



**BEE INFORMED PARTNERSHIP, INC.**

4112 Plant Sciences Building, College Park, MD 20742

[beeinformed.org](http://beeinformed.org)

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:  
NONPROFIT STRATEGIC PLANNING**

**Submission Deadline: Wednesday, October 20, 2021, 11:59 PM PDT**  
Submit PDF to [planning@beeinformed.org](mailto:planning@beeinformed.org), **Subject: Proposal [Consultant Name]**

**PURPOSE**

Bee Informed Partnership (BIP), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on honey bee health, is initiating a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to identify a qualified consultant to guide and execute its first strategic planning process with our Board of Directors, staff, and external partners to produce a five-year strategic plan.

BIP seeks a consultant who demonstrates strong understanding in nonprofit structure and operations, excellent facilitation skills and proven experience with nonprofit strategic planning. In addition, consultants should be knowledgeable about agriculture and food systems at the national level and understand government and private grant programs. Experience with fee-for-service memberships, educational outreach programs, and backyard and commercial beekeeping is highly preferred.

**ABOUT BEE INFORMED PARTNERSHIP**

BIP's current mission is to use science-based, data-driven approaches to improve the health and long-term sustainability of managed honey bees (*Apis mellifera*). BIP is dedicated to working with beekeepers to improve colony health and increase colony survivorship. We provide relevant, timely data that helps beekeepers make informed management decisions. Beekeepers of all sides of the industry, from large scale to small scale benefit from our work. Please visit [beeinformed.org](http://beeinformed.org) for details about our services and programs.

BIP was incorporated in 2014 and as an evolving organization that is growing in reach, a strategic planning process is necessary to assess BIP's history and plan for the future. While the nonprofit maintains a physical address to receive correspondence in Maryland, BIP's staff and Board of Directors are located across North America. Except when personnel is performing field and lab work that requires on-site activities, most staff work remotely from their homes or lab offices. Due to budgetary constraints and travel limitations due to the pandemic, the strategic planning process will take place over videoconferencing and likely no in-person retreats or meetings will be feasible.

In Summer 2021, BIP formed a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) comprised of Board and staff members to oversee the RFP process and to ensure that the consultant is staying on schedule and within budget during the strategic planning process. The consultant will report progress to the

SPC based on an agreed upon schedule and at the SPC's request.

### **SCOPE OF WORK & DELIVERABLES**

The project is expected to include the design and execution of a strategic planning process that meets the criteria outlined in this RFP, including project management, facilitation, budget for implementation, and support structure for plan implementation. The five-year strategic plan is targeted for 2022-2026.

BIP envisions the scope of work to be completed in three stages. Work completed in each of the stages must be summarized in periodic reports to BIP's Strategic Planning Committee. We expect that the work will be completed by July 1, 2022.

#### **Stage 1: Preparation & Assessment**

This stage requires the consultant to research and report the following in preparation for the strategic planning process. Items to be considered include:

- Review organization's history and overall organizational assessment through SWOT analysis, followed by a gap analysis to evaluate opportunities and/or challenges
- Collect information about past and current mission and vision to inform discussions on future mission and vision
- Conduct interviews, surveys and focus group polling to receive staff, Board, partner, stakeholder and community input (should include but not be limited to current, past and potential fee-for-service members and funders). Please note that BIP's staff and Board of Directors are located across North America and rely heavily on videoconferencing; likely no in-person retreats or meetings will be feasible during the strategic planning process.
- Assess the current and future direction of the agriculture-based nonprofit field, specifically private foundation investment trends, emerging research, government programs and policy efforts

#### **Stage 2: Strategic Plan Creation**

At this stage, the consultant helps the nonprofit identify strategic goals and creates an actionable strategic plan. The plan will include:

- An executive summary
- A comprehensive plan that identifies:
  - Shared Mission and Vision
  - Proposed goals, priorities, innovative strategies, and synergistic approaches.
  - Opportunities for engaging the Board, staff and external partners
  - Objectives and tactics
  - List of responsible parties and roles; human capital needs
  - Metrics and measurable outcomes
  - Resource development strategies and communication strategies

#### **Stage 3: Implementation & Evaluation**

This stage requires the consultant to provide oversight of the implementation and evaluation process. This process should include:

- Follow-up sessions with nonprofit leadership to gauge the progress of the implementation at 3- and 6-month points after plan delivery
- Continued identification of early action items

- Review of metrics to determine effectiveness of implementation

### **SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Please read the instructions carefully and comply with all formatting and content request to ensure full consideration of your proposal.

### **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

- All submissions must be electronic, standard-size 8x11 letter pages compiled into one PDF document or portfolio. Faxed or mailed copies will NOT be accepted. Electronic submissions must not exceed 30 megabytes; a url link to the file may be provided in lieu of an attachment.
- **Use subject line: Proposal [Consultant Name]**. Submissions without this subject line format may not be picked up by our filters.
- General Information, Narrative, Qualifications & References and Project Plan & Budget sections (see below for sections descriptions) must not exceed 8 pages total ( $\leq 4,000$  words total).
- Attachments & Supporting Documents must be type-written. Include additional attachments as needed.

### **CLOSING SUBMISSION DATE & INQUIRIES**

- **Proposals are due by Wednesday, October 20, 2021, 11:59 PM PDT.**
- **All submissions must be sent to [planning@beeinformed.org](mailto:planning@beeinformed.org) using subject line: Proposal [Consultant Name]**
- Please read the RFP carefully. Inquiries concerning this RFP should be directed to [planning@beeinformed.org](mailto:planning@beeinformed.org). Inquiries already covered within the RFP may not be answered due to time limitations.
- All proposals received by the deadline will undergo a preliminary screening. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted for review and rating. Any proposal may be disqualified if it deviates from the Proposal Format (see below).
- An email acknowledgement of received submission will be sent to the applicant.
- Submissions will be kept on file.

### **PROPOSAL FORMAT**

*Proposals must follow this format, in this order:*

- **General Information**
  - **Contact information:** Name of consultant/firm, address, phone number, email address and website.
  - **RFP source:** How did you learn about this opportunity?
- **Narrative, Qualifications & References**
  - **Opening:** Your approach to strategic planning.
  - **Qualifications:** Relevant work activities, expertise, knowledge and strategic planning experience. Experience should include specific examples of similar related nonprofit work. Please note any prior experience assisting nonprofits with their strategic priorities in the area of work related to BIP. Some key qualifications that will be considered:
    - Experience in successfully developing strategic plans
    - Knowledge of collective impact or collaborative strategic initiatives
    - Strong facilitation skills

- Experience in creating a neutral environment for obtaining input
  - Experience in gathering and utilizing data to drive the strategic process
  - Ability to constructively challenge key stakeholders
  - Experience in inspiring others to think innovatively
  - Project management and change management experience
  - Experience with community engagement and participant-centered practices
  - Education (degree(s) and/or certificate(s))
  - Familiarity with the core programs at BIP (preferred but not required)
  - **Your Team:** Information about all team members who will be involved with the project, including names, email addresses, title, tenure, experience and education.
  - **References:** Three client references with each individual's name, address, phone number, email address, website and relationship to the bidder.
- **Project Plan & Budget**
    - **Work Plan:** Detailed work plan, to include:
      - Major stages and milestones
      - Specific activities to be conducted at each stage
      - Timeline for the activities to be conducted at each stage
      - List of milestones and deliverables tied to the activities to be conducted at each stage
    - **Budget:** Detailed project budget (including estimated hours, and proposed payment schedule as it relates to project milestones and deliverables).
    - **Reporting Plan:** Proposed plan to inform BIP's Strategic Planning Committee about progress and budget throughout process.
- **Attachments & Supporting Documents**
    - **Work samples:** At least one sample of a previously completed strategic plan. Portions may be redacted to protect private information as needed.
    - **Supporting documents:** Attachments or url links may also be included.

## **EVALUATION, NOTIFICATION & TIMELINE**

### **Scoring Criteria**

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated based on qualifications (40%), work plan (40%), budget (15%), and attention to detail, thoroughness and adherence to RFP instructions (5%).

### **Notification of Selection**

BIP's Strategic Planning Committee will rate the submitted proposals. The evaluation process will include individual committee member evaluation and rating of each proposal, followed by committee discussion and ranking of proposals. After preliminary rating and ranking of proposals, interviews may be scheduled with finalists, particularly if two or more proposals are closely rated and/or more information is needed. References will be contacted for all finalists.

The final recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee will be submitted for approval by the BIP President and is not subject to appeal. All applicants will receive electronic notification of BIP's decision regarding their proposal.

Additional information may be required from the selected applicant prior to the awarding of the project. BIP reserves the right not to select an applicant for project implementation if, in its

determination, no qualified applicant has applied or is sufficiently responsive to the service need.

In the event that no proposal is selected, BIP may elect to either not develop the service pending further analysis of alternatives to meet the expressed need, or issue a new RFP to attempt to expand the pool of potential respondents.

**Timeline**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
Friday, September 3, 2021	Release RFP
Wednesday, October 20, 2021, by 11:59 PM PDT	Deadline for receipt of proposals
Thursday, October 21 to Wednesday November 3, 2021	BIP Strategic Planning Committee to evaluate proposals and select finalists
Monday, November 8 to Friday, November 12, 2021	Interviews with highest-ranking applicants, if applicable
Monday November 15 to Monday, November 22, 2021	Notify the selected applicant; contract signed

**TERMS & CONDITIONS**

- **Ownership and Confidentiality.** All intellectual property will become the property of BIP. All data remains the sole property of BIP. The consultant shall agree to keep information related to this process in strict confidence, including, but not limited to, the terms of the contract and any confidential business information or proprietary information that has been gathered on this project. If the bidder deems any material submitted to be proprietary or confidential, the bidder must indicate this in the relevant sections of the response.
- **Cost of Proposal.** All costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP are the responsibility of the bidder and will not be reimbursed by BIP.
- **Reservation of Rights.** BIP reserves the right to request or negotiate changes in a proposal, to accept all or part of a proposal, or to reject any or all proposals. BIP may, at its sole and absolute discretion, select no provider for these services if, in its determination, no applicant is sufficiently responsive to the need. BIP reserves the right to withdraw this RFP and/or any item within the RFP at any time without prior notice. BIP reserves the right to disqualify any proposal, which does not adhere to the RFP guidelines. This RFP is being offered at the discretion of BIP. It does not commit BIP to award any contract.
- **Conflict of Interest.** Applicants agree that they or their employees do not currently have, nor will they have, any conflict of interest between themselves and Bee Informed Partnership. Any perceived or potential conflict of interest must be disclosed in the proposal. BIP employees, Board members and their family members are ineligible to be a BIP vendor, and therefore may not submit a proposal.