Request for Proposals (RFP) for Executive Search Firms

Issue Date: April 2, 2021
Submissions Due: April 16, 2021 by 5:00pm EST
Reply To: Melody Fitzgerald at: mfitzgerald@meyerfdn.org

Background

The Meyer Foundation is launching a search for its next President and CEO. Founded in 1944 by Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer, the Meyer Foundation is an independent, private, regionally focused foundation that has long played an influential role in philanthropy locally and nationally. Under the leadership of its current CEO, the Foundation has dedicated itself over the past seven years to a vision of a Washington region in which systemic racism and its consequences no longer exist and incorporated a set of values that guide operating and programmatic decisions. That vision and those values led to a systematic shift in the organization’s internal and external work to focus squarely on racial equity and justice, including an intentional commitment to investing in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) led movements that are building power to advance racial justice. Internally, the Foundation is committed to being an anti-racist organization and ensures operations – including the selection of consulting partners and vendors – are aligned with its values.

The Meyer Foundation ended 2020 with a clear vision of its work going forward and a strong foundation for realizing its goals. The Meyer Board of Directors is searching for the next leader who will build on the momentum with vision, energy, and a strong track record in movement building, racial justice, and organizational management. The Board will appoint a committee to lead the search and make a recommendation of a new CEO.
to the Board of Directors. The Board wishes to retain a firm to collaboratively identify a diverse and qualified slate of candidates and, ultimately, our next leader.

The Board is interested in exploring how a firm might challenge conventional executive search practices that may unintentionally create barriers to BIPOC candidates. In addition, the Board is requesting proposals from national and local firms and encourages those led or governed by BIPOC and those that have experience in the Washington region. The Board will select the firm that best meets our needs per the criteria below.

**Request for Proposals**

The Meyer Foundation requests proposals from prospective executive search firms for the purpose described in this document. This RFP is not an offer to enter into a contract but rather a solicitation for proposals. Proposals are to be received by 5:00 p.m. (EST) April 16, 2021, via email to Melody Fitzgerald at mfitzgerald@meyerfdn.org. Additional questions about proposal criteria and/or the scope of the search may be directed to Melody Fitzgerald at mfitzgerald@meyerfdn.org. **Proposals or materials will not be accepted after the due date.**

Proposers will receive a confirmation via email of receipt of the proposal. All submissions must conform to the terms and conditions of this RFP, as stated in this document. It is in the Meyer Foundation’s sole discretion to render a proposal non-responsive and ineligible for further consideration for failure to conform to the requirements. The Meyer Foundation reserves the right to accept any proposal or any parts thereof or to reject any proposals. A successful firm will be required to comply with all applicable federal and District of Columbia equal opportunity regulations as applicable. The Meyer Foundation may identify a group of firms as finalists. All firms will be notified of selection or non-selection as a finalist by April 30, 2021. The Meyer Foundation may invite finalists to participate in a follow-up conversation or interview. We anticipate that the decision regarding the selection of a chosen firm will be confirmed by May 15, 2021.

Included with this RFP for reference are the following links:
- Meyer Mission, Vision, and Values
- Meyer’s Priorities 2020-2022

**Vendor Selection and Contracting Through a Racial Equity Lens**

As a funder of systems change to advance racial equity, the Meyer Foundation has a responsibility to express its values through its resource allocations. The Foundation recognizes that structural and systemic barriers have impacted the ability of people of color to access contracting opportunities. The Meyer Foundation seeks to eliminate racial bias, systemic barriers, and their subsequent economic harm to communities of color through vendor and consultant selection and contracting practices. **Our goal is that Meyer Foundation dollars used for contracting, consulting and vendors do no harm to communities of color, create opportunities for economically disadvantaged**
communities, and engage service providers whose diversity is reflective of the diversity of the region.

To meet this goal, Meyer incorporates three methods into the process:

1. **Expand Points of Entry:** Public request for proposal (RFP) processes, outreach to niche and alternative networks, and reviewing RFPs (and other requests) for equitable policies, language, and expectations.

2. **Evaluate Values-Based Alignment:** Commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and building a just, connected, and inclusive Greater Washington, as evidenced in staffing, organizational mission, values, community affiliations, and previous work and clients.

3. **Evaluate Regional Focus:** Determine the potential vendor’s stake and depth of knowledge in the region.

A racially diverse vendor is defined as at least 51% owned by a person/s of color. The Meyer Foundation aspires to having all its vendors in alignment with our commitment to racial equity, so if a prospective vendor does not meet the 51% threshold, please include a summary of your racial equity policy as a company. Additionally, if it becomes known that a vendor has acted in a manner that is contrary to this commitment, the Meyer Foundation will seek to replace the vendor with one that fits within this philosophy.

**Services Required**

A. Solicit input from board, search committee, staff, and identified community stakeholders and partners through meetings interviews, or surveys, to understand the role, responsibilities, qualifications, and appropriate experience needed for the position.

B. Develop a recruitment strategy, process, and timetable in consultation with the Search Committee.

C. Develop an accurate and engaging job description and job announcement.

D. Use an equity lens in the search process and source diverse candidates through several different channels using best practice recruitment strategies.

E. Assess the qualifications of interested candidates against requirements of the position description and recommend potential candidates to be interviewed by the Search Committee.

F. Support the Search Committee by providing guidance for conducting rigorous interviews and evaluating successful candidates such that the Committee can recommend a final candidate to the full board for approval.
Proposal Requirements

A. Qualifications: Firm name, brief history, number of years of experience in philanthropic sector, list of primary contact person(s). Professional staff background for each person assigned to the search. (250-word limit).

B. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as evidenced in staffing, organizational mission, values, and previous work, as well as an equity-informed strategy for recruitment of diverse candidates with strong racial equity track records. Please include a description of how the firm applies an equity lens to the search process.

C. Search Services & Approach: Identification of specific services to be provided (e.g. candidate screening, background check, reference check, interview questions, evaluations, timeline) and discussion of any challenges foreseen in current recruiting environment. Please detail efforts to ensure that all candidates bring a nuanced understanding of racial equity, movement building, and racial justice, in addition to other leadership and management competencies. Identify specific factors that distinguish your firm from others.

D. Fee Structure and Billing: Fee structure and rates, including all fees and reimbursable expenses, incidental and other charges, and schedule for when these will be paid. Airline and hotel expenses of any potential candidates to be discussed with the Search Committee Chair.

E. Recent Relevant Experience. List of 3-5 recent placements, length of time these appointees have remained in their positions, with contact names and information for potential reference checks.

F. Placement Guarantee. No-cost replacement search if the selected candidate leaves the Foundation for any reason within a specified timeframe.

G. Contract and Conflict of Interest Policy. Copy of a sample engagement contract, and conflict of interest policy. If selected, the firm will also be asked to provide a certificate of insurance coverage before finalizing the contract.

How to Respond

To be considered, please submit a proposal (a pdf document, no more than 8 pages) indicating your interest and responding to the requirements above to Melody Fitzgerald – mfitzgerald@meyerfdn.org. (The sample copy of the engagement contract and conflict of interest policy do not count toward the 8-page limit).

The deadline for proposals is Friday, April 16 at 5:00 pm EST. Please direct any questions to Melody Fitzgerald at mfitzgerald@meyerfdn.org.
Timetable for Response to the RFP and Firm Selection

• Deadline for responses to the RFP: April 16
• Interview with selected firms: April 26 – May 12
• Final firm selection: Estimated May 15