



Overview

Verified Voting is seeking a consultant/vendor/partner to assist in developing the organization's next strategic plan to guide the organization through the 2024 federal election cycle.

Scope of Work

We are looking for someone who can:

- Plan and implement an inclusive and rigorous collaborative planning process. Ensure this process is clear to all those who are participating, including setting and meeting deadlines.
- Communicate effectively with different types of stakeholders (board members, executive leadership, staff, funders, ecosystem partners). Create an inclusive environment for the planning process, ensuring key stakeholder voices are heard.
- Manage group and Zoom meetings and phone calls, by setting clear agendas and expectations, providing all necessary preparatory materials ahead of time, and following up with notes and next steps.
- Provide guidance to an organization moving through a critical transition period -- from a founding board to a governance board with committees, and a new President and CEO at the helm.

Key questions to be answered through the strategic planning process:

1. What is Verified Voting's core and unique value proposition?
2. What would "mission accomplished" look like for Verified Voting in four years? What is our north star?
3. What are the concrete steps to get there, and what will it take to achieve our goals?
4. What are our values and our approach when it comes to diversity, equity and inclusion? What work needs to be done -- and who must we engage with -- for our organization to prioritize the values that we share?

We envision a small taskforce of VV staff and Board members to play a leadership role in the development of a strategic plan, though all VV staff and board members should be engaged at various points through stakeholder interviews and updates. We also envision a portion of the strategic planning process to be conducted through an in-person retreat if it is possible given the conditions of the pandemic and the locations of involved participants.

Organization Background and Political Context

Verified Voting has an exciting and challenging opportunity ahead. The work core to our mission -- post election audits, voting technology security, trustworthy elections -- has risen to the top of national conversations and media attention. There are unprecedented levels of external opportunities and we must advance several high priority internal initiatives, such as strategic planning, board development and a fundraising drive, in order to leverage this momentum.

Founded in 2004 by computer scientists, Verified Voting plays a unique role in bridging the gap between technology and election administration by bringing together policymakers and officials who are designing and implementing voting-related legislation and regulations with technology experts. Our status as a trusted resource, built through our team of nationally-recognized subject matter experts and curation of one-of-a-kind data sets, allows us to provide advocates,

researchers, government officials, the media, and the public with a greater understanding of these complex issues. Ultimately, we seek to ensure a stronger, more secure election system where transparency is key, and voters can feel reassured that their vote will be counted as cast.

The 2020 general election was the most secure in U.S. history, according to the former Director of the U.S. Homeland Security Department's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency Christopher Krebs¹. But the road to that conclusion was a long and involved one — and, without Verified Voting's ongoing work to provide evidence-based assurance that the reported results in highly contested states were accurate, might not have been possible.

Our work entails meeting with election officials, providing formal testimony, and holding training and pilots to demonstrate how the components of a trustworthy voting record could help provide voters with justified confidence in reported election results. We work to ensure that election security measures are baked into voter access and participation efforts, and build public support through media outreach and education.

At the same time, we face an uphill battle in countering still-active disinformation campaigns and their efforts to weaken public trust: both in the legitimacy of our elections, and the systems and people who make those elections possible. After years of working to build public awareness around these topics, there is an attempt to co-opt definitions or derail the progress for trustworthy elections.

In this rapidly changing landscape, Verified Voting has a vital role to play in helping election officials and policymakers navigate key election decisions with evidence-based recommendations, resources, and guidance.

Strategic Planning Context

Our most recent strategic plan "Validate 2020" led the organization to refine its [mission statement, values](#), and program work.

We have a full-time staff of ten, supported by six technical specialists with a variety of skills who have been serving as consultants for several years. Our annual budget is \$2 Million. With the 2020 election done and new President and CEO at the helm, we are at a pivotal moment to build upon the success of the organization and map our blueprint for the next 3-4 years.

The organization is at an important juncture also with respect to the board's transition to a governance board, and a core team that has doubled in size in eighteen months. All this plays out against a backdrop of election security and integrity issues rising to the top of national conversations and daily media attention. The right consultant will help analyze and organize these important streams of change, and advise and recommend how they can be addressed, sequenced and ultimately harnessed for VV's long-term success to enable more secure and trustworthy elections.

Consultant Selection Process and Criteria

We want to get started right away - and map out a clear staff and board engagement plan, as well as name key deliverables and due dates. The goal is to have a final draft of the plan by January 2022 for the Board of Directors to approve, along with the proposed 2022 budget and

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https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/christopher-krebs-trump-election-wasnt-hacked/2020/12/01/88da94a0-340f-11eb-8d38-6aea1adb3839_story.html

resource needs for the duration of the strategic plan. The information on resource needs should provide an impetus for a successful fundraising drive.

If you are interested in submitting a proposal for this project, draft a short memo (no more than 5 pages) outlining your approach to this work, examples of relevant projects with similar sized organizations, a proposed timeline and fee for this work given the above considerations, and a list of 3-4 client references. Preference will be given to organizations that:

- Can demonstrate a track record of helping non-partisan US democracy organizations in an evolving political landscape to develop strategic plans and to document successful implementation through measurable results and metrics.
- Bring a strong understanding and practical experience of how to thoughtfully integrate diversity, equity and inclusion principles in the strategic planning process.
- Experience providing guidance to an organization moving through a critical transition period -- from a founding board to a governance board, and a new President and CEO at the helm who will be leading the strategic planning and board development initiatives.

Timeline and Submission

All proposals must be in by September 24. Verified Voting plans on making a final decision by October 15. Please send proposals to: ssigdyal@verifiedvoting.org.