

The Xerces Society, Inc.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Organizational Training and Hiring Responses due Wednesday, June 22, 2022

About Xerces

The Xerces Society is a nonprofit organization that protects wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat. Established in 1971, the Society is at the forefront of invertebrate protection worldwide, harnessing the knowledge of scientists and the enthusiasm of citizens to implement conservation programs.

Butterflies, dragonflies, beetles, worms, starfish, mussels, and crabs are but a few of the millions of invertebrates at the heart of a healthy environment. Invertebrates build the stunning coral reefs of our oceans; they are essential to the reproduction of most flowering plants, including many fruits, vegetables, and nuts; and they are food for birds, fish, and other animals. Yet invertebrate populations are often imperiled by human activities and rarely accounted for in mainstream conservation.

Over the past three decades, we have protected endangered species and their habitats, produced ground-breaking publications on insect conservation, trained thousands of farmers and land managers to protect and manage habitat, and raised awareness about the invertebrates of forests, prairies, deserts, and oceans.

The Xerces Society is committed to establishing and maintaining a diverse and inclusive community that collectively supports our mission: to protect the natural world by conserving invertebrates and their habitat. We recognize that climate change, biodiversity loss, contamination of water, soil, and air with pesticides and other toxics and many other environmental challenges have disproportionate negative impacts on communities of color and economically disadvantaged communities.

Xerces Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

Invertebrate diversity is vital to sustain life on this planet. Having invertebrates to pollinate nutritious food, process plant and animal waste, help clean our rivers and feed the myriad animals on the planet will help us all. The benefits of conserving invertebrates truly help everyone—no matter their gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, education, or disability. The inverse is also true—to maximize invertebrate conservation, all of society needs to have a role. The conservation of invertebrates will take an all-hands-on-deck approach and it is vital that diverse communities benefit from this conservation and engage to help protect these vital animals.

The Xerces Society embraces diversity in staffing and in our program services. At the Xerces Society a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace is one where all employees and volunteers, regardless of their gender identity, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, education or disability, feel valued and respected. We are committed to a nondiscriminatory approach and provide equal opportunity for employment and advancement. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages, and work to ensure that all

voices are valued and heard. The Xerces Society will strive to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in our conservation and education programs.

As part of building a diverse and inclusive community in both our organization and conservation and education programs, the Xerces Society strives to:

- Ensure that all staff members feel that they are critical members of the Xerces Society community.
- Support diversity, inclusion, and equity as connected to our mission and to ensure the well-being of our staff and the communities we serve.
- Acknowledge and dismantle any inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services.
- Step back to listen to all voices.
- Engage and include as broad a constituency as possible.
- Always collaborate with fairness and respect.
- Identify potential underlying, unquestioned biases that interfere with inclusiveness.
- Assess how past and present systemic inequities might affect Xerces' work, and how best to address these inequities in a way that is consistent with our mission.
- Hold ourselves accountable for the ways that our actions both actively and passively reinforce inequities.

The Xerces Society is moving forward with the following action plans to help promote diversity and inclusion in our workplace and in our program services:

- Attracting, hiring, and retaining a diverse and multi-culturally sensitive staff and board.
- Improving employee satisfaction and engagement by building a work culture of trust, support, cultural sensitivity, respect, and inclusion.
- Applying an equity lens in planning and implementation of conservation initiatives.
- Connecting with and building a diverse base of supporters and funders who will help us to achieve our mission.
- Furthering the mission of Xerces by reaching, educating, and engaging a broad range of communities where the outcome is mutually beneficial for the conservation of invertebrates and the relationships built within those communities.

Consultant Summary

To date, we have a DEI committee that formed in 2017 and have been meeting regularly since. We formed a DEI public statement, created a work plan for each program with DEI goals, and have had a two-day organization wide DEI training.

Moving forward, we would like to develop a long term relationship with a consultant that can provide ongoing services when needed. As a nation-wide organization, we face many DEI challenges. With over 60 staff and positions inward and outward facing, the opportunities to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive are endless.

Initially, we would like to prioritize training for staff and guidance for hiring and retention of BIPOC staff. Our staff is predominantly white as are our supervisors. Last year, our staff went through a two day virtual DEI training that included DEI basics, defining terms, and briefly brainstormed ideas of how to incorporate DEI into our jobs.

Organizational Needs

These are our priorities for 2022:

- Ongoing staff training
 - We have added 20-25 new staff members since the initial organization-wide training in 2021. We need to provide them with the introduction to basic concepts and principles of DEI so that all employees have a similar knowledge base and an understanding of why this initiative is critical to the organization.
- Guidance for hiring and retention of BIPOC staff
 - As we grow and expand our workforce, we want to ensure that we are addressing and mitigating our implicit bias and implementing effective outreach strategies.

Deliverables

Staff Training

- A large group training in the fall of 2022 which addresses key concepts including:
 - Historical context and dynamics of power and privilege
 - Implicit bias
 - Cultural proficiency
 - Strategies for equitable and inclusive organizational management

Guidance for hiring and retention of BIPOC staff

- Recommendations on changes to language in job postings
- Recommendations on specific websites, listing services, or other posting platforms
- Recommendations on other ways to promote the positions to diverse applicants
- Other recommendations for overall process improvement
- Recommendations for supporting and retaining BIPOC staff

Deliverables should be accomplished by the end of 2022.

Vendor Required and Preferred Experience

Required:

- Experience working with non-profits whose mission isn't direct services to clients
- Experience with effectively training remotely
- Ability to provide a BIPOC perspective

Preferred:

- Experience with non-profit conservation or environmental organizations
- Experience working with nationwide organizations
- Experience working with organizations with employees in both urban and rural settings
- Experience working with employees at various stages of their careers

Proposal Guidelines

The proposal should address the following:

Qualifications

- Briefly describe your organization in terms of:
 - its history, staffing and location
 - the background and experience of its senior management and key personnel
 - your previous work as it relates to the criteria in the Vendor Required and Preferred Experience section
 - your interest in being a DEI consultant for Xerces
- Provide current contact information for three former or current clients
- Include an affirmative statement that neither the proposing company nor its employees is/are presently debarred, suspended, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in transactions with any department or agency of the Federal government or any of the State governments

Costs

Please provide a detailed cost proposal which includes and identifies all time and materials required for the deliverables described in your proposal. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, please provide a list of excluded fees with an explanation of the nature of those fees.

Workplan

Please provide a workplan outlining your approach and timetable for meeting the Deliverables identified, particularly the ways in which the workplan depends on the availability of, and collaboration with, Xerces' employees.

Provisions of this RFP and the successful proposal may be incorporated into the resulting contract.

Proposal Process

Questions will be accepted until Friday, May 27 and should be sent by e-mail to procurement@xerces.org. All questions will be held until after the May 27 deadline; answers to general questions will be sent to all interested parties no later than June 10. ONLY THOSE QUESTIONS SENT AS DIRECTED WILL BE ANSWERED; NO PHONE CALLS OR MESSAGES DIRECTLY TO XERCES STAFF WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Proposals must be submitted as an attachment to an e-mail to procurement@xerces.org and received on or before **Wednesday, June 22, 2022** at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time. Proposals received after this date may not be considered.

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria: (a) the extent to which the proposal meets the Proposal Guidelines and the needs identified in this RFP; (b) the extent to which the proposer's experience meets the criteria outlined in the Vendor Required and Preferred Experience section: and (c) pricing which is reasonable and competitive.

We expect to announce a decision by July 13, 2022.

XERCES RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS AND TO AWARD A CONTRACT OR CONTRACTS WHICH XERCES DEEMS, IN ITS SOLE DISCRETION, IS/ARE IN XERCES' BEST INTERESTS. COSTS OF DEVELOPING THE PROPOSAL ARE SOLELY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PROPOSER. ALL MATERIALS SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF XERCES AND WILL NOT BE RETURNED.