Tualatin River, so it can be used again. We work in partnership with others to safeguard the river's health and vitality, ensure the economic success of our region, and protect public health for over 620,000 residents and businesses in urban Washington County.

Our customers enjoy clean water and healthy rivers and streams as a result of innovative water management solutions, drainage management, water quality and stream enhancement projects, and fish habitat protection. CWS' service area consists of the urban areas of Washington County, Oregon and small parts of Clackamas and Multnomah Counties. The population served is over 620,000 within 12 partner cities and unincorporated county areas.

CWS operates four water treatment and resource recovery facilities, using award-winning innovative strategies, manages stormwater for the one of the fastest-growing areas in Oregon and manages robust environmental enhancement, restoration and stream resilience programs to protect the Tualatin River.

CWS has approximately 400 employees, almost half of which are represented by unions, spread over four main facilities. [Our annual report has a summary of our work.](#)

2. Conditions

CWS is seeking information from members of the consultant community with proven, on-the-ground experience developing equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) programs to assist CWS in planning and developing its requirements for the services described in the Background section.

- A. This Request for Information (RFI) is issued solely to obtain information, facilitate decision making and assist with internal planning. It does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP)/Request for Quotes (RFQ) or a promise to issue an RFP/RFQ in the future.
- B. This RFI does not commit CWS to contract for any equipment or services and issuance of this RFI will not be construed to be a commitment to procure anything. Responses to this RFI are not considered offers and cannot be accepted by CWS to form a binding contract. Any contract that may be awarded based on information received or derived from this market research will be based on the competitive process required by CWS' Purchasing Rules.
- C. CWS will not pay for any information or administrative costs a respondent incurs to respond to this RFI. All costs to respond to this RFI will be solely at the respondent's expense.
- D. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future RFP issued.

- E. Responses to this RFI are voluntary.
- F. This RFI may also be used to identify potentially qualified consultants who are able to meet CWS' requirements.
- G. If a solicitation is released, it will be available on <http://bids.cleanwaterservices.org/>, and it is the respondent's responsibility to monitor the site for those postings.
- H. The information in this RFI is subject to change and is not binding on CWS.

3. Background

- A. CWS is in the second year of a three-year plan to more fully integrate EDI as it develops or modifies programs, policies, practices and operations. CWS believes this is an ongoing effort and the first three years should begin to embed practices that include changes in its culture, recruitment/hiring/retention practices, procurement processes and the organizational use of an equity lens.
- B. The first year of CWS' three-year equity plan focused on data review, planning, employee engagement and leadership learning. CWS is active in four areas of learning: leadership learning, CEO learning, employee research and engagement and creation of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Steering Group. CWS recognized an intersectional approach with a lens on historically disadvantaged groups reflecting past discriminatory societal practices and policies. CWS' main goal in Year 1 was to solidify leadership learning, so Year 2 could focus on employee learning, as we create an organizational equity policy. Year 3 will focus on creating measurable equity plans with metrics that can be quantified and reported on an annual basis.
- C. It has been a time of tremendous change and lack of certainty in public health, the economy and social interaction, and CWS anticipates that 2021-2022 will be similar. This equity program and the work associated with it will continue to be iterative and dynamic.

Year 1 accomplishments:

- Business Partner (Leadership) learning sessions – 4 self-guided sessions, 7 sessions with consultants, self- assessment and evaluation. Leading with racial equity.
- DEI Steering Group- 11 facilitated meetings, four foundational outcomes produced from discussion after reviewing and discussing data/equity best practices. Recommendation to provide learning at different levels, to “meet employees where they are.”
- Employee research: Survey and conversations circles- DEI employee survey (60% participation in Nov. 2020); 6 facilitated in-person conversation circles with merged results.
- Employee engagement: 2 virtual peer employee panel sessions, plus emails, internal e-newsletter, staff meeting presentations, Employee Resource and Suggestion posting sites.
- CEO meetings with community equity leaders: 8 meetings with community leaders.

Year 2 Activities:

CWS is embarking on the second year of this journey with a focus on employee learning. CWS is looking for learning consultants to work with employee teams and groups to provide interactive information and teachings on basic foundational concepts of equity, diversity and inclusion. As opposed to a static basic EDI class for everyone, CWS would like to work with learning consultants who can provide equity learning at all levels- novice up to advanced- and who can productively communicate with groups who work in the field, in the office, administrative as well as executive roles. CWS would also like consultants who can provide learning on other organizational development topics: leadership training, cultural competency, coaching, management training and similar topics. Learning consultants who offer these merged skills (equity plus traditional organizational development) and who can tailor the learning to what is needed with each group or individual will help meet the needs of its employees to grow their knowledge at every level. CWS seeks to enhance and maintain an inclusive and welcoming environment for all, and to fully integrate equity into our strategic initiatives.

D. CWS' approach to its DEI (also referred to as EDI) employee learning program will:

- 1) Meet people where they are,
- 2) Create space to learn, grow and thrive,
- 3) Lead with dignity, respect, value and inclusion,
- 4) Be customized to provide multiple ways to learn and access learning,
- 5) Be interwoven with career pathing and professional development,
- 6) Learn from the first year, adjust and grow in the second year, and
- 7) Be practical and action-oriented.

4. Requested Information

A. As this is an RFI, respondents are requested to provide information about their respective ability to provide the services and complete the tasks necessary to meet CWS' needs. Responses will address the following in addition to the information requested in Section 5:

- 1) Provide detailed information on the respondent's ability to deliver employee EDI learning classes at a variety of levels, using interactive and compelling methods.
- 2) Tasks to be completed include:
 - a) Assess equity work at CWS to date and recommend next steps in learning process. Develop and deliver interactive and practical learning sessions on key topics determined to be useful for different levels of staff at CWS. These could be virtual or in-person, depending on the public health situation at the time. These could include discussions, exercises, interactive activities, digital content, physical exercises that increase empathy for other perspectives, imagery, storytelling, etc. Learnings should increase knowledge and understanding of systems that create barriers to opportunity as well as the

benefits of removing those barriers. Equity content could include information such as belonging at work, equity vs. equality, basic equity concepts, using an equity lens, implicit bias/microaggressions, managing with an equity mindset, and other similar topics that are often included in equity learning.

- b) Begin delivering some learning sessions in spring 2022. As part of delivery, assess the level and content needed for each self-determined group. Some groups may be entire departments, some may be project teams, some may be groups of supervisors or peer workers.
 - c) Report outcomes and experiences of various learning sessions to CWS staff, to adapt and improve future sessions.
 - d) Consult with CWS staff on best learning methods and how to adjust and develop these over time.
 - e) Provide coaching to identified CWS groups facing EDI concerns within their divisions.
- 3) Respondents should include comments on which tasks the respondent can complete, which capabilities the respondent has, why the respondent could not provide a particular capability or complete a specific task, associated services that respondent provides to other customers with similar requirements and any other information you would require from CWS to propose on these services. Respondents may also propose adjustments to tasks if they feel that would yield a better outcome and may propose a suite of consultants with various skills to meet CWS' needs.
- 4) Provide information on the typical payment mechanism for these types of services. Are there other costs CWS should consider asking about in relation to these types of services?
 - 5) Provide information about time constraints or considerations that CWS should consider or ask about when soliciting these types of services,
 - 6) Provide suggestions for best methods to reach equity consultants (websites, etc.) to notify interested firms about opportunities.

5. Responses

- A. Interested organizations or individuals are requested to submit their RFI responses. Responses should not exceed 8 pages in length, should clearly detail the respondent's ability to perform the aspects of the work described above and should be tailored to the work requirements as concisely as possible. Each response should also include the following business information:

- 1) Organization Name
- 2) Company Address
- 3) Point of Contact (including name, title, addresses, telephone number, and email address)

- 4) Number of employees in your organization available to provide the described services
- 5) Socio-economic Status (e.g., service-disabled, veteran-owned small business, woman-owned small business or small disadvantaged business.)
- 6) Documents showing your capability and ability to provide the specified services.
- 7) Examples of prior completed contracts and other related information showing similar work experience.
- 8) List of all current public agency contracts, including General Schedule Contracts.
- 9) If a respondent believes that any portion of its submission contains any information that is considered a trade secret or otherwise is exempt from disclosure under Oregon Public Records Law (ORS 192.311 through 192.478), respondent must clearly mark and segregate that information.

- B. Submit a PDF of your response to this RFI via email only to Christine White at whitec@cleanwaterservices.org by Friday, Jan. 21 at 5:00 p.m., Pacific Standard Time. Include "Response to Request for Information" in the subject line of the email. All submission becomes the property of the District and will not be returned.
- C. For questions or clarifications related to this RFI, contact Ms. White by email to whitec@cleanwaterservices.org.

CWS appreciates your interest and looks forward to receiving your response.