

MassArt RFP 21-03
Attachment # 1
Specifications and Description of Services
Office of Justice, Equity and Transformation Consultant Services

Relevant Background

Founded in 1873, MassArt is the only freestanding public college of art and design in the United States. The College excels in the education of professional artists, designers, and art educators and is an integral contributor to the cultural and intellectual life and creative economy of the Greater Boston region, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and beyond. Located in Boston's hub of arts and culture along the Avenue of the Arts, MassArt enrolls nearly 2,000 students and offers a comprehensive range of undergraduate and graduate degrees in 22 disciplines, as well as youth and continuing education programs.

MassArt has been awarded funding from the Lumina Foundation's Equity Institution grant to dismantle systemic barriers to student success and degree attainment, particularly for Black and Latinx students. MassArt is one of six public community colleges and universities to receive funding as a sub-grant through the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, which received \$1.2 million in funding from Lumina. MassArt is working in partnership with the Commonwealth and community partners in support of the equity vision adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE) in December 2018.

"Massachusetts has been a leader in offering access to higher education since MassArt was founded in 1873 as the country's first freestanding public college of art and design," said Dr. Kymberly Pinder, Acting President of MassArt. "We are grateful to the Department of Higher Education for its commitment to equity, particularly during this critical time, and we are honored to receive funding from the Lumina Foundation. We look forward to working with our state colleagues to remove the obstacles our students currently face, to enable them to reach their full potential and claim the bright futures they deserve."

In 2018 MassArt launched its current five year strategic plan, which identifies the College's responsibility to become a "student ready campus" as a way of closing the completion gap and recruiting more students from underserved populations. MassArt's graduation rate at 73% is higher than the national average, yet racial and gender disparities remain with a 26% discrepancy between white women and Latinx men and a 20% discrepancy between Black students and all other students.

The Lumina Foundation grant funds will support **Faculty and Staff Professional Development**. In 2020, the Office of Justice, Equity and Transformation (JET) office delivered a series of *Thriving Classrooms* workshops to 60 MassArt faculty and staff members. The goal is for all faculty and staff to participate in these workshops, which address issues of supporting first generation students, inclusive facilitation and pedagogy, undoing racism, trauma informed classrooms and active bystander training.

Project Goals

MassArt's mission takes on an even greater weight during this unprecedented time of the Covid-19 pandemic. This crisis exacerbates and lays bare areas of inequities in the educational, economic and societal systems especially for learners of color. We are tasked with fully aligning our mission with our practice.

MassArt's current strategic plan (2018-2023) has refocused our efforts to cultivate systemic equity on and through our campus by aiming to be a "student ready campus". We are reshaping our practices to increase our capacity for faculty/staff to create more equitable classrooms and be prepared to serve every student who enrolls at MassArt.

We aim to expand Thriving Classrooms workshops to support comprehensive engagement of design and fine arts departments to fully engage exploring inclusive pedagogy and curriculum through a community based lens. MassArt is currently seeking proposals from organizations to provide consultation to the college as it builds capacity to cultivate systemic equity throughout our academic areas. The selected consultant should have experience but not limited to educational equity and community based engagement. We are seeking proposals that will help us identify best practices specifically focused on design and fine arts departments. We have an interest in a consultant with experience in equity work with education and/or arts institutions.

At the end of this process, we must have models we can pilot that engage full participation and representation of faculty, staff and student in the design and fine art communities towards equitable educational environments framed by the [Massachusetts Department of Higher Education Equity Agenda](#)..

The consultant must build on ideas in our strategic plan to be a “student ready campus” by supporting faculty development work. These educational development efforts will work in tandem with mentoring initiatives for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American) students.

Project Scope

The scope of this project includes working with one design and one fine arts department representing xx full time faculty, xx number of students and related staff to gather information from their communities to understand curriculum, pedagogy, department culture, and student experience. The lens of educational equity will be a primary focus from which these elements are considered to surface strengths and areas of growth. The selected consultant will receive guidance from the Dean of the Office of Justice, Equity and Transformation.

The following criteria must be met to achieve a successful project:

- Process developed to engage full participation of department communities: students, faculty and staff
- Development of assessment instruments not limited to rubric and sample surveys to chart longitudinal process
- Identification of skills and tools specific to design and fine art departments
- Experienced facilitators to guide an iterative approach in the process
- Pilot developed to facilitate questions, understanding and implementation of equitable and inclusive environments within design and fine art departments

Meetings

The consultant/firm will:

- Be available for virtual meetings with the department teams for the spring 2021 semester (January to June): 10 hours per month
- Meet with individual team leaders on a regular basis to assess the development of tools and skills (January-June): 8 hours per month
- Facilitate community meetings : 3 meetings total for 1 hour each during Spring 2021 Semester
- Meet with the Dean of JET to update on projects status including community meetings: 8 meetings total for 1 hour each during Spring 2021 Semester

Proposal & Project Timeline

Bid Issued	November 30, 2020
Deadline to submit written questions	December 6 at 11:59 PM EST
Contract addendum issued answering questions	December 9, 2020
Bid Deadline	December 15 at 11:59 PM EST
Virtual Finalist Interviews	January 5-7, 2021
Anticipated Bid Award	January 11, 2021
Anticipated Start Date	January 14, 2021

The college anticipates commencing this project January 14, 2021. The project is scheduled to end on June 30, 2021.

Either party may terminate this agreement with or without cause by giving to the other party not less than thirty (30) days advance written notice of both its election to do so and the effective date of termination. If this agreement is terminated, the college shall have no further obligations other than payment for services already rendered and for expenses previously incurred.

Proposal Deadline

Bid proposals are due by December 15, 2020 at 11:59 PM EST . Bids must be submitted electronically by emailing proposals to purchasing@massart.edu. Your electronic file should not exceed 10 megabytes. Subject line in your email should reference RFP 21-03, Office of Justice, Equity and Transformation Consultant Services. No paper or fax copies will be accepted.

The cost of producing proposals shall be borne by the candidates.

Any questions regarding the bid must be submitted in writing to purchasing@massart.edu by December 6, 2020 11:59 PM EST. An RFP addendum will be issued by end of day, December 9, 2020 containing written responses to questions received. The College will not be able to address additional questions received after December 4, 2020.

After a review of proposals, selected finalists will be asked to present in a virtual interview with college representatives. The team lead/account manager that will be providing services required in the RFP must attend the interview. The interviews will take place January 5-7, 2021 and will last for approximately one hour.

Cost Proposals

All RFP responses must include cost proposals to complete the tasks described in the project scope. Costs proposals must categorize/provide sub-totals for the bottom line amount as follows:

- Project Initiation and Planning
- Meeting Times
- Forum Facilitations
- Materials: manual of report tools
- If applicable, a description of other services the consultant needs to provide in order to meet goals of the project with associated cost(s).

Vendor Response and Evaluation Criteria

MassArt will evaluate proposals based on the following criteria. To ensure consideration for the RFP, your proposal must address the following criteria:

- An explanation of how the consultant/firm is best served to meet the objectives of the college as outlined in this RFP
- Organizational experience as it pertains to the project; preferred experience in art and design education and/or higher education
- List of staff, and their background, in your organization. Credentials of the specific team that will be working on the account. Note: the awarded bidder must consult with MassArt regarding any replacements to the original account team outlined in the RFP document and the virtual interviews. Any team member replacement(s) must be mutually agreed upon.
- A full client list including quality of work shown for at least three clients for whom your organization has completed similar work within the past five years, with a description of the completed project and primary contact information for these clients.
- Anticipated resources you will assign to this project.
- **Cost Proposal** (See above breakout of bottom line Cost Proposal). While the College is not defining a set budget amount in this RFP, bidders should be cognizant of the fact that MassArt is a public institution of art and design. Therefore, the College must have a high quality AND cost effective public relations initiative. The successful bidder will have to demonstrate the ability to achieve both objectives. MassArt will use the entirety of responses in the section of the RFP titled "Vendor Response and Evaluation Criteria" as the evaluation criteria. Cost is one factor, but the selection will also take into consideration the consultant's ability to deliver on the other criteria.