

NATIONAL CULTURAL DISTRICTS EXCHANGE



Choosing a Cultural District Consultant

Do you have a great idea for a cultural district in your city or town, but need help developing a plan? Maybe you have a plan for a cultural district, but need help securing funding or creating a marketing plan. Here is a simple guide to selecting consultants you might need

1) Create a budget for a consultant.

Determine how much money you have to pay for the consultant, their travel, (if necessary), etc.

2) Identify the project you need the consultant to conduct.

Define the nature of the work carefully with a clear idea of what type of consultant you need. Be very specific in developing exactly what your needs are, the timeframe, and the specific deliverables.

3) Draft a scope of work.

Create a one page document that you will use to solicit proposals. If you need to use a request for proposals (RFP), create a template that you can use for all you RFPs. Sample RFP templates are widely available online or your city usually can share a copy of what they use.

4) Create a list of consultants.

Determine if you would like to solicit only local consultants or if you would like to distribute your request to a state or national pool. If you would like to distribute to a wider group, contact your local or state arts agency for a list of consultants.

5) Distribute your proposal.

Remember to review the general qualifications of those who submit proposals. References should be required.

6) Evaluate the written responses.

Review the responses to your request and develop a list of your top five to interview.

7) Interview up to five possible consultants that appear best qualified.

Create a standard list of questions to ask each candidate and also try to assess whether the consultant will be able to complete the project within the proposed deadline. This interview may be done either in person or via teleconference.

8) Narrow down

Narrow down your selection to your candidate and an alternate.

8) Check references

Always check at least two references.

9) Contact your choice of consultant and agree on responsibilities and fees.

If they say "yes," then negotiations begin!!