

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas
Request for Proposals for a Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Consultant

1. Introduction and Background

The Spencer Museum of Art at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas, aims to be a more inclusive institution that advances diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI). The Museum invites proposals from qualified persons or firms interested in entering into a contract to perform consulting services related to DEAI. Spencer Museum leadership is committed to centering the experiences of marginalized people—including people of color, women, and LGBTQ+ people—in the Museum. Therefore, we encourage applications from people with these identities. The consultant hired through this request for proposals will be compensated with federal grant funds and will need to comply with federal spending requirements.

Through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Museum will hire a consultant to guide staff-wide professional development on DEAI topics from May 2020 through November 30, 2021 and prepare the Museum to continue this work beyond the grant period. The grant will support engaging a series of consultants to facilitate trainings primarily for Museum staff, as well as volunteers and board members, over the grant period. This request for proposals aims to enlist a **lead consultant** who will serve as a guide for the project and offer support for shifting institutional culture about DEAI work, evaluating progress toward grant goals, identifying other consultants for trainings on specific topics, and creating an institutional plan related to DEAI.

2. Project Objectives

All Museum staff should improve their understanding of DEAI topics and begin applying new knowledge and skills in their daily work. The intended results of the project are:

- Create an adaptive and inclusive workplace climate.
- Increase the understanding and practice of hiring and retaining staff from marginalized and minoritized backgrounds in order to diversify the Museum’s staff, volunteers, and boards.
- Apply what staff learn to their specific museum positions.
- Authentically engage people of diverse races, ethnicities, nationalities, abilities, gender identities, educational backgrounds, and income levels.
- Develop and maintain on-going relationships with a broad range of campus and community partners, especially from those whose voices are underrepresented in the Museum.

Anticipated changes in knowledge include:

- Improved self-awareness of how an individual’s identities shape their work at the Museum.
- Recognition of conscious and unconscious bias and how biases manifest in the activities of the Museum, such as acquisition practices, program development, and hiring.
- Increased familiarity with accessibility issues at the Museum and how people with different abilities can and cannot experience Museum resources.
- Greater understanding of how community members perceive the Museum (gained through community feedback), what opportunities exist to connect with communities who may not feel

welcome or represented, and changes in practice to create environments for communities to feel more welcome and represented.

Staff will develop new skills related to:

- Measuring progress toward DEAI goals.
- Writing more inclusive position descriptions.
- Culturally aware mentoring.
- Developing, sustaining, and reciprocating relationships with community partners.

3. Description of Services and Expected Outputs

The consultant will serve as the lead for a grant-funded initiative to strengthen the skills and knowledge of the Museum's 32 permanent staff members and 24 student staff members related to DEAI. The Museum's team of 30+ volunteers and 30+ board members should also be included in some activities, as determined in collaboration with Museum staff.

The consultant will:

- Facilitate at least one in-person, multi-day workshop with all staff related to the anticipated changes in knowledge and skills noted above.
- Assess the Museum's workplace climate in order to identify critical areas for improvement and growth.
- Collaborate with staff to create benchmarks and tools for measuring progress toward goals.
- Offer recommendations for generating commitment to the Museum's DEAI objectives and the role each individual staff member can play to advancing those goals. A 2018 staff survey indicated mixed comfort levels engaging with DEAI topics.
- Help identify other national leaders/professionals to lead staff trainings on specific DEAI topics related to the anticipated changes in knowledge and skills noted above (costs will be supported with funds separate from the \$30,000 for the lead consultant's fee).
- Facilitate and guide the staff in writing a DEAI plan for future action in 2022 and beyond. This plan will formalize DEAI goals related to cross-departmental activities and align with the Museum's next strategic plan, which will begin in 2023.
- Commit to the duration of the project and make 3+ visits to the Spencer Museum of Art between May 2020 and November 2021. While at the Museum, the consultant will learn about the institution's practices, staff, resources, and communities.
- Provide guidance through conversations with smaller groups of staff, both in-person and remotely.

4. Budget and Payment Schedule

The Museum has allocated **\$30,000 for the consultant's fee**, plus additional funds for consultant travel to Lawrence, Kansas. The consultant's fee will be paid in installments from May 2020 through November 2021. Every six months, the Museum will assess the consultant's work and progress toward key

benchmarks, which will be established collaboratively between Museum staff and the consultant at the beginning of the project. Continuation of contract and payment will be contingent on the consultant's performance. Travel costs will be supported by the Museum as they are incurred and should not exceed \$4,000.

5. Qualifications of Consultant and Evaluation Criteria

- Deep understanding of DEAI topics and a record of providing consulting services about DEAI topics, as evidenced by proposal and by providing names and contact information for three previous clients. **(25 points)**
- Familiarity with the unique opportunities and challenges of DEAI work in a higher education setting and/or for an art museum, and experience working with similar clients, such as higher education institutions, art museums, or ideally academic art museums. **(20 points)**
- Demonstrated appreciation of the key issues and challenges to achieving the objectives outlined in this request for proposals, as evidenced by recommended methods and activities. **(15 points)**
- A network of professional contacts who can be invited to submit proposals to subsequent requests for proposals from the Museum for specific DEAI trainings. **(15 points)**

6. Proposal Content

Applicants are encouraged to review the Museum's website (spencerart.ku.edu) and strategic plan (<https://indd.adobe.com/view/70683120-97ce-45bc-a9f9-58c2e303f201>) in advance of submitting a proposal.

- **Background Information.** A cover letter or executive summary with the name, contact information, brief history, and description of the firm or individual applying. Include resumes or bios of those who will be providing services. The University of Kansas, Spencer Museum of Art is an equal opportunity employer and encourages responses from minority- and women-owned business enterprises, veteran-owned business enterprises, disability-owned business enterprises and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender-owned enterprises. If you/your firm's ownership represents one or more of the above, please note it in your proposal.
- **Experience in Providing the Services.** Describe your experience or the experience of your firm and its consultants in providing similar services to those requested here. Further, describe demonstrated outcomes as a result of the work performed in client organizations.
- **Additional Experience.** Describe any other relevant experience or qualifications related to the proposed activities.
- **Approach.** Provide a description of the approach you/your firm uses when consulting with organizations on matters related to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. Tell us what you believe most critical to your practice. How would you tailor your approach for the Spencer Museum of Art?
- **Fee Schedule.** A proposed schedule of fees that aligns with the Museum's proposed installment payment plan, including rates for specific portions of the scope of work. We welcome you to propose

on all or of any portion of the services requested; simply make clear the expenses related to each section of work.

- **References.** Three verifiable client references with contact information.
- **Conflicts of Interest.** Any known relationships that would or could create a conflict of interest with the Spencer Museum of Art or the University of Kansas if you were awarded a contract.

7. **Submission of Proposals and Point of Contact**

All proposals should be submitted by email to fekete@ku.edu, to the attention of Alexis Fekete-Shukla, Director of Advancement and Planning. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please send any inquiries to the same email.

8. **Anticipated Selection Schedule**

Proposals will be accepted until January 31, 2020. Review of proposals and interviews (telephone, video conferencing, and/or in-person) will be conducted during February 2020. The Museum may contact client references any time after proposal submission. The Museum aims to select a consultant and to execute a contract no later than March 31, 2020.