

STRATEGIC PLANNING REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL



SUMMARY

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 documents and updating new goals and strategies to our existing vision, mission, and values.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

History

Founded in 1946, 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.

The Council is guided by its vision, mission and values:

- **Vision:** Transforming Philanthropy
- **Mission:** Building donor and nonprofit relationships for strong, vibrant, and just communities.
- **Values:** Forge Trust, Strive for Excellence, Innovate, Model 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, grassroots process, with broad participation from donors, funders, nonprofits, academics and community leaders. The standards set reasonable expectations of nonprofits in the areas of public disclosure, governance, financial activity and fundraising.

Recent Council Initiatives

Under the leadership of an active and engaged board, which represents both our donor and nonprofit constituencies, and building on our 75 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:

- Implementation of our 2018-2021 Strategic Plan that refocused our work on supporting the relationship between donors and nonprofits, striving to make it authentic and engaged while built on the foundation of the Accountability Standards®.
- [The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Toolkit \(DEI Toolkit\)](#) was 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 [Accountability Wizard® nonprofit review process](#).

- Moving away from the historical donor watchdog role in 2012, the Council only publishes information about organizations once they Meet 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.
- The events of 2020, including the global COVID-19 pandemic and the murder of Mr. George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis Police, have brought a new urgency to the issues the Council was already considering including a review of the Accountability Standards® and the application of them in the review process.

PROJECT SCOPE

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

- What is our agreed upon 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?
- How can our internal and external programs and practices better align with our values and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion?

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

- Initial planning meeting with executive director and board leaders
- Review of recent external and internal assessments
- Integration of key themes from assessment results into planning process, board meetings and/or retreat facilitation
- Planning meeting with executive committee
- Facilitation of board and staff retreat
- Facilitate staff meeting on integration of proposed strategies into annual work plans prior to board approval
- Written report of key themes from retreat including draft goals and strategies
- Preparing possible revisions to an existing plan
- Presentation of strategic plan draft to executive committee – Spring 2022
- Presentation of strategic plan to board – Summer 2022

The plan will be informed by data collected over the past few years from community, as well as our donor and nonprofit constituents. No additional market research will be requested of the consultant.

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 strategy steering committee and the executive director who will recommend one or more candidates for consideration by the Executive Committee. Criteria for evaluation will include:

- Demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience in conducting strategic planning projects with philanthropic or other nonprofit organizations
- Understanding of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors
- Ability to meet deadlines and operate within budget
- Ability to effectively facilitate online (Zoom) meetings
- A personal commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion

BUDGET

Budget range is \$12,000 - \$15,000.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

Interested people should email the following to Kris Kewitsch (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(s) involved in project.
- Reference and contact information of three nonprofit organizations that have utilized strategic planning services in the last 24 months.

Applications should be received by the Council by end of day Friday, October 1st.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, contact Kris Kewitsch at kris@smartgivers.org, 651-328-6970.

APPENDIX A.

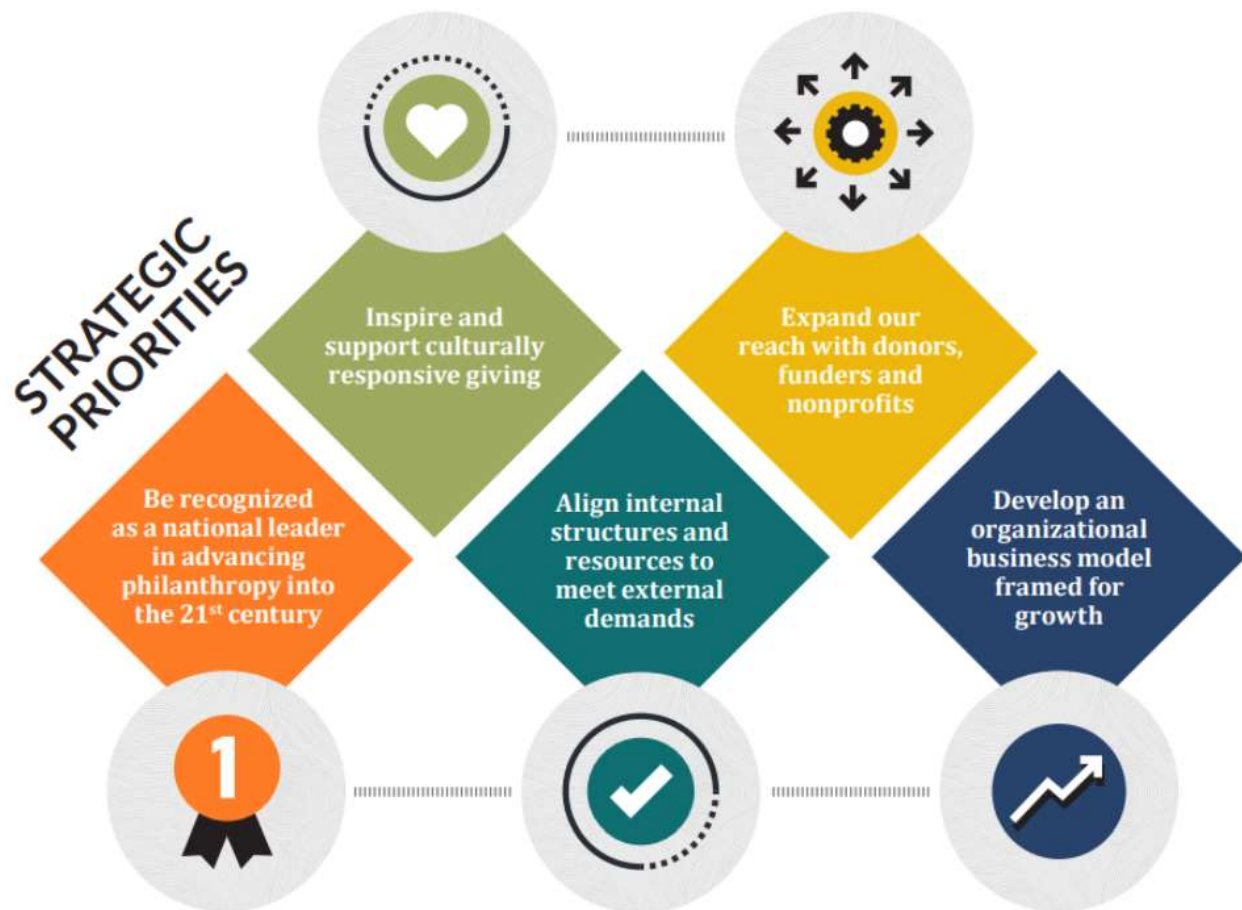
Current Strategic Framework

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



Transforming philanthropy

*Building donor and nonprofit relationships
for strong, vibrant and just communities.*



OUR VALUES

