

Request for Proposals for Strategic Planning Support

Sustain Ontario is looking for an individual or a team to undertake a Strategic Planning and Development Process that will help Sustain position itself both strategically and sustainably, so we are able to take best advantage of current and future opportunities to fulfill our mandate moving forward.

The individual or team will work closely with our staff and leadership as well as engage a range of stakeholders and partners to review, assess and reposition, where necessary, our governance, operations, strategic directions, membership and brand strategies.

We are looking for an experienced individual or team to bring an insightful, grounded and action-oriented approach to help Sustain become more effective and financially viable, as well as clear and focused so that our energies and limited resources are able to generate the most impactful change. Experience in the food and agriculture sector is an asset, but is not required.

Timeframe: November 2014 to January 2015.

Individual or project teams welcome to apply. We recommend that you contact us first to discuss the project.

About Sustain Ontario

Sustain Ontario is a province-wide, cross-sectoral alliance that promotes healthy food and farming. Our mission is to provide coordinated support for the development of food systems throughout the province that are healthy, equitable, ecological and financially viable through collaborative action. We envision food systems throughout Ontario that are healthy, ecological, equitable and financially viable. Sustain Ontario is a project of Tides Canada Initiatives.

About this Moment in Sustain Ontario's Development

This is a key moment in Sustain Ontario's development. We have done the groundwork necessary to move into a more strategic phase of operations. We have a tremendous opportunity to successfully fulfill our mandate. We have a critical mass of engaged members and have positive working relationships with the provincial government and opposition.

Groundwork for Strategic Planning

We have already created the following:

- * Developmental Evaluation Process and Report
- * Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy
- * Draft decision-making guidelines and processes
- * Draft Working Group Approvals process

We have been diversifying our funding through events and a paid membership system, and are now ready to take the next steps to ensure our financial sustainability in the long-term.

It is time for us to get clear on how to focus our energies and limited resources in order to generate the most impactful change.

We are seeking knowledgeable and skilful support to undertake the following work.

We want to review our governance to ensure that:

- we have the right people engaged in making various kinds of decisions
- we have processes guiding our work that generate effective results
- we are the right kind of organization, administered in the best way

We want to review our strategic directions to:

- ensure that we have clear and effective priorities guiding our work
- provide clarity about where we should focus our efforts

We want to investigate membership to:

- identify opportunities to advance our vision through serving our members
- identify possible new members
- explore how to better serve them
- investigate ways to build our revenue base through members

We want to review our operations to:

- ensure that we have the right skills and traits to advance our strategy
- find ways of advancing our mission that will ensure our long-term financial wellbeing

We want to develop a brand strategy to:

- clarify what our brand is
- develop clear, simple and compelling ways of describing who we are, what we do, and why it is valuable

The Work We Are Seeking

We are seeking proposals to provide support in developing the following:

1. An external environment scan to gather input from our members, relevant funders, government agencies, and partner groups regarding emerging political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental issues
2. A strategic plan that integrates the environmental scan, results of our developmental evaluation report, and perspectives of relevant stakeholders to determine direction and priorities
3. A governance review to ensure that we have the right organizational structures and processes, and the right people engaged in making various kinds of decision

4. A membership strategy that investigates how we can attract new members and best serve and monetize our value to new and existing members
5. A financial sustainability strategy that details steps to become more financially resilient and better resourced
6. A human resources strategy that lays out the skills and attributes that we need to have on staff to accomplish our goals
7. A branding strategy that clearly defines our brand and provides clear and simple ways of communicating it.

Proposals Welcome

We welcome proposals to undertake and produce any and all of the above activities and products.

Proponents are invited to offer to do some or all of the work that they propose pro-bono or at a discounted rate.

We welcome proposals from individual consultants, consultancies that employ multiple people, and multiple groups or individuals that want to collaborate.

In your proposal please include the following:

- A description of the principles and approaches that you would bring to each element of the work you propose to undertake
- Which elements of the work you are proposing to do and which will be done by others
- If you are proposing to undertake only a portion of the work, please provide examples of other contexts in which you have collaborated with other consultants on a joint project
- Examples of other projects in which you have done similar work
- How you would engage and work with Sustain Ontario's staff and leadership
- How you will ensure that the recommendations and plans that you create will be more than just words on paper
- Biographies of relevant background and work for each team member
- A proposed timeline for the work¹
- An itemized budget for the work, with each project element as a separate line
 - Include an hourly rate
 - Estimate the number of hours needed to complete the deliverables
 - Estimate additional expenses (mileage, supplies, etc.)
 - List any discounts or pro-bono work proposed
 - Include the total price to complete the project
- Any unique qualifications or abilities that you bring

¹ Our ideal timeline is to undertake this work between November 2014 and January 2015

- At least 3 references from relevant past projects
- A checklist of which of the following qualifications the project team possesses:
 - Research Abilities
 - Community Engagement Experience
 - Facilitation Experience
 - Strategic Planning Experience
 - Knowledge of the Food and Farm Sector
 - Expertise in Charitable Regulations
 - Governance Knowledge
 - Membership Development and Retention Expertise
 - Network and Alliance Expertise
 - Fundraising Strategy Expertise
 - Human Resources Expertise

Please also send

- an example of a relevant product that you have created for another client or purpose
- C.V.s for each of the project team members

How to Submit Your Proposal

Proposals are due by October 15, 2014

Please email proposals to development@sustainontario.ca with Strategic Plan Proposal in the title.

Any inquiries can be directed to Ravenna@sustainontario.ca or 416 890 0937