



Arab Americans of Cleveland

Young Professionals Network

**STRATEGIC PLAN AND
COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Arab Americans of Cleveland - Young Professionals Network is seeking a Consultant/Firm specializing in organizational assessment, comprehensive rebranding, and the development of a 3-year strategic plan and a community needs assessment.

Release Date: August 28, 2024

Due Date: September 28, 2024

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Summary

Arab Americans of Cleveland (AAC) invites proposals from qualified consultants/firms capable of conducting a comprehensive organizational assessment, guiding a strategic planning process, and spearheading and completing a community needs assessment of the Northeast Ohio Arab American community. Prospective partners are encouraged to showcase expertise in organizational analysis, strategic planning, and demographic and data collection, emphasizing cultural relevance within communities of color.

Consultants/Firms should outline strategies for a 3-year strategic plan aligned with the mission and vision of AAC. Furthermore, the RFP encourages proposals that acknowledge the option for the strategic planning firm to collaborate with other firms as needed for the community needs assessment. Submissions should detail methodologies, timelines, potential collaboration strategies, and budget and ensure a holistic approach to advance the goals of AAC.

History

Arab Americans of Cleveland - Young Professionals Network (AAC) is a 501c3 Nonprofit Organization in Cleveland with a mission to create strategic relationships and engagements with other Arab Americans in the city, organize events, and provide professional development opportunities to students, professionals, and Arab American-owned businesses. Co-Founded by Omar Kurdi and Mohammad Faraj, two young professionals living in Cleveland who saw a need for the broader Arab American community to have a space in which they could connect, mobilize, and seek pathways of opportunity for young professionals to be a part of uplifting the community to advance further in unity. AAC is a non-partisan and non-religious organization that celebrates the rich diversity that exists and aims to be a hub for all who identify as Arab American and want to connect, learn, teach, find mentorship, and build community together.

AAC Vision is:

AAC offers professional and cultural promotion through community engagement while breaking barriers and collaborating with all parts of the community.

AAC Values are:

- AAC places a high level of importance on unity, connections, and community.
- Unity encompasses our commitment to collaborating with Arab Americans with roots from all 22 Arab countries.
- Connections are what we strive to build among people from different backgrounds and professions.
- Community highlights our outreach to include students, professionals, employers, universities, and both community and industry leaders.
- Empowering Arab American students through a scholarship program dedicated to Arab American college students in Northeast Ohio.
- Representing the Arab American professional community and advocating on their behalf.

AAC is grounded in the belief that we, as Arab Americans, have both the ability and responsibility to ensure the cohesion, advancement, and development of our community. Arab communities have thrived ever since the first Arab immigrants came to America over a hundred years ago, contributing to the long of benefits to society through science, business, politics, education, the arts, and numerous other areas. In its inception, AAC sought to be a catalyst in being a unique pathway to aid in adding social investment to the community's potential to make a long-term impact – from a professional, cultural, and

political perspective to work toward further defining our place in Cleveland. Currently, AAC has an email list of 800 Arab Americans across Northeast Ohio. Further, AAC has over 2,100 followers on Instagram and over 1,700 likes on Facebook. AAC has an average of 400 monthly visitors to the website.

The work of AAC began over eight years ago- with time, attention, and dedication poured into understanding the existing gaps that needed to be filled to support the community's needs. In January 2020, AAC formalized its efforts and started with 13 advisory board members who began to create various visions for programming, events, and launching said services into the community- even with the COVID-19 pandemic disrupting the nation, AAC worked to provide avenues of representation locally for Arab American community members. Since, more than a dozen events have been hosted across Greater Cleveland encompassing professional development training and support, networking opportunities, cultural celebrations throughout Arab American Heritage Month in April annually, as well as series of events that center Arab American professionals, culture, and topics that impact the community at large.

In looking at 2024 and beyond, AAC has staple events planned, as well as new events, workshops, and professional development opportunities to further expand our reach and the impact of our programming to Arab professionals, business owners, other nonprofits led by Arab Americans as well as cross-cultural solidarity building.

The Opportunity

The allocated budget for this engagement is \$40,000.00 for both the strategic plan and the community needs assessment.

Overview

AAC seeks the expertise of qualified consultant(s) to orchestrate an organizational assessment, lead and execute a strategic planning process, and conduct a community needs assessment of the Northeast Ohio Arab American community. The selected consultant(s) will play a pivotal role in evaluating AAC's current organizational landscape and actively engage internal stakeholders and external communities as well. The consultant(s) will design surveys and sessions, ensuring a comprehensive approach that addresses the organization's unique needs.

Additionally, the consultant(s) will incorporate trends, current branding strategies, and lessons learned into the overall process, aligning the organization's identity with its mission, values, and target audience. The objective is to produce a final strategic plan document that outlines the future direction of AAC and integrates a cohesive and impactful community needs assessment. This document will be tailored for external audiences, with a focus on facilitating its seamless operationalization.

The comprehensive services sought include organizational assessment, strategic planning, and the integration of a community needs assessment to ensure a holistic approach to advancing AAC's goal.

Desired Consultant Expertise

We are seeking consultant(s) with demonstrated experience in the following areas:

- Strategic planning with strong writing skills for framework development
- Work experience with social service, workforce development, social and racial equity-focused organizations, and proficiency in grantmaking and management strategies.
- Track record in identifying alternative revenue streams, exploring cooperatives, social enterprises, and other models for independent revenue generation.
- Strong facilitation skills to engage diverse stakeholders.
- Adaptability to navigate dynamic landscapes while maintaining organizational focus.
- Resourcefulness and the ability to work independently with minimal supervision.
- Understand intersectional communities and the ability to explore and learn about the varying needs of ethnic-community groups.

The Opportunity (continued)

Consultant Responsibilities

- Conduct a comprehensive landscape and organizational assessment, evaluating the theory of change, mission, vision, values, and brand identity.
- Design and execute participatory strategic planning involving stakeholders, integrating the community needs assessment within the plan.
- Facilitate strategic planning meetings, offering leadership, expertise, and guidance throughout the process.
- Deliver a clear, measurable, and operationalized strategic plan presented in multiple formats for accessibility.
- Develop a robust community needs assessment of the Northeast Ohio Arab American community that is aligned with organizational objectives and integrates seamlessly into the strategic plan.
- Carry out multiple qualitative and quantitative data collection methods for a multidimensional, robust community needs assessment.
- Communicate and engage effectively with stakeholders, fostering their involvement in both planning and the community needs assessment initiatives.
- Establish a post-implementation evaluation framework, providing recommendations for monitoring success and impact and guiding future adjustments.

Consultant Deliverables

Initial Organizational Assessment:

- Comprehensive examination of the organization's current state, including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Initial brand assessment: analysis of the current brand identity, perception, and marketing position of our mission, vision, and programming.

Initial Findings Report:

- Compilation of information gathered from community and peer organizations interviews, surveys, competitive landscape analysis, and initial brand assessment.

Draft Strategic Plan:

- Integration of feedback and information from the initial findings report to outline the organization's future
- Crafting a comprehensive Needs Assessment of the Northeast Ohio Arab American community with the strategic plan:

- Through various methods, collect and assess the current population count of Arab Americans in Northeast Ohio, further encompassing country of origin, household size, age, gender identification, sexual orientation, immigration status, profession, educational level, and other similar data
- Through various methods, collect and assess the needs of the Northeast Ohio Arab American community in areas such as social needs, economic needs, workforce needs, and alike to then inform our organizational strategic goals.

Final Strategic Plan (Delivered in 3 formats):

- Full detailed strategic plan encompassing both strategic objectives and rebranding strategies.
- Summary document highlighting key points and community needs assessment elements.
- Presentation format for clear communication and dissemination of both strategic and community needs assessment initiatives.

Final Plan/Report Components:

- Executive summary summarizing key aspects of the plan/report, including both strategic and community needs assessment aspects.
- Detailed landscape analysis highlighting strengths, weaknesses, challenges, opportunities, and best practices relevant to the organization, integrating the community needs assessment insights.
- Realistic, time-bound budget and infrastructure plan for 2024-2027, outlining short-, medium-, and long-term goals, expected outcomes, and associated activities, considering additional costs for strategic plan implementation.
- Guidelines and recommendations for equitable fundraising and grantmaking strategies.
- Evaluation of business models, revenue streams, and strategies for independent revenue generation.
- Recommendations for an organizational structure aligned with goal execution, accounting for the current organization's lack of staff, and what the organization must do to achieve its first hired role.
- Creative approaches, growth opportunities, and practices aligned with the organization's objectives incorporating the community needs assessment.
- An evaluative framework applicable throughout the plan's three-year period for ongoing assessment and refinement of the strategic initiatives.

Proposal Submission Instructions

The proposal's narrative should not exceed ten pages (excluding attachments) and must include the following sections:

General Information:

- Name of the Consultant(s) or Firm.
- Address, phone number, email address.
- Social media handles and website (if applicable).

Project Proposal:

Detailed narrative addressing the RFP needs, including:

- Approach to addressing the outlined needs.
- Experience engaging with culturally oriented, professional development, advocacy, and social service-based organizations.
- Demonstrated ability in data-driven decision-making for strategic processes.
- Capacity to constructively challenge key stakeholders.
- Capacity to conduct region-wide data collection and analysis.
- Track record in inspiring innovative thinking.
- Project timeline with major tasks, milestones, and deliverables.
- Estimated number of project hours.
- Proposed high-level itemized fee structure for the scope of work.

Qualifications:

Responses to the following questions:

- Relevant experience preparing for this consultation.
- Frameworks integrating diversity, racial equity, and inclusion into the process and approach.
- Approach to strategic planning.
- Knowledge and experience in alternative revenue streams, cooperatives, social enterprise, and independent resource generation models.
- Additional information providing insight into your experience.

Biographies:

- Brief biographies and photos of all principals, partners, and facilitators involved in the project.

References:

- Provide three references able to speak about your relevant work experience, preferably within a nonprofit setting.

Proposal Submission Instructions (continued)

Attachments:

- Relevant examples showcasing the work that you wish to share.

Submission Guidelines:

- Submit proposals electronically in PDF format.
- Ensure the proposal adheres to the specified page limit.
- Email the proposal to president@arabamericanscle.com

Timeline

The timeline for this proposal request is as follows:

1. Deadline to submit proposals: September 28th, 2024
2. Interviews: between September 28th, 2024 and October 11th, 2024
3. Decision: October 14th, 2024
4. Deadline for Strategic Plan: January 13th, 2025
5. Deadline for Community Needs Assessment: March 31st, 2025
6. Final report deadline: March 31st, 2025