Consultant for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Request for Proposal

Summary
The Independent Publishers Association seeks proposals from consultants to help guide its efforts to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion across all aspects of the organization and specifically to train key volunteers and staff so that we are all working within the same social justice and DEI framework.

Contact Person: Andrea Fleck-Nisbet, Chief Executive Officer, andrea@ibpa-online.org

Issue Date: November 1, 2023
Due Date: November 30, 2023
Submit to: andrea@ibpa-online.org

Who We Are: Founded in 1983, the Independent Book Publishers Association is a professional association of independent book publishers, author publishers, and publishing service providers. Our mission is to lead and serve the independent publishing community through advocacy, education, and tools for success.

We do this work through the lens of our five core values -- Service, Leadership, Independence, Inclusivity, and Data First -- and by executing against the four goals outlined in IBPA’s 2023-2025 Strategic Plan.

IBPA is comprised of approximately 3,500 members whom we serve through a variety of educational programs, trade and consumer marketing offerings, and advocacy initiatives. We also run a book awards program, which recognizes publishers for excellence in publishing, and
the newly launched **IBPA Innovative Voices** program, which provides resources and industry opportunities for publishers who are serving their historically underrepresented communities.

**Background in DEI Work to Date**

In 2020, a DEI Task Force of the IBPA Board of Directors developed a **DEI Strategic Plan**, making more explicit IBPA’s commitment to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion within its leadership, policies, practices, publications, and membership and its desire to contribute to a more inclusive and diverse publishing industry, particularly within the independent publishing community.

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) work to date includes:

1. Ongoing organization-wide surveys/assessment.
2. Working with DEI consultants to provide introductory training to the board of directors, key volunteers, and the at-large membership.
3. Incorporating DEI principles and values into IBPA’s strategic plan including a commitment to eliminate bias and enhance diversity and inclusion within the IBPA community.
4. Creating a member-led DEI Committee that is tasked with serving as a sounding board and advisory council on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within IBPA and the independent book publishing community.
5. Developing a **DEI Resource Center** to enable positive, actionable, and systemic change among our membership and within the publishing industry.
6. Launching the IBPA **Innovative Voices Program** to recognize and serve publishers from marginalized communities.

While many of the current staff and key volunteers have participated in previous training, several individuals are new to the staff, IBPA board, and our committees and have not participated in any kind of training offered by IBPA.

**Project Overview & Scope of Work**

The Independent Book Publishers Association is seeking the services of a consultant across a period of 6 months to provide transformative training for key volunteers and staff including IBPA Board of Directors members, committee members, and IBPA staff so that all parties have a shared DEI framework from which to achieve our strategic and business goals.

Overall training objectives include:

1. **Raise awareness** of the importance and value of diversity, equity, and inclusion; recognize bias and how it affects the way people perceive, evaluate, and react to others.
2. **Increase knowledge** to develop informed empathy and respect.
3. **Develop skills** to recognize, practice, and measure inclusive behaviors.
4. **Demonstrate an understanding of IBPA's DEI principles** and effectively apply them to lead and implement individual and systemic changes, resolve conflict, and foster an inclusive and equitable environment within the association, one’s own publishing company, and the industry at large.

Learning outcomes from this training will help trainees progress toward the following actionable items related to these four areas:

**Awareness:**

- Recognize the breadth of diversity: ability, age, ethnicity, gender identity, geographic origin, national origin, race, religion/spiritual traditions, sexual orientation, caste, socioeconomic class, and more.
- Understand multiple worldviews and cultural experiences through dimensions of power, privilege, and oppression, along with recognition of the complexity, inequity, and interdependence of these systems.
- Appreciate differences and similarities.
- Gain insight into one’s own identities, culture, biases, assumptions, fears, and comfort levels, as well as social group experiences and their affiliated values, rules and biases.
- Develop empathy and concern about the impact of social injustice.
- Gain ethical insight into one’s core beliefs and their origins.
- Recognize physical, organizational and social conditions that lend to community, involvement, inclusion and safety.

**Knowledge:**

- Understand essential vocabulary related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Articulate key constructs (e.g., race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, caste, socioeconomic status) and how their individual and combined effects impact cultural, societal, organizational and institutional norms.
- Know about the social constructions of identities created through legal, cultural, political, and historical practices, and the historical impact on creation and sustainment of levels of prejudice.
- Learn global diversity issues, such as genocides that have occurred and still occur.
- Understand the personal protections guaranteed by the US Constitution, its amendments, and legal code and how federal, state and local laws do and do not provide a foundation for equity and social justice.
- Know about social, political, and historical movements that shape and challenge systems of power, privilege, and oppression.
- Be able to identify the ways in which power differentials operate, are experienced, and are reinforced at individual, group, community, institutional, and global levels.
• Be able to identify the concerns of Indigenous populations and issues related to marginalization, sovereignty, and colonization within borders, territories, and other state boundaries.
• Analyze personal experiences, as well as the experiences of others, in various environments, recognizing how meaning-making can vary by communities with which one affiliates and by personal and collective histories within the larger society.
• Understand the importance of collecting and analyzing data related to diversity metrics to identify areas of improvement.
• Apply knowledge to evaluation and assessment.

Skills:

• Learn inclusive leadership, communication, and facilitation, such as valuing and involving all members of the group for their unique contributions.
• Invite others to share their stories through an attitude of respectful interest and curiosity, using open-ended questions.
• Respond to statements or acts of bias in a way that invites dialogue rather than debate.
• Be able to identify, analyze, and evaluate the ways in which individuals and groups in the US have unequal experiences, access to opportunity, or life outcomes based on the intersections of race, gender, social class, citizenship, (dis)ability, indigeneity, sexual orientation, religion and creed, caste, or other dimensions of difference.
• Be able to identify, analyze, and critique tropes, narratives, and other discursive strategies around various dimensions of difference.
• Facilitate productive and affirming intergroup collaborations to work across and within diverse communities to achieve mutual goals, including language, tone, expressions and behaviors that cultivate group connection and momentum.
• Interpret intercultural experiences in a supportive manner that recognizes the meaning and feelings of other individuals and cultural groups.
• Understand cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication and the ability to skillfully negotiate a shared understanding based on those differences.
• Seek out approaches to reach a goal or resolve an issue, by integrating alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas.
• Use data to make informed decisions regarding DEI initiatives and measure their effectiveness over time.

Action:

• Engage in difficult conversations related to DEI with empathy and respect on behalf of yourself or others.
• Increase interactions with people different from yourself.
• Work effectively with diverse groups.
• Actively try to impact those who are within your sphere of influence regarding issues of bias, discrimination, and social justice.
• Identify one or more strategies to intervene and disrupt systems of oppression on an individual or systemic level.
• Employ communicative tools while seeking common ground in discussing concepts of diversity, inclusion, and equity.
• Challenge your own implicit biases and inherited assumptions.
• Cultivate a growth mindset of openness and tolerance and be willing to stretch beyond your comfort level.
• Practice relevant skills and address equity and inclusion at different levels of advocacy.
• With exposure over time to variety of content across a range of training modalities, reflect and apply what’s been learned, and adapt to the sometimes-uncomfortable feelings that accompany change and growth.
• Expand knowledge and skills, envision a path forward, and convene and organize others to make a positive difference in IBPA, your publishing company, and the industry.

The immediate outcomes of this training will:

1. Meet stated learning objectives and outcomes.
2. Recognize the unique learning path and DEI competency level of individual participants.
3. Provide historical context to power, privilege, and oppressions; racism; sexism; homophobia; casteism; ableism; and other knowledge about marginalized and oppressed groups.
4. Engage participants in sharing personal and professional experiences of bias, for the development of awareness, empathy, and respect.
5. Provide IBPA’s best practices documentation and reference materials for repeatable, scalable, sustainable use, such as how to train key volunteers and staff who may join the organization mid-year.
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of DEI efforts and make data-informed adjustments as needed.

Qualifications of Consultants

• Experience presenting and leading DEI workshops that engage key volunteers and staff, foster connection and understanding, and provide trainees with actionable ways to apply their learnings.
- Demonstrated understanding and/or experience with issues and challenges of a non-profit association with a diverse group of staff and key volunteers who have varying degrees of experience and awareness related to DEI topics.
- Ability to make recommendations for best practices and procedures related to ongoing staff and key volunteer training.

**Deliverables**

- Initial assessment of the IBPA staff and key volunteers to determine current level of DEI awareness, knowledge, skills and competency.
- Six 90-minute training sessions for staff, board members and key volunteers. Training would be broken into directional content that would be recorded followed by small group breakout session discussion that would not be recorded. Training would cover a diverse and relevant range of subjects related to DEI concepts and principles.
- Recorded training sessions and ancillary materials (session outlines, booklists for additional information, etc.) that could be delivered and utilized for the purpose of training any staff or volunteers who miss the initial training or join IBPA leadership after the training.
- Post-training assessment to demonstrate staff and volunteers’ progress toward training objectives
- Recommendations for future training sessions to continually improve IBPA’s awareness, knowledge, and skill set.

**Budget**

The total budget for the assessment, training sessions, and post-training evaluation must not exceed $10,000 - $15,000. Proposals should outline anticipated costs of any or all components requested in this RFP. Non-profit discounts are welcomed and appreciated.

**Evaluation Process and Criteria**

IBPA will select the consultant based on their ability to meet the overall expectations. The following criteria will be used in the selection process:

- Responsiveness and completeness of the response provided to the RFP.
- Experience and qualifications of consultant.
- Technical quality and methodology of consultant’s approach to organizing and managing the project; ability to document information and recommendations clearly.
• Experience working with nonprofit organizations, especially within publishing or media organizations.
• Satisfaction of former clients with competency of completed work based on references.
• Price and fee structure reasonable to services provided.

Submission of Proposals

IBPA will accept proposals until November 30 via email to andrea@ibpa-online.org

If you feel you/your firm are a good fit for this work, but the proposal deadline creates a challenge, please contact us to discuss. All proposals should specify when the consultant or consulting firm is available.

For consideration, please submit proposals in PDF format with the following Information:

• Contact information,
• Summary of Approach and Frameworks for DEI: Please include specific examples of strategies, training content, workshops, and descriptions of key activities
• Scope of Work and Timeline
• Cost information that includes a rate sheet, the estimated number of hours and cost per hour for the consultant staff, for each of the components of the work, and the estimated time investment for the IBPA Board, staff, and key volunteer leadership
• Key personnel information for consultant or firm
• Three professional references.