

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Consultant to Develop an Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression (ARAO) Strategy Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN)

Issue Date: December 12, 2025

Closing Date: January 9, 2026

1. Introduction

The Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN) is seeking proposals from qualified consultants or consulting firms with demonstrated expertise in diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and Indigenous reconciliation to support the development of a comprehensive **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy**. This Strategy will build a strong, sustainable foundation for DEI across the organization and sector, and will integrate the OHTN's **Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism** and its **Truth and Reconciliation Action Plan**.

2. Background

The OHTN is a nonprofit organization that advances HIV research, knowledge translation, surveillance, capacity-building, and community and clinical programming across Ontario. Our mandate prioritizes health equity, the reduction of HIV-related disparities, and meaningful engagement of diverse communities disproportionately affected by HIV.

To uphold these commitments, the OHTN is developing an integrated DEI Strategy that advances anti-racism, decolonization, accessibility, and inclusion across our organization and programs.

This RFP seeks a consultant to guide the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of this Strategy.

3. Project Objectives

The consultant will work with the DEIA Council, OHTN leadership, staff, community partners, and people with lived/living experience of HIV to:

- I. Develop a comprehensive **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy** that incorporates and strengthens:
 - a. Organizational commitments to anti-racism, anti-oppression, equity, accessibility, and inclusive practice
 - b. OHTN's Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism

- c. OHTN's Truth and Reconciliation Action Plan
 - d. OHTN's Greater and Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV
2. Establish a strong and sustainable framework for DEI that enhances OHTN's internal culture, operational processes, and sector-facing programs.
 3. Support mechanisms for ongoing implementation, monitoring, reporting, and accountability.

4. Scope of Work & Key Deliverables

The consultant will be responsible for the following core functions:

4.1 Development of a DEI Strategy

- Conduct an organizational assessment (policies, culture, governance, programs, hiring and retention practices, community and interest holders, engagement, etc.).
- Facilitate consultations with staff, Board, community partners, and priority populations.
- Identify barriers, opportunities, and priorities for systemic change.
- Produce a **comprehensive DEI Strategy**, including goals, guiding principles, and priority actions.
- Integrate and align existing organizational action plans and policies (Anti-Black Racism, Truth & Reconciliation, and GIPA/MEPA).

4.2 Monitoring and Implementation Framework

- Develop a detailed **Implementation Plan**, including timelines, roles, resource requirements, and change-management considerations.
- Advise on sustainable governance structures for oversight (council, committees, advisory groups, etc.).

4.3 Accountability Metrics and Reporting Mechanisms

- Create **clear accountability indicators** for each DEI/ARAO objective.
- Develop reporting tools, dashboards, and templates for internal and external reporting.
- Provide guidance on sector-appropriate, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive metrics.

4.4 Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

- Develop an evaluation framework to assess the Strategy's effectiveness.
- Provide methods for regular review and adaptation to respond to emerging needs.

4.5 Consultation and Engagement Processes

- Develop and support **transparent, inclusive, and ongoing** consultation processes.
- Ensure meaningful engagement of Black communities, Indigenous partners, 2SLGBTQ+ people, people with lived/living experience of HIV, newcomers, and other equity-deserving groups.

4.6 Capacity Building and Learning Environment

- Provide guidance on establishing a **thriving learning environment** for DEI across the OHTN.
- Recommend training curricula, professional development pathways, and organizational learning mechanisms.

Key Deliverables

- Organizational needs assessment & summary report
- OHTN DEI Strategy (final)
- Implementation and Accountability Framework (final)
- Metrics & Monitoring Dashboard
- Evaluation Framework (final)
- Consultation & Engagement Plan (final)
- Staff/Board training recommendations (final)

5. Consultant Qualifications

The successful consultant or consulting team should possess:

- Experience developing multi-year DEI strategies and evaluation frameworks.
- Demonstrated expertise in diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and decolonization.
- Experience working with organizations in the health, research, community, HIV, or social services sectors.
- Familiarity with Ontario-specific equity contexts (e.g., Anti-Black racism, Indigenous reconciliation, OCAP, EGAP).
- Strong facilitation skills, including trauma-informed and culturally safe engagement.
- Ability to work with diverse teams and equity-deserving communities.

6. Timeline

The anticipated project timeline is **6 months**, beginning on February 1, 2026 and concluding on July 31, 2026.

A proposed timeline with milestones must be included in the submission.

7. Budget

The budget range for this work is \$25,000-40,000, inclusive of all consultant fees, subcontractors, travel, materials, and administrative costs.

All proposals must include a detailed budget breakdown with assumptions.

8. Proposal Requirements

Interested consultants must submit a proposal that includes:

1. Cover Letter
2. Profile of the Consultant/Team
3. Relevant Experience with examples of previous DEI strategy work
4. Proposed Approach & Methodology
5. Detailed Work Plan & Timeline
6. Budget Breakdown
7. Names and Roles of Project Personnel
8. Three References
9. Sample Deliverables (optional but encouraged)

9. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

| Category | Weight |
|---|--------|
| Demonstrated understanding of DEI, anti-racism, reconciliation, and GIPA/MEPA | 25% |
| Relevant experience & past performance | 25% |
| Methodology & approach | 25% |
| Budget & value for money | 15% |
| Alignment with OHTN values and sector knowledge | 10% |

10. Submission Instructions

All proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format to:

Subject Line: *RFP - OHTN DEI Strategy Consultant*

Lydia Makoroka, Senior Director, Programs

Ontario HIV Treatment Network

Email: lmakoroka@ohntn.on.ca

Deadline: January 9, 2026, at 5:00 pm ET

Late submissions will not be accepted.

11. Questions

Questions regarding this RFP may be submitted in writing to dmiller@ohtn.on.ca by **December 19, 2026, at 5:00 pm ET**. Responses will be shared with all applicants.

12. Terms and Conditions

- OHTN reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal.
- All materials created as part of this project by the successful candidate will become the property of OHTN.
- Consultants must adhere to confidentiality and privacy requirements.
- The lowest-cost proposal will not necessarily be selected.