

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Implementation Consultant for

The Irving Harris Foundation's Diversity-Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children and Families (Tenets)

RFP Issued: October 5, 2023

Responses Due: October 31, 2023

Introduction:

We welcome submissions from experienced and qualified diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging and anti-racist consultants to provide their proposals for aiding the Irving Harris Foundation's Diversity-Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children and Families (Tenets) in formulating and advancing an implementation plan for the Tenets. This Request for Proposal (RFP) aims to identify a consultant who can collaborate with the Irving Harris Foundation (IHF) Tenets team and current Tenets advisory council to implement recommendations made in a recently completed strategic business plan. The consultant will work to transform the Tenets governance structure, establish essential infrastructure, facilitate collaborative decision-making, and support the transition of the Tenets Initiative out of IHF as an independent entity, all through a DEI and liberatory perspective.

The Tenets Initiative encompasses guiding principles designed to raise awareness of inequities and injustices and empower individuals, agencies, and care systems to recognize, address, and combat various systems of oppression such as institutional racism, white privilege, sexism, classism, xenophobia, and homophobia. Addressing these issues is vital to ensure more authentic and meaningful services and systems supporting families with young children and their communities, as a lack of intentional diversity and inclusion efforts can inadvertently perpetuate harmful patterns and historical injustices. The Tenets aim to proactively confront systemic oppression and work towards liberation.

The Tenets Initiative was created by a group of infant and early childhood mental health (IECMH) practitioners seeking to integrate an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, decolonizing, and liberatory frame and praxis into infant and early childhood mental health. These principles have been shared at conferences, educational programs, and in medical and social service contexts, prompting a demand for tools to adopt and implement the Tenets across the country. The Tenets are open sourced, and primarily disseminated through conferences, publications, workshops, and consultation to organizations and systems. As the Initiative grows, it is vital that it has a leadership, governance structure and infrastructure needed to enable the Tenets to become an independent entity.

Project Overview:

The main objective of this project is to engage a consultant whose practice is rooted in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging and anti-racist, anti-oppressive, liberatory perspectives to guide us in deconstructing and reimagining the Tenets' governance and infrastructure, while ensuring its operations, policies and practices are inclusive, equitable, and hold the integrity of anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and liberatory principles. The consultant will collaborate closely with the IHF Tenets team, Tenets advisory council, and facilitators to enable impactful and sustainable change and oversee the longer-term transition of the Tenets to an independently operated entity.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the Tenets, the consultant will need to support the IHF Tenets team and the current Tenets advisory council to explore:

- Deconstructing and reorganizing the governance structure;
- Establishing the internal infrastructure to drive growth and increase earned income; and
- Determining the optimal pathway for the Tenets Initiative to separate from the Foundation.

These efforts will significantly influence the future strategic trajectory of the Tenets Initiative and its application across diverse settings.

Scope of Work:

The selected consultant will undertake the following tasks:

- Review the last two consultants' recommendations and assess how to move forward in restructuring the existing governance structure, practices, business model, and policies through a diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging and anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and liberatory framework;
- Collaborate with the current advisory council and the IHF Tenets team to design and implement changes that enhance equitable decision-making and representation;
- Provide expert guidance in establishing the infrastructure required to foster an inclusive and anti-racist organization and support a pathway towards financial independence; and
- Assist in determining the most suitable program type for the Tenets Initiative (e.g., 501(c)(3), under a larger organization, fiscal sponsorship), ensuring alignment with Tenets and diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging and anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and liberatory principles.

The final deliverables will encompass a new governance structure with clear policies and practices; recommendations for how to achieve an appropriate growth trajectory for the Tenets (e.g. dissemination, implementation and sustainability of current offerings; development, implementation and sustainability of new projects); a decision on the transition of the Tenets Initiative into an independent entity; and identification of potential partners within philanthropy and DEI initiatives that can help accelerate the Tenets' growth and reach.

Timeline and Schedule:

The project is set to begin in **November 2023** and conclude no later than **May 2024**. The specific timeline for key milestones and deliverables will be mutually determined during the contracting phase.

Budget and Pricing:

Proposals should provide a comprehensive breakdown of costs associated with the outlined scope of work. The total budget allocated for this project is **\$90,000.00**. Payment terms and schedule will be negotiated with the selected consultant.

Evaluation Criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated by a small subset of the Advisory Council and IHF staff, based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated expertise and proven track record in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging and anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and liberatory practices;
- Relevant experience collaborating, supporting, and developing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging programs rooted in anti-racist, anti-oppressive and liberatory principles;
- Experience leading a grassroots organization through a capacity-building and sustainability process;

- Clarity and thoroughness of the proposed approach and methodologies;
- Evidence of an approach towards consultation that is rooted in critical reflection, building relationships, sharing-power, transparency and collaboration;
- Experience collaborating with diverse teams and promoting equitable decision-making;
- Strong communication and facilitation skills;
- Familiarity with nonprofit governance and obtaining 501(c)(3) status;
- Strong understanding or background in business development and management
- Budget alignment with project requirements and scope; and
- References and track record in similar diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging focused projects rooted in anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and liberatory principles.

Submission Requirements:

Interested consultants are requested to submit their proposals electronically to tenets@irvingharrisfdn.org, no later than **October 31, 2023**. Proposals should encompass:

- Consultant's qualifications and pertinent experience;
- Detailed approach and methodology to achieve project objectives;
- Proposed timeline and key milestones;
- Budget breakdown and cost estimate; and
- References from previous DEI-related projects.

Additionally, please submit a draft action plan and timeline for engagement, highlighting your qualifications and experience related to diversity and inclusion. If your experience in this field is limited, express your interest and motivation for undertaking this endeavor. Describe your familiarity with establishing governance structures, business analysis, planning, and scaling projects, especially within nonprofit or purpose-driven contexts. Provide relevant background information about your firm, its values, and certifications.

Contact Information:

For inquiries or clarifications about this RFP, please contact Tonia M. Spence, Program Director of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health at the Irving Harris Foundation, at tspence@irvingharrisfdn.org.

Appendix:

Attached please find the following source materials:

- Diversity-Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children and Families
- Tenets overview article
- List of Tenets Advisory Council and facilitation team members with affiliation (upon request)
- Overview of Irving Harris Foundation
- Arabella Advisors recommendations (upon request)

DIVERSITY-INFORMED TENETS FOR WORK WITH INFANTS, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Irving Harris Foundation Professional Development Network Tenets Working Group



THE TENETS

DIVERSITY-INFORMED TENETS FOR WORK
WITH INFANTS, CHILDREN & FAMILIES

CENTRAL PRINCIPLE FOR DIVERSITY-INFORMED PRACTICE

1. Self-Awareness Leads to Better Services for Families:

Working with infants, children, and families requires all individuals, organizations, and systems of care to reflect on our own culture, values and beliefs, and on the impact that racism, classism, sexism, able-ism, homophobia, xenophobia, and other systems of oppression have had on our lives in order to provide diversity-informed, culturally attuned services.

STANCE TOWARD INFANTS, CHILDREN, AND FAMILIES FOR DIVERSITY-INFORMED PRACTICE

2. Champion Children's Rights Globally: Infants and children are citizens of the world. The global community is responsible for supporting parents/caregivers, families, and local communities in welcoming, protecting, and nurturing them.

3. Work to Acknowledge Privilege and Combat Discrimination: Discriminatory policies and practices that harm adults harm the infants and children in their care. Privilege constitutes injustice. Diversity-informed practitioners acknowledge privilege where we hold it, and use it strategically and responsibly. We combat racism, classism, sexism, able-ism, homophobia, xenophobia, and other systems of oppression within ourselves, our practices, and our fields.

4. Recognize and Respect Non-Dominant Bodies of Knowledge: Diversity-informed practice recognizes non-dominant ways of knowing, bodies of knowledge, sources of strength, and routes to healing within all families and communities.

5. Honor Diverse Family Structures: Families decide who is included and how they are structured; no particular family constellation or organization is inherently optimal compared to any other. Diversity-informed practice recognizes and strives to counter the historical bias toward idealizing (and conversely blaming) biological mothers while overlooking the critical child-rearing contributions of other parents and caregivers including second mothers, fathers, kin and felt family, adoptive parents, foster parents, and early care and educational providers.

PRINCIPLES FOR DIVERSITY-INFORMED RESOURCE ALLOCATION

6. Understand That Language Can Hurt or Heal: Diversity-informed practice recognizes the power of language to divide or connect, denigrate or celebrate, hurt or heal. We strive to use language (including body language, imagery, and other modes of nonverbal communication) in ways that most inclusively support all children and their families, caregivers, and communities.

7. Support Families in Their Preferred Language: Families are best supported in facilitating infants' and children's development and mental health when services are available in their native languages.

8. Allocate Resources to Systems Change: Diversity and inclusion must be proactively considered when doing any work with or on behalf of infants, children, and families. Resource allocation includes time, money, additional/alternative practices, and other supports and accommodations, otherwise systems of oppression may be inadvertently reproduced. Individuals, organizations, and systems of care need ongoing opportunities for reflection in order to identify implicit bias, remove barriers, and work to dismantle the root causes of disparity and inequity.

9. Make Space and Open Pathways: Infant, child, and family-serving workforces are most dynamic and effective when historically and currently marginalized individuals and groups have equitable access to a wide range of roles, disciplines, and modes of practice and influence.

ADVOCACY TOWARDS DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND EQUITY IN INSTITUTIONS

10. Advance Policy That Supports All Families: Diversity-informed practitioners consider the impact of policy and legislation on all people and advance a just and equitable policy agenda for and with families.

TENETS INITIATIVE IRVING HARRIS FOUNDATION

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www.diversityinformedtenets.org

Diversity is used in the most inclusive sense possible, signaling race and ethnicity, as well as other identity markers, and referring to groups and individuals on both the "up and down side of power" along all axes.

Diversity-informed practice is a dynamic system of beliefs and values that strives for the highest levels of diversity, inclusion and equity. Diversity-informed practice recognizes the historic and contemporary systems of oppression that shape interactions between individuals, organizations and systems of care. Diversity-informed practice seeks the highest possible standard of equity, inclusivity and justice in all spheres of practice: teaching and training, research and writing, public policy and advocacy and direct service.

PRINCIPIOS INFORMADOS EN LA DIVERSIDAD PARA TRABAJAR CON BEBÉS, NIÑOS, NIÑAS Y FAMILIAS



THE TENETS

DIVERSITY-INFORMED TENETS FOR WORK WITH INFANTS, CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Grupo de Trabajo sobre Principios Informados en la Diversidad de la Red de Desarrollo Profesional de la Fundación Irving Harris

PRINCIPIO CENTRAL PARA LA PRÁCTICA INFORMADA EN LA DIVERSIDAD

1. La Constante Toma de Consciencia Sobre Sí Mismo (a), a Través de un Proceso Reflexivo, Conduce a Mejores Servicios para las Familias:

Trabajar con bebés, niños(as) y familias requiere que todas las personas, organizaciones y sistemas de atención reflexionemos sobre nuestra cultura, valores y creencias, y sobre el impacto que el racismo, clasismo, sexismo, capacitismo (discriminación hacia la discapacidad), homofobia, xenofobia y otros sistemas de opresión han tenido en nuestras vidas, de manera que proporcionemos servicios informados en la diversidad y en sintonía con la cultura de aquellos a quienes servimos.

POSTURA HACIA LOS BEBÉS, NIÑOS(AS) Y SUS FAMILIAS PARA UNA PRÁCTICA INFORMADA EN LA DIVERSIDAD

2. Defender los Derechos de los Niños(as) Globalmente: Los bebés y niños(as) son ciudadanos del mundo. Es responsabilidad de la comunidad global el apoyar a los padres/adultos responsables/cuidadores, a las familias y a las comunidades para que puedan acoger, proteger y cuidar de los niños(as).

3. Trabajar para Reconocer el Privilegio y Luchar Contra la Discriminación: Las políticas y prácticas discriminatorias que les hacen daño a los adultos, también dañan a los bebés y niño(as) bajo su cuidado. El privilegio constituye en sí una injusticia. La práctica informada en la diversidad significa reconocer nuestra posición de privilegio, en todos ámbitos donde nos otorga ventaja, y usarla de manera estratégica y responsable. También significa luchar contra el racismo, clasismo, sexismo, capacitismo (discriminación hacia la discapacidad), homofobia, xenofobia y otros sistemas de opresión presentes en nosotros mismos, nuestras prácticas y nuestro campo profesional.

4. Reconocer y Respetar los Campos No Dominantes de Conocimiento: Las prácticas informadas en la diversidad reconocen formas no dominantes del saber, áreas de conocimiento, fuentes de fortaleza, y métodos de sanación/curación dentro de familias y comunidades diversas.

5. Honrar las Estructuras Familiares Diversas: Las familias definen quiénes las componen y cómo están estructuradas; ninguna constelación u organización familiar en particular, es inherentemente óptima en comparación a otras. La práctica informada en la diversidad reconoce y se esfuerza por contrarrestar la tendencia histórica a idealizar (o en contraste, a culpabilizar) a las madres biológicas como figuras de cuidado primario. Esta tendencia pasa por alto las contribuciones cruciales en la crianza de los niños(as) de otros padres y cuidadores primarios; incluyendo otras figuras maternas, al padre, los padres sustitutos y adoptivos, parientes y familia

extendida, los educadores de niños(as) pequeños(as), además de otras personas.

PRINCIPIOS PARA LA ASIGNACIÓN DE RECURSOS INFORMADOS POR LA DIVERSIDAD

6. Comprender que el Lenguaje puede Ser Usado para Herir o Curar/Sanar: La práctica informada en la diversidad reconoce el poder del lenguaje para dividir o unir, denigrar o celebrar, herir o curar/sanar. Nos esforzamos por utilizar el lenguaje (incluido el lenguaje corporal, imágenes y otros modos de comunicación no verbal) de la manera más inclusiva posible para todos los bebés, niños(as), sus familias, adultos responsables/cuidadores y comunidades.

7. Apoyar a las Familias en Su Idioma de Preferencia: Las familias son ayudadas de manera más efectiva a fomentar el desarrollo y salud mental de los bebés y niños(as), cuando los servicios destinados para ellos(as) están disponibles en sus idiomas de preferencia.

8. Destinar Recursos para Cambiar los Sistemas: La diversidad e inclusión deben ser consideradas de manera proactiva al realizar cualquier trabajo con o para bebés, niños(as) y familias. Esta consideración requiere que se destinen recursos tales como: tiempo, dinero, prácticas adicionales/alternativas u otros apoyos y adaptaciones adicionales para este propósito; de lo contrario los sistemas de opresión pueden reproducirse inadvertidamente. Las personas, las organizaciones y los sistemas de atención necesitan oportunidades continuas de reflexión para identificar sesgos implícitos, eliminar barreras y trabajar para dismantelar las raíces de la disparidad y la inequidad.

9. Hacer Espacio y Abrir Caminos: La fuerza laboral al servicio de bebés niños(as) y familias, será más dinámica y eficaz cuando las personas y grupos histórica y actualmente marginados tengan acceso equitativo a una amplia gama de roles, disciplinas y modos de práctica e influencia.

ABOGAR POR LA DIVERSIDAD, INCLUSIÓN Y EQUIDAD EN LAS INSTITUCIONES

10. Promover una Política que Apoye a Todas las Familias: Los(as) profesionales, que están informados en la diversidad, consideran el impacto de las políticas y la legislación en todas las personas y fomentan una agenda justa y equitativa para y con las familias.

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El término diversidad se utiliza en el sentido más inclusivo posible, señalando raza y etnia, así como otros atributos de identidad y refiriéndose a grupos e individuos que se encuentran tanto en esferas altas como bajas de poder, en todos los ámbitos.

La práctica informada en la diversidad es un sistema dinámico de creencias y valores, que se esfuerza por alcanzar los más altos estándares de diversidad, inclusión y equidad. La práctica basada en la diversidad reconoce los sistemas de opresión históricos y contemporáneos que dan forma a las interacciones entre personas, organizaciones y sistemas de cuidado. La práctica informada en la diversidad busca los niveles más elevados posibles de equidad, inclusión y justicia en todos los ámbitos de la práctica: enseñanza y capacitación, investigación y escritura, política pública y abogacía, y servicio directo.

Esta es una versión actualizada de Los Principios de Salud Mental Infantil Informados en la Diversidad publicados en el 2012.

DIVERSITY-INFORMED TENETS FOR WORK WITH INFANTS, CHILDREN, AND FAMILIES



THE TENETS

DIVERSITY-INFORMED TENETS FOR WORK
WITH INFANTS, CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Irving Harris Foundation
Executive Summary

Working with infants, children and families takes personal commitment, professional knowledge and respect and care for families. This work is complex especially in a society in which race, class, gender, sexual identity, disability, immigration and nationality are often fraught with frustration, conflict and fear. Children's development happens in the context of relationships with caregiving figures/family members. The quality of these relationships are impacted by family and community cultural mores and values and by the larger socio-political-historical context. Chances are if diversity, inclusion and equity are not addressed deliberately they will be played out in ways that may replicate injurious patterns or historical injustices.

Recent decades have seen critical advances in brain science and the impact of early experiences, resulting in policy change that supports infants, children and their families. But patterns of injustice persist because we have not effectively embedded diversity, inclusion and equity-informed principles into our professional spheres of practice.

The Diversity-Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children & Families (Tenets) were developed to address this gap. The Tenets are a set of guiding principles and practices that strengthen the commitment and capacity of professionals, organizations and systems to embed diversity, inclusion and equity principles into our work. The framework helps us understand how our own background and experiences shape our work with infants, children and families, and offers us a navigational tool for organizational and system change.

The Tenets were developed and are managed by a Working Group formed out of Irving Harris Foundation's Professional Development Network, an international network of grantees working to change the landscape of services for pregnant women, children ages birth to three and their families. Each of the ten Tenets is informed by research and evidence, as well as the extensive collective experience of Working Group members, the multitude of families they have served, and the systems in which they work.

The **Tenets Initiative** consists of a set of activities designed to help professionals, agencies and systems that serve infants, children and families understand and embed the Tenets into all aspects of their work:

- **The Tenets:** The Tenets are available for free via the [Tenets](#) website. The Tenets Working Group provides recommended guidelines for their use.
- **Tenets Workshops:** Tenets Working Group members facilitate workshops geared towards cross-functional teams of professionals, as well as leadership working in agencies serving infants, children and families. Workshops are grounded in self-reflective practice, a critical tool for effectively understanding and integrating diversity, inclusion and equity principles and practices into all aspects of working with infants, children and families. Workshops provide participants with opportunities to analyze and discuss how the Tenets apply to real case scenarios, and conversely, how the lack of a diversity, inclusion and equity-informed lens and framework can in fact harm children and families.

In a survey of professionals who participated in Tenets Workshops 90% reported their individual practices or approach to their work changed as a result of participating in the workshop, and 100% reported they would refer the workshop to peers.
- **Tenets Online Resource Toolkit:** The Tenets Toolkit provides a range of resources to support individuals and organizations in their understanding of the Tenets as well as their ability to embed them into practices and policies. Resources range from research that supports the Tenets, to case studies and videos highlighting effective strategies professionals have used to embed the Tenets into their practices and policies. The Tenets Toolkit will be available to organizations, and agencies that participate in a full-day Tenets workshop.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE TENETS, VISIT
www.imhdivtenets.org.

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Irving Harris Foundation

Irving Harris Foundation enhances the quality of life for children, families and communities by advancing human potential, social justice and equity, and creative experience and expression

Giving Areas



How We Work



Values



Strategies

