

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

January 27, 2017

## SUMMARY

The Charities Review Council is seeking a strategic planning consultant to guide board and staff through the strategic planning process from planning and retreat facilitation to drafting strategic plan document including mission, goals and strategies.

## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

### HISTORY & MISSION

Founded in 1946, the Charities Review Council (the Council) continues to strengthen the integrity of Minnesota's philanthropic environment by serving as an independent source of information, resources, and education for both donors and nonprofits.

The Council was originally established because of concern that generous Minnesotans, who had contributed large sums to support soldiers during World War II, could be exploited by national fundraising organizations. While much has changed through the years, we have remained a valuable resource to both donors and nonprofits, grounded by the foresight of our founders who recognized that Minnesotans' community-minded generosity would be protected and nurtured if there was an independent resource about charities to which donors could turn. We envision vibrant and healthy communities for all, benefiting from effective and trustworthy nonprofits that are supported by a well-informed public's generosity.

The Council's mission is to mobilize informed donors and accountable nonprofits for the greater good. We are guided by these values:

*Build Community*

*Strive for Excellence*

*Innovate*

*Have Integrity*

*Lead the Way*

To achieve its mission, the Council maintains and applies standards to encourage accountability in the nonprofit sector. The Council's Accountability Standards® have evolved over time to reflect the changing nonprofit environment, and to meet the current needs of donors. The standards were developed through an extensive, grass roots process, with broad participation from donors, funders, nonprofits, academics and community leaders. The standards set reasonable expectations of nonprofits in the areas of disclosure, governance, financial activity and fundraising.

## RECENT INITIATIVES THAT HAVE AFFECTED THE COUNCIL

Under the leadership of an active and engaged board, which represents both our donor and nonprofit constituencies, and building on our 71 years of experience and reputation for quality services, the Council has been focused on strengthening and growing our impact for the past several years. As a result, recent significant changes for the organization include:

- Completion of 2014-2017 Strategic Plan that refocused our work on supporting the relationship between donors and nonprofit, striving to make it authentic and engaged while built on the foundation of the Accountability Standards®.
- The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Toolkit will be launched in May 2017. It is an online, affordable and accessible resource for organizations to build their cultural competence through assessments and training modules. Directly supporting the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Accountability Standard, this resource is designed to support all nonprofits, especially those going through our review process. This is a new revenue opportunity for the Council.
- Highlighting Trustworthy Organizations. Moving away from the historical donor watchdog role in 2012, the Council only publishes information about organizations once they meets standards. (Those not meeting standards but engaged in the process are listed as only “review in progress.”) This has led to a significant increase in the number of small, culturally specific organizations electing to participate in our review process.
- Sustainability has been a challenge that has ebbed and flowed for the Council throughout its history. Losing a major donor the end of 2015 and other shifting financial pressures has led the Council to evaluate our business model. We have shifted to depend on a smaller permanent staff that grows with consulting services as funding and projects are secured.

## PROJECT SCOPE

The objectives of the strategic planning process are to identify/ answer the following:

- Should the Council’s mission change? If yes, what is potential new mission statement?
- What is our agreed up on value proposition?
- Are the current goals relevant and appropriate? Particularly, what does successful growth look like and/or what critical alignments should we pursue?
- What current strategies should remain and what new strategies are called for?

The Council seeks the expertise of a consultant to achieve the objectives of the planning process. Identified consultant responsibilities are:

- A. Initial planning meeting with executive director
- B. Review of recent external and internal assessments
- C. Integration of key themes from assessment results into planning process, board meetings and/or retreat facilitation.
- D. Potential planning meeting with executive committee (March 27, 3:30 pm -5:00 pm)
- E. Potential participation in April board meeting (April 20, 3:30 – 6:00 pm)
- F. Facilitation of board retreat (Saturday in June – date TBD)
- G. Facilitate staff meeting on integration of proposed strategies into annual work plans
- H. Written report of key themes from retreat including draft mission, goals and strategies.
- I. Presentation of strategic plan draft to staff and board of directors (September 21, 3:30 – 6:30 pm )

Consultant expertise in the following areas is not required but useful

- Knowledge of the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors—regionally and nationally
- Ability to develop common understanding, if not consensus, of board and staff

## SELECTION CRITERIA

---

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the Executive Director who will recommend one or more candidates for consideration by the Executive Committee. Consideration to include a meeting to discuss proposal and provide guidance to committee in decision making. Criteria for evaluation will include:

- Demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience in conducting strategic planning projects in philanthropic or other nonprofit organizations.
- Understanding of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors.
- Ability to meet deadlines and operate within budget
- Satisfactory performance record.

## HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

Interested people should email the following to Kris Kewitsch, Executive Director, Charities Review Council, [kris@smartgivers.org](mailto:kris@smartgivers.org);

- A work plan that contains methodology, timeline, and deliverables for the project
- A project budget
- Exclusions or exceptions
- Description of qualifications and/or resume of consultant involved in project.
- Reference and contact information of three nonprofit organizations that have utilized strategic planning services in the last 18-24 months.

Applications should be received by the Council on February 17, 2017.

## QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, contact Kris Kewitsch at [kris@smartgivers.org](mailto:kris@smartgivers.org) 651-328-6970.

# APPENDIX A.

## CURRENT STRATEGIC GOALS

The Council is currently finishing the fourth year of a three year strategic plan extended to four years. The strategic goals included:

### **ADVANCE DONOR AND NONPROFIT CAPACITY FOR MISSION ENGAGEMENT.**

---

Help more donors be smart and nonprofits be stronger to increase ability to deliver on their mission.

### **ELEVATE IMPACTFUL AND INCLUSIVE GIVING PRACTICES.**

---

Expand definition of philanthropy beyond check writing to time, talent and treasure, while lifting up non-traditional methods of giving.

### **INCREASE THE NUMBER OF DONORS, NONPROFITS ENGAGED IN DEEP & SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIPS**

---

Support transition of interactions between nonprofits and donors from transactional to relational.