

## Request for Proposals

Strategic Planning Consultant

February 2023

### Introduction

The Pacific Institute (PI) has initiated a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to identify a consultant with experience in non-profit strategic planning and growth management to design and facilitate a participatory planning process with staff and board to create a 3–4year strategic plan. Responses to this RFP are due on or before February 24, 2023. We look forward to hearing from you.

### About the Pacific Institute

The Pacific Institute is a global water think tank that combines science-based thought leadership with active outreach to influence local, national, and international efforts to build water resilience. It is seen as a global thought leader on sustainable water policy and practice. Founded in 1987 in California, the Pacific Institute now has staff across the United States and around the world.

To address the climate crisis, PI recently launched an organizational goal to catalyze the transformation to water resilience by 2030. The Pacific Institute currently prioritizes work in three key areas: water efficiency and reuse, water and climate equity, and nature-based solutions. The organization works to scale the uptake of its work through policy and practice advocacy, as well as strategic partnerships spanning government agencies, NGOs, communities, and the corporate sector.

The Pacific Institute is also a leading global force advancing corporate water stewardship. The organization serves as the co-secretariat of the UN Global Compact's CEO Water Mandate, a unique public-private initiative established in 2007 that mobilizes business leaders to address global water challenges. With more than 200 company endorsers, the Mandate's work is carried out in partnership with the United Nations, governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders.

### Status of Current Strategic Plan

In 2019 The Pacific Institute approved a strategic plan in which we revised the organization's Mission and Vision statements, adopted a 2030 Organizational Goal, established three primary organizational focus areas, and detailed 3-year departmental goals and objectives. Please see a summary of the plan in Exhibit A.

As PI enters the final year of the three-year plan, we aim to update the plan to meet the needs of our growing organization. We hope to create new set of 3-4-year goals, objectives, and activities across the organization, and a more detailed Growth Management Plan. We do not anticipate changing our mission, vision, or 2030 goal during this process, but we would like to revisit and reaffirm those statements as a precursor to our planning process.

Since we approved the current plan, the Institute has grown substantially. Our 2023 budget of \$6.5 Million has doubled in size over the past 5 years. We have expanded the size and scope of our programmatic work,

transitioned to a primarily remote workforce, built a robust Communications and Outreach department, upgraded our administrative capacities, developed impact measurement metrics and a Theory of Change, and strengthened a commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). We aim to develop a strategic plan that reflects these changes and lays the foundation for further expansion.

## Scope of Work

Our goals for this strategic planning process include:

- Reaffirm PI's 2030 Organizational Goal, Mission and Vision statements.
- Create a 3-4-year strategic plan:
  - Develop clarity around current and potential focus areas, competency domains, program implementation, geographic scope of work, and primary audiences.
  - Define PI's core value add to the sector, "but for the existence of PI . . ."
  - Reaffirm impact goals and Theory of Change, update both if necessary.
  - Incorporate DEI goals into our external-facing work.
  - Define PI's approach to strategic partnerships, and advocacy.
  - Update goals, objectives, and activities for our programmatic work, as well as our Communications and Outreach, Fundraising, and Administration/Finance departments.
  - Map our growth management process, including system building, organizational structure, and fundraising plans.

The consultant will work with staff leadership and select board members to develop and facilitate a process to meet these goals. This process will take place over the spring and summer of 2023. The first phase of work will center around an in-person retreat to take place in the San Francisco Bay Area the week of May 22<sup>nd</sup> involving all PI staff and some board members. The consultant will be expected to attend and facilitate this meeting. The consultant will then work with staff leadership and a board strategic planning committee to draft the remaining pieces of the plan over the summer. We aim to present a draft plan to the full staff and board for discussion/modification in the late summer and have a final plan ready in late September for approval.

In total, it is anticipated the consultant's activities and deliverables will include:

- Facilitate meetings:
  - One day-long in-person all staff/board meeting.
  - One 2-hour board/staff leadership meeting.
  - Four 1-hour planning calls with board/staff leadership.
  - One 2-hour call with staff/board to discuss the draft plan.
- Create and distribute agendas, workplans, and meeting notes/summaries.
- Create and oversee pre-meeting exercises for staff aimed to tackle some of the retreat work virtually.
- Synthesize results of meetings for feedback/discussion of staff and board.
- Provide guidance and best practices to leadership as we navigate complex decisions around organizational growth and structure.
- Write the final plan, allowing for two rounds of input/revisions.

## Process/Timeline

While we are open to a variety of facilitation and project management approaches from the selected consultant, but we do have a suggested process and timeline:

Overview	Activities	Timeframe
Background / Workplan	<p>Meet with key staff and board strategic planning committee to better understand our goals, the work that has already been done, as well as what is in/out of scope for this process</p> <p>Develop more detailed/modified workplan based on these conversations</p>	March
Retreat Preparation	<p>In preparation for the May retreat, meet with leadership to develop key questions, distribute pre-meeting materials and exercises to staff/board to prepare for our in-person conversations.</p> <p>Engage staff remotely to address as much of the work of the retreat as possible before we meet. These topics could include affirming/reaffirming our Mission, Vision, and Values Statements, SWOT analysis (or similar process), impact goals, focus areas, competency domains, and geographic focus.</p> <p>Synthesize input from pre-meeting work, develop agenda for retreat (with input from leadership)</p>	April/early May
Retreat Facilitation	<p>Facilitate a day-long in-person retreat in the San Francisco Bay Area. Part of the day will be an all-staff meeting, and part will be a staff/board discussion. Ideally, we would come to the retreat with drafts of these documents, which we had been working in remotely during the previous month. At the retreat, we will address key outstanding questions, finalize these statements/documents, and draft 3-4-year goals and objectives.</p> <p>The retreat should be an inclusive conversation, with structure that encourages input from all staff and board members in attendance.</p>	Week of May 22
Key Outcomes of Retreat	<p>Synthesize outcomes from retreat for discussion at the June 14<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors meeting.</p> <p>Incorporate feedback from board and staff and develop workplan for the next phase with staff leadership and board committee.</p> <p>Staff leadership will take draft goals and objectives to their teams and begin drafting activities under each.</p>	June/July

Draft Plan	Facilitate meeting with staff leadership and board committee to fine tune goals/objectives/activities and discuss a growth management plan.  Incorporate outcomes of meeting into a draft plan and present to leadership and board committee for discussion and modification.	July / early August
Finalize Plan	Present Plan to full staff/board for discussion/feedback  Incorporate feedback into final plan for approval by Board of Directors.	September

## Selection Criteria

The criteria below will be used as minimum requirements to assess proposals and to build a pool of appropriate candidates. In addition to availability and cost, the successful consultant has experience or relevant qualifications in:

- Delivering work products in each of the categories listed in the Scope of Work above.
- A demonstrated focus in the non-profit sector, preferably with small/mid-sized environmental organizations.
- Experience with developing growth management plan as part of a strategic planning process.
- An understanding of the complexities of working with U.S. and international staff.
- Experience with incorporating DEI into a strategic planning process.

## Application Process and Budget

Pacific Institute has budgeted \$25,000 this work. We ask interested parties to submit an application of no more than five pages which includes the following:

- Description of how the consultant plans to undertake the described scope of work, both in terms of the approach to a strategic planning process, and any thoughts on how to make best use of staff/board's limited time together.
- Description of the consultant's qualifications to undertake the work and examples of similar projects.
- Cost proposal. If the proposed costs in the response deviate from the draft budget, please include some brief explanatory comments outlining the rationale for the modifications.
- Description of the consultant's personal and/or organizational commitment and approach to including DEI in a strategic planning process.
- Description of how the consultant would avoid any conflict of interest in undertaking the described scope of work.
- Resumes/CVs of the consultant's team, if applicable, may be attached to the proposal and will not count toward the proposal page limit.

Note: All proposals and documents submitted to the Pacific Institute will be kept confidential. Please submit all documents by close of business on **February 24, 2023**. Please submit all materials [nullman@pacinst.org](mailto:nullman@pacinst.org).

We will schedule a call with the top candidate(s).

Thank you for your interest in this important process.

## Exhibit A

## Pacific Institute 2020-2023 Strategic Plan

Vision and Mission	Vision: We envision a world in which society, the economy, and the environment have the water they need to thrive now and in the future.			
	Mission: The Pacific Institute creates and advances solutions to the world’s most pressing water challenges.			
2030 Organizational Goal and Anchor Strategies	Organizational Goal: By 2030, the Pacific Institute will catalyze the transformation to water resilience in the face of climate change.			
	Elevate Elevate the profile of water to convey a sense of urgency and inspire action.	Innovate Collaborate with leaders on innovative solutions and transformative technologies.	Scale Scale proven successes through policy and partnerships.	
	Anchor Strategies in Action With science-based research at the core, we provide technical insight and direction and policy advice, while building networks that cross pollinate leading ideas and practices across many different regions and stakeholder groups.			
Focus Areas and Desired Impacts	Vulnerable Communities To profile climate impacts on water for vulnerable communities, and to offer innovative solutions that mitigate those impacts.	Nature-Based Solutions To innovate new solutions and scale existing approaches proven to have efficacy.	Water Efficiency and Reuse To innovate new solutions and scale existing approaches proven to have efficacy.	
2023 Programmatic Goal and Objectives	2023 Programmatic Goal: The Pacific Institute is a global thought leader and solution provider for water resilience.			
	Identify Strategies Identify water resilience strategies for key actors, such as utilities, businesses, and watershed managers, that also advance positive economic, environmental, and equity outcomes.	Develop Blueprints for Scaling Develop blueprints for scaling water resilience strategies.	Evaluate Strategies with Climate and Water Co-Benefits Develop a ranking of strategies that simultaneously reduce greenhouse gas emissions and advance water resilience and sustainability outcomes.	Raise Awareness Raise awareness among priority audiences about the water resiliency imperative and emerging solutions.
Fundraising Objectives	Grow Funding for Operations and Stability Grow and diversify funding to support the operations and long-term stability of the organization.	Increase Revenue for Research Projects Secure funding for ongoing research projects and to increase the breadth and depth of our water and climate research.	Expand Outreach Capacity Expand funding to grow strategic communications, policy advocacy, and direct stakeholder engagement capacity.	
Operational Objectives	Measure Impact Create and implement impact measurement systems with clearly defined evaluation metrics for programmatic, fundraising, outreach, and operational objectives.	Improve Staff Development and Retention Design and build talent management systems for staff growth and retention, professional development, and improved workplace diversity, and employee satisfaction and wellbeing.	Strengthen Policies Update and strengthen administrative and financial policies and procedures at the staff and board levels, to meet the needs of an increasingly virtual, global, and growing organization.	Develop Functional Specializations Develop functional specializations around policy advocacy, direct stakeholder engagement, and partnerships capabilities.