

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

MICD Urban Design, Arts, and Culture Resources for City Leadership

TIMELINE

RFP announced:	October 8, 2024
Submission deadline:	November 15, 2024, 4:00pm Eastern Time
Consultants notified:	November 22, 2024
Contract Period:	December 2024 - September 2025

ABOUT THE MAYORS' INSTITUTE ON CITY DESIGN

The Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD) is a leadership initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in partnership with the United States Conference of Mayors. Since 1986, MICD has served as an invaluable leadership development and technical assistance opportunity for mayors, preparing them to be the chief urban designers of their cities. As urban design is the art of making places for people, this education is critical for helping mayors to create more thriving, equitable, and resilient cities in the 21st century.

MICD offers a suite of programming including highly collaborative in-person sessions, fellowship programs, virtual learning, and ongoing technical assistance to mayors. MICD Institute Sessions bring mayors together with design professionals to examine a design challenge in their cities and receive tailored assistance from field leaders in urban planning, architecture, development, landscape design, transportation, arts and culture, and more. The MICD Just City Mayoral Fellowship is a collaboration between MICD and the Just City Lab at Harvard University whereby mayors participate in a semester-long program with weekly meetings featuring lectures and case study work aimed at tackling injustice in each of their cities. Virtual seminars and ongoing alumni advising are interactive learning and processing opportunities for mayors and their staff to continue to ensure their cities are resilient, equitable, and thriving.

With over 1,200 mayors as alumni of our programs, MICD is the premier resource for helping mayors to address challenges and seize opportunities in the built environment. Over the 38 years of MICD, the needs of mayors have changed significantly, and MICD has adapted to meet those changing needs, creating new programs that support mayors in addressing ever more complex challenges. Design, arts, culture, and the built environment have a role to play in solving these complex, intersecting challenges, from a changing climate to changing economies, from housing challenges to infrastructure challenges. Our programs are consistently lauded as helping mayors peel back the layers of these intersections, leading them to ask the right questions so that their limited resources have multiplying, positive impacts.

OPPORTUNITY / REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

MICD seeks to build new resources for mayors and city leadership as they work to embed design excellence into their administrations and government structures. Topics frequently addressed in MICD programming include structuring government to build better cities, communicating the value of good design to city staff and

to the public, and ensuring systems are helping residents, and not perpetuating harms. MICD is seeking consultant(s) to identify and research emerging best practices and to create concrete, in-depth resources for mayors and city staff on embedding design, arts, and culture into their work. MICD seeks to enhance its role as the nation's go-to resource at the intersection of design and city leadership.

This request for proposals is to **solicit an individual or team** to build out a suite of urban design, arts, and culture-focused content to support city leadership. Through this solicitation, MICD will identify qualified individual(s) or team(s) whose expertise will be matched with the outlined Scope of Work. **Individuals or teams with tactical skills and experience in the following areas are encouraged to apply:**

- Direct experience working in city government, through city processes, and with elected officials
- Expertise in the allied design/development fields (architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, arts and culture, real estate/economic development, equitable community development, creative placemaking)
- Experience writing concise, clear publications for an audience of decision-makers
- Experience delivering technical assistance for senior-level leaders
- Experience conducting research applicable to professional audiences
- Wide knowledge of best practices in equitable city design

SCOPE OF WORK

Based on qualifications and experience, selected consultant(s) will provide **all, or a selection of**, the following services:

- **Developing tools, resources, and case studies** (approximately 50% of total contract)
 - Develop collections of tools and case studies for city leadership to better embed design thinking, methodologies, structures, and principles into their administrations. Examples might include: a resource on general good design principles, how they apply to your city, and how to use them; case studies of bureaucratic structures that center design, arts, and culture, how they work, and lessons learned; and examples of city hall buildings as civic commons, how they are used, and how they help create a more cohesive community. Selected consultants will work with MICD to refine this list and identify the final products.
- **Communicating the value of good design and the importance of arts and culture** (approx. 25% of total contract)
 - Develop a presentation with/for MICD staff that defines good urban design, communicates the value of good urban design and the mayor's role in it, and communicates the role of arts and culture in creating vibrant, loved, and livable communities.
 - Develop tools for mayors to "make the case" for good urban design to their publics (including residents and city staff). Topics might include: density, zoning, multi-modal transportation, parking, and design guidelines that reflect local culture and identity. Selected consultants will work with MICD to refine this list and identify the final products.
- **Technical assistance** (approx. 25% of total contract)
 - Building on the success of the new MICD Alumni Advising program, in close coordination with MICD staff, the consultant will seek out experts and coordinate personalized advising to a cohort of mayors to better incorporate design, arts, and culture into their administrations. The general lessons learned from these engagements will be collected and shared publicly.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

Please include the following in the proposal. Individuals or teams are encouraged to apply:

- A narrative that 1) includes your expertise in architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, arts and culture, real estate/economic development, equitable community development, and/or creative placemaking, and 2) identifies the activities from the scope of work (above) that are best suited to your expertise and how you would approach them. Describe your specific skills in working with civic leaders and public officials. (Limit 750 words)
- CV or Resume, and a short (<250 words) bio
- Fee proposal, not to exceed \$75,000, to accomplish the full scope outlined above. The quoted fee should take into account and be inclusive of all ancillary charges (e.g. office equipment rentals, supplies, phone/computer usage if necessary). Consultants must submit bids with fees assigned per tranche of work described in the Scope of Work, above. If you are interested in only a portion of the work described in the Scope of Work, indicate \$0 under Proposed fee for items you elect not to include in your proposal. Bear in mind that \$75,000 is allocated to the complete Scope of Work, thus if you elect to propose to complete only a portion of the outlined Scope of Work, your proposal should reflect only a portion of the \$75,000 per the estimated percentage of contract noted above. Fees for each task or deliverable include preparation, research, participation in phone calls and meetings with MICD and other relevant parties, and other ancillary tasks/work necessary for the completion of the task or deliverable described in the Scope of Work, above. Please use the Fee Proposal Template to structure your budget.

CONSULTANT FEE PROPOSAL

Instructions: Each deliverable must have a description and a fee attached. Each deliverable should include all associated expenses and time charged.

DO NOT INCLUDE any travel or meal expenses in this budget. If needed, MICD will cover travel expenses separately.

Fee proposal template:

	Hourly rate and description of task(s) and/or expected deliverables	Proposed Fee
Developing tools, resources, and case studies		
Communicating the value of good urban design		
Technical Assistance		
TOTAL		

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Responses will be evaluated according to:

- Demonstrated relevant expertise to produce one or more of the required deliverables
- Understanding of the role of mayor, city leadership, and municipal government structure
- Ability to deliver proposed products and content outlined in the Scope of Work

Additionally, proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Responsiveness of proposal to the specifications set forth in this RFP
- Value/Pricing structure and price levels

CONTACT INFORMATION AND DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Please submit all information requested above to Trinity Simons Wagner (trinity@micd.org).

Submissions are due by 4:00pm ET on November 15, 2024. Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Trinity Simons Wagner.