

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY CONSULTATION
FOR
CLOUDBURST CONSULTING GROUP, INC.

RFP Release Date: April 15, 2024

Question/ Inquiry Submission Deadline*: April 26, 2024

Proposal Submission Deadline: May 7, 2024 4 PM EST

Performance Period (Estimated): July 2024 to May 2025

Anticipated Type of Award: Time and Materials

Place of Performance: Virtual

* Questions and Answers will be included on our company website's home page,
www.cloudburstgroup.com.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is the exclusive, confidential, proprietary property of Cloudburst Consulting Group, Inc. (Cloudburst). It may not be copied, transmitted, or disclosed by any means without the express written consent of Cloudburst. By accepting a copy hereof, recipient agrees to 1) be bound by the terms and conditions contained herein (including but not limited to the confidentiality provisions), 2) use the RFP (and any related documents) solely for evaluation purposes and for responding to this RFP and 3) return or destroy the RFP (and any related documents) upon Cloudburst's request or upon your decision not to respond to this RFP.

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I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Cloudburst Group (Cloudburst) is a mission-driven women-owned small business working to improve social, economic, and environmental resilience through strengthening government programming in the U.S. and across the globe, with a particular focus on programs that benefit low-income, vulnerable, and marginalized populations, and communities. Cloudburst does this primarily through providing management consulting in core service areas including research and evaluation; data analytics; capacity building and training; and knowledge management and communications.

Cloudburst has been in business since 2005 and is certified by the Small Business Administration as a women-owned small business. Cloudburst clients include multiple agencies within the U.S. Federal Government (HUD, HHS, USAID, MCC), global donors (i.e. World Bank), and dozens of state and local governments in the U.S. Cloudburst has extensive experience working in all U.S. states and territories as well as in over 65 countries across the globe. Cloudburst is a fully virtual organization with 80+ employees located in more than half of the U.S. states and in multiple countries throughout the globe with annual revenues exceeding \$15M.

Since 2020, Cloudburst has undertaken significant work to advance its own Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility agenda. This included conducting an organizational equity assessment, conducting open recruitment for an Equity Lead, then Co-Lead, and revising organizational values to include equity and ensuring persons of different races, colors, nationalities, genders, sexual orientations, ages, and abilities are present in all aspects of our work. This flowed through to revisions to the Cloudburst Employee Handbook to include a racial, gender, LGBTQI+, and neurodivergent equity lens.

Cloudburst also established multiple waves of staff-led equity working groups that have focused on attracting and retaining diverse talent; enhancing the staff onboarding process; and increasing transparency in job roles, goal setting, and career development.

Cloudburst also expanded its workplace training curriculum to focus on issues of unconscious bias, preventing discrimination, cultural competency, microaggressions in the workplace, white dominant culture, among others, and offered staff time to reflect on these trainings and how to apply core concepts in our work internally at Cloudburst and in our work with clients.

Staff also engaged in an affinity group pilot, where they connected with colleagues who shared similar cultural backgrounds and identities. This effort was evaluated with recommendations to scale for the future.

Cloudburst has also identified priorities for future staff-led working teams to convene in 2024 focused on: additional revisions to organizational policies and procedures; revising Cloudburst's Project Management Handbook in line with new [CDC guidelines for preferred terms for select population groups & communities](#); honing protocols for working with persons with lived experience in our work; developing guidelines and training for working with small/minority/local partners to achieve success in government contracting; and engaging with other businesses doing equity work for shared learning.

In summary, Cloudburst is actively engaged in many aspects of an equity journey and would benefit from external consultation to guide and advise on industry-leading approaches and best practices.

II. PROPOSAL PURPOSE

Cloudburst is seeking proposals from qualified persons, firms, or organizations to provide advisory services on Cloudburst internal organizational training and facilitation activities toward building a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization for employees.

As Cloudburst is also engaged in equity work on behalf of our clients with communities in the U.S. and around the globe, we are looking for a partner that can also engage and advise on multi-disciplinary and culturally relevant approaches to advancing DEIA efforts by sharing industry-leading practices and facilitating learning with our project teams on approaches, methodologies, facilitation techniques, inclusive practices, and other to be determined topics.

The successful respondent will work alongside Cloudburst equity leads and staff-led working groups to advise on industry-leading best practices, conduct surveys, facilitate meetings, and serve as an advisor/facilitator of equity-focused discussions. All work is expected to be conducted remotely.

The successful respondent will be flexible to work with Cloudburst's current DEIA strategic goals and help to advance its strategies and structure to achieve meaningful and measurable results to address the diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility priorities of Cloudburst. This is likely to include but may not be limited to:

- Facilitating training and discussions with staff.
- Providing resources and references on industry best practices.
- Serving as an advisor with Cloudburst project teams conducting equity work with our clients.
- Serving as a reviewer on revisions to policies, procedures, or other approaches that guide Cloudburst operations.
- Advising on ad-hoc requests as they may arise during the period of performance.
- Unanticipated needs or solutions the offeror can provide.

III. CONTRACT MECHANISM & TERMS OF PAYMENT

Cloudburst will execute a time and materials type contract. The period of performance is anticipated to be 12 months, with two 1-year options to extend for a total period of performance of 3 years. Cloudburst will put in place an Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity type contract and issue task orders under this vehicle. The average annual resources available for this contract is estimated between \$15,000 and \$30,000, contingent upon needs and resources available.

IV. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

a. Instructions for Proposal Preparation

The selection committee will evaluate the Offerors based upon their written qualifications, cost proposals, and references. Each section will be evaluated according to the criteria for evaluations in this section. Offerors are expected to examine the specifications and all instructions in the RFP. Failure to do so is at the Offeror's risk.

Interested Offerors must provide a written narrative response not to exceed 10 pages (single-spaced 12-point font) plus attachments as denoted responding to the following:

1. **Organizational Overview and Experience including:**
 - a. Firm overview, size, number of employees, commitment to equity
 - b. Understanding of DEIA challenges facing small business working in the government contracting sector.
 - c. Knowledge and sources of industry-leading DEIA best practices.
 - d. Value proposition to serving as an advisor to The Clodburst Group both on organizational issues and advising Clodburst's equity work with clients.
2. **Team Qualifications**
 - a. Please denote at least 2 key personnel who will be available for the term of the project and provide copies of resumes for these people as an attachment. Key personnel cannot be replaced without prior approval of Clodburst.
 - b. Bios and roles of other proposed team members.
3. **Firm's Relevant Experience**

Offerors will demonstrate substantive, relevant experience in the following:

 - a. Training capabilities and experience (please include a list and description of available training offerings as an attachment).
 - b. Organizational development experience.
 - c. Facilitation experience including description of methods and techniques to be offered.
 - d. Experience working within the government contracting sector.
4. **Cost Proposal**

Offerors will submit fully burdened rates in USD for personnel or labor categories for 3 years. If labor categories are used, identify applicable categories for key personnel.

Offerors will also submit an illustrative cost estimate and assumptions using their own template to plan, develop, and deliver a two-hour virtual staff training on unconscious bias.

5. References

Please include three client references including name, organization, contact information, description of work completed, budget, and period of performance. References will be contacted.

b. Instructions for Submission of Proposal

1. A written response should be provided to the contact listed below. All responses to this RFP must be received no later than the submission deadline on the cover page of this RFP. Offerors must submit the proposals to:

Attention: Denise Lomuntad, Senior Contracts Manager
Email: Denise.Lomuntad@cloudburstgroup.com

Faxed offers are not acceptable.

2. All inquiries and requests for information regarding this RFP must be submitted by e-mail to the following individual(s) no later than the question/inquiry submission deadline on the cover page of this RFP. Reference the RFP number in all questions/inquiries.

Attention: Denise Lomuntad, Senior Contracts Manager
Email: Denise.Lomuntad@cloudburstgroup.com

Questions and Answers will be included on our website's home page.

3. Offerors shall provide proposals and related documentation in English.
4. Offerors' responses must meet the requirements included in this section and thoughtfully demonstrate their unique ability to provide such services.

V. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

While we will evaluate proposals based on a best value determination, Offerors should submit their most competitive rates. Only proposals conforming to the solicitation requirements will be considered. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Organizational Experience	30%	Firm capacity, expertise, and experience in working with small and/or government contract organizations to advance DEIA, including being able to leverage industry best practices
Key Personnel	20%	The applicant must have at least 2 key personnel with demonstrated experience
Relevant Experience	20%	Demonstrated capabilities in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. design and delivery of training, especially for adult learners b. providing organizational development support that may include development of policies and procedures; change management processes c. use of various facilitation techniques with diverse groups of people to apply principles and practices of DEIA d. the government contacting or similar sectors.
Cost	10%	Rate Reasonableness
References	20%	Validation of quality work with entities of similar scope, size and scale.

The evaluation committee will evaluate the proposal considering the criteria listed above and in relation to the importance of each criterion. Cloudburst may contact applicants to seek clarification or additional information or to request an interview. An Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity contract will be offered to the responsible Offeror whose proposal follows the RFP instructions and is judged to be the most advantageous.

VI. SOLICITATION PROCESS

Once the RFP is released, the Offerors must prepare a formal proposal to be sent to the contact person as indicated in Section IV (b) (1). The submitted proposals will be reviewed against the criteria for evaluation defined in Section V above and rated on their ability to satisfy the requirements stated in this RFP document. A preferred Offeror will be chosen and formally notified. A formal Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity contract will be negotiated with the selected Offeror and, if endorsed, the Offeror will be issued a Task Order to be signed by both parties, and may begin work on the project.

VII. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

a. Late Submissions

Proposals received after the submission deadline stated in the cover page of this RFP may not be considered. Offerors will be held responsible for ensuring their quotations are received according to the instructions stated herein.

b. Modification of RFP Requirements

Cloudburst retains the right to terminate the RFP or modify the requirements upon notification to Offerors. All notifications will be posted on our website's home page.

c. Withdrawals of Proposals

Proposals may be withdrawn by written notice via email at any time before award. Proposals may be withdrawn in person by an Offeror or authorized representative, if the representative's identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the proposal before award.

d. Right of Negotiation and Acceptance of Proposal

This RFP represents a definition of requirements and is an invitation for submission of proposals. Cloudburst reserves the right to fund/award any or none of the submitted proposals. No commitment is made, either expressed or implied, to compensate Offerors for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of their proposal.

Cloudburst may reject any proposal that is nonresponsive. A responsive proposal is one that complies with all terms and conditions of the RFP. A proposal must be complete, signed by an authorized signatory and delivered no later than the submission time and date indicated on the cover sheet of this RFP. Cloudburst may reserve the right to waive any minor discrepancies in a proposal.

Cloudburst reserves the right to issue an award based on the initial evaluation of proposals without discussion. Cloudburst also reserves the right to enter into best and final negotiations with any responsive Offerors for all or part of the proposed scope.

e. Validity of Proposal

Proposals submitted shall remain open for acceptance for 90 days from the last date specified for receipt of proposals. This includes, but is not limited to, pricing, terms and conditions, service levels, and all other information. If your organization is awarded the contract, all information in the RFP and negotiation process is contractually binding.

f. Minimum Offeror Qualifications

Offerors submitting proposals must be officially licensed to do such business in the United States.

g. Intellectual Property Rights

All tangible or intangible property created or acquired under this contract shall be the exclusive property of Cloudburst. The term “property” includes all data and reports associated with this engagement.

h. Confidentiality

Information pertaining to Cloudburst obtained by the Offeror as a result of participation in this RFP is confidential and shall not be disclosed at any time without prior written authorization from Cloudburst’s contact person as indicated in Section IV (b) (1).

