

www.womensupportnetwork.ca  
1110 Stellar Drive, Unit/Bureau 109  
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 7B7  
Tel/Tél. : 905.895.3646  
Fax/Télé. : 905.895.6542

Crisis Line/Ligne d'aide :  
905.895.7313  
1.800.263.6734



women's support network  
of york region

Réseau de soutien pour les femmes  
de la région de York

June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Strategic Planning: RFP

### **CONSULTANT or CONSULTANT TEAM**

Women's Support Network of York Region (WSN) is the rape crisis/sexual assault centre in York Region. We are dedicated to providing free, confidential services for survivors of sexual violence and commercial sexual exploitation for the purpose of human trafficking. WSN seeks a qualified consultant or consultant team to lead its strategic planning process.

**Title: Consultant/Consultant Team, Strategic Planning**

**Terms: July 2023 to February 2024**

**Accountability: WSN Executive Director and Board of Directors**

**Our budget for compensation: \$14,000.00 (inclusive of disbursements and taxes)**

#### **About Us**

[Women's Support Network of York Region \(WSN\)](#) was established in 1992 and is dedicated to providing free, non-judgemental, confidential support for anyone who has experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. We are committed to providing service excellence by working from an integrated feminist, anti-racist/anti-oppressive, anti-colonial framework that is person-centered and person-focused. We particularly acknowledge the differential impact of sexual violence on racialized and marginalized communities. We are committed to non-exclusionary policy, practice and programs.

WSN services include:

- 24 hour crisis line for survivors of sexual violence and sex trafficking
- Online chat and text support for sexual violence survivors and survivors of human trafficking
- Crisis counselling for sexual violence survivors and survivors of human trafficking
- Ongoing counselling sexual violence survivors and survivors of human trafficking
- Groups and skill-building workshops
- Drop-in support for sexual violence survivors and survivors of human trafficking
- Practical assistance: access to food vouchers, transportation, personal hygiene items for survivors of violence
- Prevention education for those at-risk of sexual violence and sexual exploitation through human trafficking
- Outreach to isolated survivors

WSN has over 10 years of demonstrated leadership in supporting survivors of human trafficking. In 2014, WSN led consultations with women at-risk of and experiencing human trafficking and sexual exploitation across York Region, including trans and two-spirit respondents. Building on WSN's prior work, in late 2022 and early 2023, WSN facilitated consultations with survivors of human trafficking, and service providers with an aim to better understand their pandemic experiences and

needs. Currently, WSN operates group and individual trauma-informed support programming for adult survivors of sexual trafficking, as well as case management support for youth who have survived or are at risk of trafficking.

WSN is committed to providing service excellence by working from an integrated feminist anti-racist/anti-oppressive, anti-colonial framework that is person-centered and person-focused. We particularly acknowledge the differential impact of sexual violence on racialized and marginalized communities.

Our work is guided by survivors and their experiences of stigma, isolation, service access (or limitations to this); as well as new trends of gender-based violence occurring in the community. All WSN work is framed by feminist, anti-racist and anti-oppression principles of survivor support.

### **Background to this RFP**

Women's Support Network of York Region (WSN) is the rape crisis/sexual assault centre in York Region, providing free, confidential services for survivors of sexual violence and commercial sexual exploitation for the purpose of human trafficking. Our last strategic planning process occurred in 2019, but much has changed since then.

In recent years, WSN has found itself responding to the changing needs of the organization and the community, following the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This reality is not unique to WSN. Recent research shows that many Canadian non-profit organizations have been affected by the pandemic in a variety of ways: for example, most have seen shifts in resources, in their financial sustainability, in community needs and service demands; and in changes to their existing infrastructure, in program modifications, staffing and communication strategies. WSN is now providing hybrid services (a combination of in-person and online access options), without having planned for this ongoing reality.

At the same time, in the pandemic years, service requests have greatly increased. In 2019, WSN responded to 1609 crisis calls and saw 229 survivors served in its counseling and support programs. By 2021, these numbers had increased: WSN responded to 2333 crisis calls and saw 357 survivors served in its counseling and support programs.

In light of the pandemic and where we are today, we believe our organization could benefit from an environmental scan of external contexts impacting WSN (i.e. post-pandemic realities, inflation, new hybrid service provision) and a document review, a team review of its mandate, to explore intersectionality and inclusivity and how we will center these values, and to prioritize finances and staffing.

With these realities in mind, WSN aims to gain knowledge of current strengths, opportunities and threats. WSN also wishes to plan for its future and strengthen its post-pandemic stability and service priorities, and identify strategic priorities for the next three years.

All aspects of the position are performed from an integrated anti-oppression, anti-racist feminist perspective and are in keeping with the goals, objectives and policies of WSN.

### **Responsibilities and Key Duties**

The Consultant (or consultant team) will work closely with the Executive Director, WSN's staff and volunteer team and WSN's Board to develop, plan and implement the organization's strategic plan.

This work will include:

- An environmental scan (of external contexts such as legal, social, political issues that may have an affect on WSN/survivors), WSN document review and WSN data collection
- Analysis or commentary on this review from an integrated anti-oppression, anti-colonial, anti-racist feminist perspective
- A one day OR two half-days facilitated sessions with staff, volunteers and Board oriented towards discussion, decision making, and creating a shared future.
- An online survey for those unable to attend the facilitated session (questions should align with facilitated session's content/questions)
- An online survey for service users and other stakeholders
- Create a strategic plan report including development of an interim and final report for the project, including executive summary.
- The strategic plan should include a phased in implementation approach (i.e. immediate 6 months to 1 year/short term 1-2 years/medium term 2-3 years/and long term 3-4 years) to achieve the mandate of the RFP.
- Presentation of the strategic plan priority areas and activities.
- *Note: Some of this work will occur virtually; other components will occur in-person.*

**The consultant or consultant team will demonstrate** familiarity with and competency in: knowledge of sexual violence and other gender-based violence organizations; knowledge and experience in trans and gender non-binary inclusion; knowledge of feminist theory; knowledge and experience with feminist governance values, models and practices; knowledge and experience with anti-oppression organizational change; knowledge of gender-based analysis, as well as an intersectional, anti-oppression, anti-colonial and anti-racist analysis; an understanding of the history of oppression and inequity impacting marginalized populations of survivors, such as gender diverse, trans, youth, elder and Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) survivors; a broad understanding of how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted gender-based violence organizations, such as sexual assault centres and women's shelters; a broad understanding of how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted small non-profits and charitable organizations in Canada; significant strategic planning development and implementation experience; short and long-term project management experience; working with diverse staff and allies; experience with community-based collaboration and partnerships; significant virtual and in-person facilitation experience; demonstrated ability to deliver on the objectives of a project; and familiarity with the work of [WSN](#).

### Timeline

Questions about this RFP will be accepted up to **Friday June 30, 2023**. Please email: [jbennjohn@womenssupportnetwork.ca](mailto:jbennjohn@womenssupportnetwork.ca) with appropriate contact details to assist with any requests.

Proposals are due by **Friday July 7, 2023**. The work is expected to commence **Monday July 24, 2023** and conclude by **Friday February 2, 2024**.

### Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals:

- Relevant experience on similar projects (30%)
- Level of expertise of the consultant(s) (25%)
- Quality of the work plan (20%)
- Cost (25%)

## **Submission Details**

Interested consultants are invited to submit their proposal using the template attached (word file), which should not exceed 15 pages:

- Background: Briefly provide general requirements of the project
- Scope: Outline approach to this work/methodology
- Resource Needs: What information and materials do you require to conduct this work
- Schedule: High level work plan with timing
- Cost: Pricing /Fees
- Staff: Biographical information on the project team and experience doing similar work
- Supporting Information: List all support materials/information included in your submission
- Contact Info: Consultant/Team

## **Budget**

The total budget for this project is not to exceed **\$14,000.00** including all disbursements and contingencies. Terms and timelines for payment will be negotiated in the contract for services and will be based on receipt of written invoices from the Consultant(s) for services completed.

## **How to submit:**

Please submit your proposal in PDF format by email on or before **Friday July 7, 2023** to [kfiore@womenssupportnetwork.ca](mailto:kfiore@womenssupportnetwork.ca). Interested consultants may be asked to present to WSN Board members as part of the evaluation process.

WSN reserves the right to:

- Request clarifications from candidates and this may take the form of a presentation and/or an interview
- Discuss any or all proposals
- Request additional information
- Decline any or all proposals made

Only applicants selected for an interview will be contacted. WSN is committed to a staff team that reflects the diversity within the community. We encourage Indigenous, Black, women of colour, immigrant women, persons with disabilities, francophone, and 2SLGBTQIA+ to apply.