



**Responses to Questions
Cloudburst DEIA Training & Facilitation RFP**

October 11, 2024

Question 1. After reviewing your RFP, we noticed that the estimated budget for the project still is listed at \$25-30k. Based on the scope of work proposed, we anticipate the cost for the four quarterly training sessions to be \$32k. Additionally, for the ongoing people operations and ad hoc consulting, we typically require a monthly retainer of no less than \$12k. Given these figures, would there be flexibility in the budget to accommodate this scope of work?

Response to Question 1: Cloudburst has an estimated annual budget for contractor support that will be negotiated based on priorities and services agreed mutually with the selected applicant. We are unable to agree to a monthly retainer and will establish a 6 month contract as a time and materials agreement with an option to extend.

Question 2. Given the period of performance and the number of areas in which Cloudburst has already made progress in advancing DEIA in the organization, how would you prioritize the requested areas needing support included in the RFP?

Response to Question 2: There are 5 key areas of priorities defined in the RFP. This list is inclusive of possible activities. Priorities will be discussed and negotiated with the selected applicant.

Question 3. Must an offeror demonstrate capability in all areas for support requested in order to be considered for any of them?

Response to Question 3: Yes, Cloudburst is looking for support in all areas identified.

Question 4. In earlier interactions related to the previous RFP, we shared reservations about the \$25,000-30,000 budget available for this work. Although we note the slightly expanded budget ceiling, is this figure intended to be illustrative or final? We say this keeping in mind that a significant part (~\$15,000) will be absorbed by the requested sample 2-hour training budget, leaving the remaining amount (~\$10,000-15,000) for additional interventions and support.

Response to Question 4: Please see response to Question 1.

Question 5. In our experience, a 2-hour training for 80 people is insufficient to address unconscious bias in a meaningful way. Is there latitude to provide a sample training budget that includes (4) 4-8-hour sessions, each attended by 20 participants?

Response to Question 5: The request is for a sample budget for illustrative purposes only. Offerors are welcome to include cost assumptions that support their illustrative budget. As stated in the instructions, this sample budget will be evaluated for cost reasonableness only. Cloudburst will work with the selected applicant to provide cost estimates for each anticipated activity after award.

Question 6. If this is a 6-month contract, will the DEIA training and facilitated discussions occur only twice (i.e. 2 quarterly training sessions with the period of performance), and will they focus on operationalizing DEIA in areas where previous consultants have worked?

Response to Question 6: We anticipate an on-going need for training and facilitation services. After award, priorities will be negotiated in consultation with the selected applicant.

Question 7. Could we clarify the scope and/or key findings of the internal Equity Assessment? Specifically, I am trying to understand how this contract expects to continue some of that work, particularly on the policy and procedures recommendations.

Response to Question 7: We will share background information and an overview of work completed to date with the selected applicant. We anticipate building from this existing work, some of which is complete and some of which is ongoing. For example, Cloudburst has an active staff-led working group reviewing and revising our internal Project Management Handbook to infuse equity into the framework and procedures, and align with current standards for language, approaches, and methodologies.

Question 8. Did the Equity Assessment, or prior efforts, include insights from learning sessions, staff engagement surveys, or similar activities that highlighted specific equity-related challenges?

Response to Question 8: Prior efforts engaged staff at all levels, from anonymous surveys to focus groups to open feedback sessions. Staff are a critical and driving factor to Cloudburst's equity journey. Cloudburst equity co-leads provide ongoing leadership to all DEIA efforts. Issues that were identified that Cloudburst has undertaken in-depth work on including recruiting, hiring, and onboarding; staff advancement and development; network and outreach to expand relationships with diverse organizations; operationalizing equity in programming; shared learning from other organizations on DEIA efforts; equity review of policies and procedures; and equity review of project management protocols. Cloudburst also established an affinity group structure following a pilot evaluation.

Question 9. Given that Cloudburst intends to further operationalize DEIA in its work with clients, will Cloudburst consider awarding to any offerors who work with the same clients and could be considered competitors at a future date?

Response to Question 9: Cloudburst prioritizes shared learning. Within some areas of our work with clients we often work with "competitor firms" combining approaches to improve delivery and impact. Most importantly, Cloudburst is looking for the selected applicant to be collaborative, recognizing that this engagement should be mutually beneficial to both parties.

Question 10. The RFP mentions training for up to 80 participants. Would you prefer one large virtual session, or would you be open to splitting the group into smaller, more interactive sessions?

Response to Question 10: Cloudburst has asked applicants to provide a sample training budget for cost reasonableness analysis only. Actual training to be conducted by the selected applicant may differ from the sample training required in the RFP. Applicants are encouraged to provide details of the assumptions that resulted in the submitted cost.

Question 11. As this is a time and materials award, is there a cap or expectation on the estimated number of hours to be worked that can be billed under this contract within the \$25k-\$30k budget range?

Response to Question 11: Cloudburst has requested hourly rates and will review the illustrative budget for cost reasonableness.

Question 12. What is your anticipated ratio of assistance needed with internal DEIA work at Cloudburst versus helping your Cloudburst staff do equity work with external clients?

Response to Question 12: Cloudburst anticipates about 2/3 of work to be focused internally and 1/3 of work to be skill building and engagement with staff involved in external DEIA work. This may shift over time contingent upon priorities.

Question 13. How do you think your needs for assistance will differ for the internal DEIA work and your staff's DEIA work with their external clients?

Response to Question 13: Internal work will focus on staff training, engagement with content, guidance to working groups, revisions to organizational workflows, and policies and procedures informed by industry practices. Work with staff engaging in DEIA work with our clients will focus on skill building, engaging in scenario-based learning (i.e. how to respond if...), training on engagement and facilitation approaches, and serving as an advisor/strategist. The list is illustrative of possible activities. Priorities will be discussed and negotiated with the selected applicant.

Question 14. On Cost, there is only a request to provide an hourly rate and a sample budget for one staff training. Should the consultant assume that other services (policy revision suggestions, providing resources, etc.) would be billed on hourly basis by the consultant, or will there be further cost negotiation on these services as they are requested?

Response to Question 14: All services will be billed on an hourly basis. The selected applicant will work with Cloudburst to estimate costs for priority activities.

Question 15. Does (or how does) Cloudburst plan to assess effectiveness of the consultant's services?

Response to Question 15: Pre-award via reference checks; post-award via feedback from those involved in the engagement.

Question 16. Can you confirm the page limit and attachments request? We are assuming that the 10 page narrative response will include #1 (Org. Overview and Relevant Experience), #2 (Team Qualifications), #3 (Cost) and #4 (References). And these items will be included as Appendices (not included in the 10 page limit):

- DEIA Training Offerings
- Sample Budget for Training
- Resumes

Response to Question 16: The 10 pages is inclusive of:

- 1. Organizational Overview and Relevant Experience*
- 2. Team Qualifications*
- 3. Cost*
- 4. References*

The following can be provided as attachments and do not count toward the 10 page limit:

- 1. List of DEIA training offerings*
- 2. Resumes*
- 3. Sample training budget / budget assumptions*

Question 17. Page 3 states that Cloudburst is looking for support with various activities (e.g., quarterly training, resource support, advising project teams, reviewing and suggesting revisions to policies and procedures, and ad hoc requests). I'm curious about the delivery expectations. Is the selected firm expected to address all of these topics within six months of performance? And, if there is a need/option to extend the timeline, is the total budget still \$25 - \$30K?

Response to Question 17: The list is inclusive of possible activities. Priorities will be discussed and negotiated with the selected applicant. It is likely that within the first six months, the selected applicant will be onboarded to the project with an overview of work completed to date and a mutual decision will be made on other priorities. It is anticipated that work will continue beyond six months with additional resources allocated on an annual basis.

Question 18. Because of our expertise, we use a value-based pricing model for workshops and other services and an hourly rate for consulting. The RFP highlights five deliverables/areas of support, and it's possible to spend a lot of time on many of them. Will you please share Cloudburst's process for aligning on the scope of work and final budget with the selected firm?

Response to Question 18: See response to Question 17.

Question 19. Since several services are requested and because our pricing structure varies by service (it is not all an hourly rate), can we offer sample pricing for our services in lieu of a "fully loaded" hourly rate for the cost section?

Response to Question 19: Cloudburst would prefer to execute a time and materials contract with hourly rates and expects that pricing for all services will be discussed and mutually agreed upon. If the applicant only has a service level pricing structure, this can be provided but may impact the cost reasonableness analysis.