



Brand USA DEI Consultant RFP - Written Questions and Responses

The following are responses to questions Brand USA has received to the RFP for Brand USA DEI Consultant.

Thanks to everyone who submitted questions regarding Brand USA's RFP for a Brand USA DEI Consultant. Since many of the questions posed were similar, we have condensed and edited queries. We removed Company names. If the response to the question is already in the RFP, or if we were unable to understand a question, we did not respond.

Q What is the current state and structure of any existing full-time DEI team or committee within Brand USA?

R During the 2020 calendar year, Brand USA has established a DEI Taskforce with 19 of 44 employees participating. This Taskforce has three sub-committees— Organizational Leadership, Educational Awareness, and Marketing Inclusion. The Taskforce is currently awaiting a consultant to provide guidance on DEI initiatives specific to Organizational Leadership and Educational Awareness. See the Organizational Leadership and Educational Awareness sub-committee statements below for reference.

Organizational Leadership Statement:

We will foster an inclusive work environment by assessing the organizational structure and implementing changes through HR Policies, leadership development, contract evaluation, and other procedural systems.

Educational Awareness Statement:

We will provide resources and organize events for staff, agencies, and industry partners to educate themselves and grow into better allies for one another and society as a whole.

Q What DEI efforts or initiatives have been implemented in the last 1-2 years?

R The response above applies to this question. Specific to the Organizational Leadership and Educational Awareness sub-committees, both sub-committees have identified their recommended objectives and implementation plan to provide a clear roadmap of how Brand USA will foster an equitable and inclusive work environment. Both sub-committees have outlined a need for a consultant to provide guidance on DEI initiatives in order to move forward.

Q What is the expected or hopeful timeline for this work to be completed?

R We request that vendors present a proposed timeline based on the details of this RFP. We expect this to be an iterative process with different organizational milestones reached along the way. We are looking for respondents to provide a timeline based on their experience in providing similar services for other entities to help us understand the process and what to expect from financial and time investment perspectives.

Q What is the current culture and leader readiness for DEI learning and initiatives?

R We have also established our CFO as the leading Diversity and Inclusion Officer and presented our efforts to Brand USA's Board of Directors and additional C-suite members to further grow our efforts around DEI initiatives.

- Q** **It is very helpful to have a budget range that your organization is considering for the engagement.**
R Brand USA seeks budget benchmarking information e.g., rate schedules for staff assigned to the account or fees for specific deliverables relevant to the case studies you might include in the proposal.
- Q** **What does success look like for Brand USA for this project (short and long term success)?**
R We see short- and long-term success as actioning out the scope of work listed within the RFP and future rollout of a implementation plan based on the DEI expertise recommendations.
- Q** **What is the expectation for training and activity delivery? (i.e., onsite or virtual)**
R The response above applies to this question. Currently, our staff is working remotely and will continue to do so until it is safe for our staff to be back in the office. We anticipate that these services will be an iterative process and with short-and long-term milestones. We request vendors to present a realistic training and activity implementation plan based on their experiences in providing similar services for other entities.
- Q** **In addition to the Chief Financial, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, are there any other dedicated DEI employees at Brand USA? Who will own the project?**
R While we have established three sub-committees focused on specific tactical objectives, the Contract managers responsible for directing the work and facilitating implementation are the Committee leads along with direction from our CFO. We also anticipate collaboration with our Vice President, Human Resources & Administration and ultimately, all efforts will roll up to the CEO and the Board of Directors.
- Q** **Why is Brand USA currently seeking a DEI partner at this time? What may have recently changed internally to trigger the need for support?**
R Employees from all levels have requested the need for guidance from a vendor with DEI expertise and an external perspective to assist with the organization's DEI efforts. The tumultuous social unrest regarding racial inequality that occurred during the summer of 2020 was a part of the internal trigger for the need of additional support.
- Q** **Are you looking for customized training or off-the-shelf?**
R We would lean to the respondents to facilitate the discussion and look to their recommendation if a program designed specifically for us is needed based on their experiences in providing similar services for other entities.
- Q** **Have your employees been through any DEI training?**
R We have not conducted any formal DEI training although our yearly mandatory trainings do include training modules related to overall discrimination, ethics and harassment. The course titles are as follows:
- Preventing Discrimination and Harassment
 - Preventing Discrimination and Harassment: A leaders role
 - Workplace Ethics