



## Request for Proposal (RFP) for Equity-Forward Strategic Planning Consultant

### **About Resource Media**

[Resource Media](#) is a non-profit communications firm that develops and implements strategies to build power for sustainable and equitable social change. We seek advocates fighting for access to health, equity, justice and sustainability, and bring our own set of communications principles to all we do. Our staff of 28 are located in 10 offices across the country, bringing a wide variety of expertise in media relations, digital strategy, content creation, multicultural outreach, narrative development and effective use of imagery, and we bring a commitment to equity and inclusion to our workplace and partnerships.

Resource Media opened our doors in 1998 with a focus on conservation campaigns. As we built on early successes, we came to realize that conservation causes are stronger when considered as part of a broader tapestry of issues. Today, our approach to communications takes an integrated angle and our portfolio spreads across the environment, social justice, equity, community health and global development. Given the U.S.'s historic and ongoing abuses of power and changing demographics,, it is both a moral and strategic imperative to imagine a stronger future through the lens of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Resource Media seeks to connect our team's skills and experiences working with nonprofit partners, funders and government agencies dedicated to conservation, justice and community.

### **Our Challenge**

Seven years into our own internal equity journey, we've made significant progress, but we know there is so much further to go. Our internal equity committee continues to provide critical leadership in addressing equity challenges and opportunities on a daily basis. This leadership has always been provided within the pressure cooker of our day-to-day project work. Until recently we have received no dedicated funding for our equity work, and therefore it has always been in competition with funded project work. As a result, it is very difficult to carve out the time and space for big picture planning for our organization.

We have established a very strong base upon which to build, with a much more inclusive culture, a much more diverse staff and leadership, and infrastructure designed to help staff navigate the opportunities, challenges and uncertainties of this work. In the past few months, we have welcomed a new executive director with a strong background in and commitment to DEI. As we contemplate the next phase of our equity journey, we are eager to engage in a deeper level of contemplation, feedback sharing and ideation with our staff, new executive director, and board.

## **What We Seek**

Resource Media is looking for someone to help us develop a new strategic plan that's grounded in equity. As such, we are interested to look outside of our own organization and gather feedback and input from our partners, funders and peers. This will inform how we approach development of goals and objectives to guide our efforts, to truly take a community-based approach to measuring our progress. Our staff and board are fully committed and ready to dig deep. We believe the next phase of our evolution can be catalytic--for Resource Media and for communications and social change work writ large. We envision a day when all of our impact is measured through a racial justice and equity lens; yet, we need help getting there.

## **Who we want to partner with**

We are seeking a strategic planning consultant well-steeped in the principles and practices of organizational equity to help lead us through an organization and community-wide strategic planning process. This equity-oriented strategic plan will be our blueprint to guide Resource Media's investments in time, energy and funds, and will be a "north star" for how to prioritize our long wish list in order to achieve the change we need to see in the world. We are looking for the following core competencies:

### Consultant Core Competencies

#### *Highly desired:*

- Previous experience working with organizations dedicated to social change, power or movement building
- Familiarity with organizational structures that reduce workplace hierarchy and emphasize democratic, accessible and transparent feedback loops
- Experience facilitating open, positive meetings and safe spaces that allow for various staff and board input to work together, ranging from vision, alignment and/or execution
- Expertise in justice, equity, diversity and inclusion not just from a personal perspective, but an organizational one. Ability to create equitable processes, and insights into how a process should be communicated out to internal and external audiences
- An ability to co-create and propose an evaluation framework to ensure the vision addresses the benefits and burdens of historically marginalized communities and voices
- Past experience creatively facilitating groups and meetings virtually, using online engagement tools
- A proven track record of helping organizations develop strategic plans that "stick" and are executable
- Majority BIPOC staff representation with your core team and leadership working on this project
- A demonstrated ability to adjust, adapt, and customize working approaches to meet an organization where they are in their equity journey, and identify and provide recommendations for where there are areas of opportunity.

*Bonus points if you:*

- Have an understanding of the landscape of major players in our universe of clients and funders working toward social movements, policy and systems change and/or media and communications
- Have an orientation towards accessibility for different types of adult learning styles and information absorption, experience facilitating anti-racist education
- Experience working with organizations that use a billing model, an understanding of the real challenges and issues accompanying a business model that is fee-for-service and grants-based, rather than an individual donor and membership model.

**Timeline**

This project is estimated to take place over the course of approximately 9-10 months.

**Budget**

Resource Media has budgeted \$40,000 - \$50,000 (including hard costs) for this effort. But, please provide us with your accurate budget estimate to complete all deliverables in the time allocated so that we can gain an accurate financial picture.

**Services & Deliverables**

If you are selected, you will be expected to perform the following services and provide the following deliverables:

- Orientation meetings, getting to know you and process setup
- Work with RM's strategic planning committee to design a staff and board input process for the strategic plan
- Design and propose a community feedback process
- Gather research to inform an understanding of RM and its context, position and potential, which may include one-on-one conversations, review of existing materials or surveys
- At least one facilitated session with all staff and other facilitated meetings with smaller groups
- Drafting, editing and gaining approval of a final strategic plan
- Ongoing consultation services, including regular update and presentation meetings with strategic planning committee and equity committee
- Milestone meetings with executive leadership, board and all-staff groups

**Rubric/evaluation criteria**

Resource Media will select a consultant based on the following criteria:

- Written approach narrative and ability to convey strategic planning tools and rationale to achieve clarity, buy-in and integrity with staff, board and stakeholders
- Demonstrated commitment to equity; you should demonstrate a facility in working with and applying core equity principles and concepts toward organizational growth and progress and be able to demonstrate your success in doing so with past projects
- Can articulate a clear and realistic work plan within the timeframe of approximately 9-10 months

- Explain how consultant is going to engage with the staff and board throughout this process
- Provides a demonstrated track record working on a project with similar challenges, communities and/or issues
- Demonstrates innovation, fresh thinking and inspiration in doing this work in partnership with Resource Media

### **Application components**

Approach narrative; answer the following questions: (no more than 3 pages)

- Explain the main components of how you would build an approach to this project, the potential you see in its final form and definitions of progress and success
- Describe who is submitting this proposal and your knowledge, skills, and/or relationships that you bring to this project
- Describe a time that you completed a similar project: the objective, the community engaged and the outcomes. Describe your learnings and reflections, what would you do differently (if anything) and how you will incorporate these learnings into this project

In addition to your approach narrative, the following elements of your proposal would not count towards your three-page limit:

- Final deliverables of three of your past projects that are applicable to this work
- References: Provide three professional references who consent to potentially being contacted to discuss your work with them
- Staffing: Staff and/or consultants with bios of your core team on this project
- Budget: Describe your compensation structure (e.g. project-based or hourly), budget detail, including cost estimates for major milestones of work, hourly rates, and hard costs (if any)

### **Selection Process:**

After a review of written proposals, the review team may reach out with additional clarifying questions. We can anticipate that the finalists will be asked to attend at least one interview by video conference. References will be reached by phone.

Deadline: Please submit your applications no later than March 12, 2021. We anticipate we will select the consultant by April 16, 2021.

Submit questions and/or applications to this RFP to [info@resource-media.org](mailto:info@resource-media.org) with the subject line "RFP response: Equity-Forward Strategic Plan"