

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**  
**THE LEMELSON FOUNDATION**  
**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, And Justice Partner Consultant**

**INTRODUCTION--ABOUT THE LEMELSON FOUNDATION**

The [Lemelson Foundation](#) uses the power of invention to improve lives.

Established by prolific US inventor Jerome Lemelson and his wife Dorothy in the early 1990s, and guided today by the Lemelson family, The Lemelson Foundation (the Foundation) believes invention can solve many of the biggest economic and social challenges of our time. A private philanthropy, The Lemelson Foundation has assets of approximately \$410 million and an annual budget of approximately \$20 million and has provided over \$300 million in grants and other investments to hundreds of organizations around the world. The Lemelson Foundation approaches its work to strengthen the invention ecosystem and empower inventors to solve the biggest global challenges and opportunities of our time, using a three-part framework called Impact Inventing:

- Inventions should have positive social impact;
- Inventions should be environmentally responsible—from the materials and processes used through final products that go to market; and,
- Business models should become financially self-sustaining.

The Lemelson Foundation has created a culture of collaboration, continuous learning, and innovation. An entrepreneurial environment with flexibility and opportunities for impact has allowed the small team (10-15) to have an outsized impact in the social landscape of invention.

**BACKGROUND--COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND JUSTICE**

The Lemelson Foundation seeks to uplift and center its work, policies, and practices using a diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice lens as defined below.

**DIVERSITY:** is the “who” and “what” of all the characteristics of who we are. It is the mosaic of people who bring a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values, and beliefs as assets to the groups and organizations with which they interact. Diversity is also the presence of differences that make each person unique and can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. These ‘uniqueness-es’ include race, color, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, age, education, ability, economic background, veteran status or citizenship, among countless others. As “diversity” represents the “who” and “what” of all the characteristics of who we are, diversity is defined here as policies and protocols that recognize, value and/or encourage a myriad of perspectives, identities, & experiences.

**EQUITY:** Equity is defined as the “what” and “how” we invest in our people to ensure all individuals and groups get what they need to grow, contribute, develop, prosper, and reach their full potential; this also includes our ability to ensure that resources and opportunities are equitably distributed and accessed across various identities/ groups of individuals, taking into consideration historical and present-day systemic policies and practices that advantage some over others.

**INCLUSION:** Inclusion is “how” we create an environment of involvement, respect & connection that values unique qualities and perspectives while providing meaningful opportunities for these perspectives to be involved in the planning and decision-making within our organization. Inclusion is our ability to foster an organizational environment that allows people with diverse backgrounds, mindsets, and ways of thinking to work effectively together and to perform to their highest potential in order to achieve organizational objectives based on sound principles. This means that respect is given to the variety of subcultures within an organization, that none are excluded, and all can take part in shaping the cultural reality of the organization, its values, norms, policies, etc. In turn, it becomes crucial to foster relationships and encourage the awareness and understanding of diverse cultural viewpoints, ideas, and opinions to promote and foster inclusion and a sense of belonging.

**JUSTICE:** Justice is actively and intentionally working to dismantle systems that promote and perpetuate inequities, and removing barriers to knowledge, information, and resources that keep individuals, groups of people and communities from being able to thrive. To seek justice, we increase our awareness and heighten our senses to be able to identify and tackle issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, classism, elitism, and the countless other ‘-isms’ and ‘-phobias’ head on, in the workplace, in our programs, and in the communities we serve.

## **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The Foundation seeks proposals from vendors who can provide an ongoing partnership through consultation to guide the organization through its DEIJ action plan. The plan’s strategic goals include:

### **Decolonizing our Funding**

- Streamline our grantmaking process to increase accessibility by simplifying our guidelines and reporting requirements.
- Diversify our network by integrating DEIJ into our strategy and operations and holding ourselves accountable to DEIJ values.

### **Recruiting & Retaining Diverse Talent**

- Increase staff diversity by actively employing a DEI lens to its hiring practices.
- Cultivate a culture of inclusion that promotes equity and belonging.

### **Strengthening Engagement**

- Increase staff awareness and build internal capacity regarding personal, institutional, and systemic bias.
- Actively include and elevate BIPOC and female voices.

### **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

We anticipate collaborating on a scope of work to include managing our DEI Action Plan and developing a methodology to evaluate our progress. Also, to develop a systemic way to update and refine the Action Plan.

The Foundation anticipates the partner consultant will provide expert leadership and advice on special projects, the grant application process, and hiring materials. The partner consultant may also attend staff meetings monthly (currently the meetings are held weekly in the office, but may also include Zoom), and conduct training sessions as needed. The partner/consultant will also be available for staff and executive leadership for specific issues that may arise. At times, the partner consultant's scope of work may include researching networks to meet the DEI action plan's goals. The average hours per week is anticipated to be 5-10 but will vary based on the scope of services.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA USED FOR EVALUATING CANDIDATES**

#### **General Professional Experience:**

- Working with clients to consider US and international perspectives. As an organization with global impact, a wide-ranging perspective is critical for the Foundation.
- Experience in the nonprofit sector and ideally with family foundations.
- Creating a client partnership with both executive and management staff.

#### **Specific Experience Related to the Benchmarks in Our DEI Action Plan:**

- Executing a DEI plan that includes actions that result in administrative and/or operational change.
- Lived experiences and a track record of working within the communities with which we seek to have greater connection and impact through our DEI work.
- Experience in the fields of STEM, innovation, entrepreneurship and/or international development.

## **PROPOSAL DEADLINE/INSTRUCTION FOR SUBMISSION**

### **Proposal Details**

- No more than a three-page proposal that includes experience in the areas outlined in the Project Overview and Selection Criteria. Additional pages may be used for resumes of prospective consultant resources.
- Anticipated budget.
- List of clients and references.

### **Submission Details and Process**

- All documents must be submitted to the DEI subcommittee at [info@Lemelson.org](mailto:info@Lemelson.org)
- The top candidates will likely be asked clarifying questions, which may involve an initial screening call and virtual interviews with those directly responsible for the project, members of the selection committee, and/or Foundation staff.

### **Selection Timeline**

- Proposal deadline is 5:00 PDT Friday, June 16
- Evaluations and decision will be completed by Monday, July 31
- Project work to begin Monday, August 7
- Completion date for the current phase of the Action Plan is June 30, 2024.