



Asian Americans for Equality

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AAFE STRATEGIC PLANNING Request For Proposals

PROJECT SUMMARY

Asian Americans For Equality (AAFE) is seeking a seasoned consultant with deep experience in the field of community development and Asian American issues, to work with the organization's leadership and key stakeholders to articulate a clear strategic direction and aligned organizational plan. Specifically, the consultant will perform the following:

- Engage AAFE's membership, staff, and board to develop a Strategic Plan document that will inform our activities during the time period 2026-2028,
- Guide and support designing our organizational structure to align with the Strategic Plan,
- Facilitate a series of meetings running from staging in Q4 FY2024 to a Strategic Plan final draft to be voted on and adopted by the AAFE Board in December 2025 (number and dates TBD with AAFE), that will support the development of our Strategic Plan.

Through this process the organization aims to prioritize key areas of potential program growth and strengthen our operations, capacity building programs, and policy strategies, with a clear racial and gender equity focus.

ABOUT AAFE

Mission

Through community development, Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE) advances racial, social and economic justice for Asian Americans and other systemically disadvantaged communities, guided by our experiences as Asian Americans and our commitment to civil rights.

Our Comprehensive Approach

AAFE accomplishes its mission by creating affordable housing and economic opportunity, providing an array of multilingual [community services](#) and fostering grassroots leadership and civic engagement in the communities we serve throughout New York. We strive for an equitable city where all people live in vibrant and inclusive neighborhoods and have the opportunity to pursue their dreams and aspirations free from racial violence, poverty and discrimination.

In Manhattan's Chinatown in 1974, AAFE's founders [helped shape the fledgling Asian American civil rights movement](#), successfully championing the employment rights of Asian American workers. Today Asian Americans for Equality is a comprehensive community development organization, but we remain deeply rooted in New York's immigrant neighborhoods and dedicated to grassroots community advocacy.

What We Do

We believe that people in New York's underserved communities can only thrive when they have access to safe and stable affordable housing, essential social services and equitable resources to achieve economic mobility for their families.

For more than three decades, AAFE has been a community builder, [developing affordable multifamily affordable housing](#) and opportunities for first-time homebuyers. Through our affiliate, [Renaissance Economic Development Corporation](#), AAFE provides low-interest loans, training and multilingual counseling services for small business owners. And we meet the changing needs of the community through linguistically and culturally appropriate tenant counseling, navigation services for government entitlement programs and affordable healthcare, immigration assistance, college access and youth leadership and grassroots community engagement and advocacy. AAFE is often one of the first organizations contacted in times of disaster, emergencies and need for innovations by local and State government to solve complex community issues that get scaled as solutions widely. Through these programs, AAFE serves over 35,000 people annually throughout the NYC metropolitan area.

Asian Americans for Equality is part of the [NeighborWorks](#) network, an affiliation of more than 240 nonprofit organizations located in every state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The NeighborWorks network was founded and is supported by NeighborWorks America, which creates opportunities for people to live in affordable homes, improve their lives and strengthen their communities.

Who We Are

AAFE is comprised of 150 full-time staff, led by an Executive Director and an 8-member Senior Management Team. The Board of Directors is made up of 15 members, with a minimum of 1/3 representative or residents of low-income communities we serve. AAFE also owns and controls numerous subsidiaries with partially-overlapping boards, including two Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and a property management company. AAFE operates out of 7 full time offices in Lower Manhattan and Queens, and several other locations in shared or part-time spaces in Brooklyn and Upper Manhattan. There is planned geographic expansion in northern New Jersey, Long Island, and Hudson Valley for small business and homeownership services.

CONTEXT

AAFE's Board and staff annually reviews the Strategic Plan, the most recent of which covered the 2022-2025 period. There was a partial update during the pandemic, which drastically altered the external environment in which many of the earlier research and assumptions were made. During that time, the Board and the Executive Director participated in a multi-year in-depth workshop facilitated by NeighborWorks America's consultants to deepen constructive partnership and refresh mission goals, due to the appointment of new Executive leadership in 2018.

SCOPE OF WORK: Activities and Deliverables

Strategic Plan Document

AAFE is one of the only established comprehensive community development corporations (CDC) with the in-house capacity to provide social services, affordable housing development, economic development and capital lending, urban planning and organizing for the AAPI community and other disadvantaged

populations. While the metropolitan area is still incrementally recovering from the economic malaise of the pandemic, issues that have plagued NYC have only worsen: an affordable housing crisis, violence and discrimination in the community, political polarization, and extreme climate impacts. The City and State's budget resources are unclear, but trends point to a weakness in revenue due to fundamental changes in economic drivers for the City after COVID.

Given the organization's expertise, assets, and unique vantage point for AAPI and cross-racial community development, how should AAFE examine its mission goals in this new environment, and what programmatic focus should the organization put a strategic emphasis on while balancing impact with financial sustainability? Are there areas for modernization, deepening, cutting back or further expansion? How should AAFE allocate its resources, staff, and board? What are the strengths and what are the gaps if we are to set strategic goals? These are among the questions AAFE is hoping to address in the next strategic plan.

The consultant will work with a sub-committee of AAFE's staff and board ("Strategic Planning Committee") to develop a process that will engage its membership, key partners, and allies to produce a 2026-2028 Strategic Plan document. The plan will tackle key questions confronting the organization, many of which are listed above, as well as key operational questions.

At the end of the process (estimated December 2025) the consultant will deliver a Strategic Plan document that is a high-level summary of the Strategic Plan process outcomes for adoption by the Board of Directors. The final product should include text as well as visuals that can be adapted for publication.

Organization Structure & Development

Upon completion of a broader strategy and direction document, the consultant will develop a recommended and aligned organizational structure and development plan that will facilitate the advancement of the strategic plan. This should include recommendations on potential changes to the organizational structure, creation of new positions, and/or shifting or roles that will ensure the goals of the strategic plan are feasible. In addition, please include recommendations on how the organization can further develop and manage change that is expected.

Staff and Board Retreat and Other Facilitation

In addition to any one-on-one conversations proposed as part of the engagement process, the consultant will be asked to develop an agenda and facilitate an in-person convening of board and staff later this year or early next year (December or January), assuming it is safe to do so. The consultant will work with the Strategic Planning Committee to develop an agenda and facilitate sessions that would comprise an approximately two- day retreat to engage with key stakeholders on strategic questions as well as advance team building among staff and board.

Further, in addition to the Retreat facilitation, the consultant will work with the Strategic Planning Committee to determine an additional few (number TBD) meetings to engage various constituencies as needed ahead of developing a final document.

The term of the engagement would be approximately from Jan 2025 to Dec 2025, with the goal of delivering the Strategic Plan document for AAFE's Board review and approval at the December 2025 Board meeting.

PROPOSAL REQUESTED

Please provide the following as part of your proposal:

- Proposal Narrative: Brief narrative giving an overview of how the consultant would lead the

- Strategic Plan process and relevant experience with the proposed activities and deliverables;
- Timeline/Meetings/Process: Rough timeline giving an overview of the process to enact the proposal;
- Budget: Proposed budget with a rough breakdown by line item or unit cost;
- Attachments: Please attach the following documents with your proposal:
 - Resume and/or credentials,
 - Sample of work,
 - List of previous clients,
 - Two client references from the previous three years.

Proposals and queries must be submitted electronically via email to: strategicplanningrfp@aafe.org

Areas of interest include:

Programmatic Integration

Continual Organizational Modernization + Restructure

Board + Organizational Leadership Constructive Partnership

Preference for Strategic Planners with experience working with AAPI, immigrant and/or minority-led community development organizations; familiarity with affordable housing development, CDFIs, social services, public policy of the NYC metro region; and ability to conduct in-person meetings as well as virtual.