



Expressions of Interest – Strategic Planning Consultant

Who We Are

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (RMG) is the largest public art gallery in Durham Region, located in downtown Oshawa and in the treaty lands of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. The RMG was founded in 1967 after an exhibition of work by local artists at a commercial space on Simcoe Street demonstrated the need for a more permanent home for the arts. The McLaughlin family offered significant financial support and works from their own private collection to establish the RMG as a public art gallery for the City of Oshawa. The RMG proudly holds Canada's largest collection of works by Painters 11, because of significant donations to the Permanent Collection by artist and wife of Ewart McLaughlin, Alexandra Luke. Today, our collection of over 4,700 works focuses on telling the continuing story of Canadian abstraction.

What We Believe

We believe that art cultivates connected and caring communities. As an artist-centered and community-oriented public art gallery in Durham Region, we bring people from diverse backgrounds together to engage with art that inspires new perspectives, generates meaningful conversations, and creates a sense of belonging. We build relationships with diverse artists and communities through art. The RMG works in collaboration with artists, partners, and audiences to present dynamic and inspiring collections, exhibitions, and programs in an inclusive and equitable environment.

We acknowledge that the RMG is in treaty land, and respect our collective responsibility to protect and nurture the land. We also recognize the continuing impacts of colonialism and our responsibilities to redress the ways this has helped shape our organization. We are committed to working to address structural inequities and to centering Indigenous voices in the gallery.

What We Do

Each year we present Permanent Collection exhibitions alongside special exhibitions of contemporary art and artists. We prioritize engaging diverse audiences in new and familiar ways through our programming. We foster community connections and partnerships to create a greater sense of belonging. We reimagine the gallery, making space for all. Annually, we

welcome 38,000 visitors and 10,000 participants to engage in our: exhibitions, education programs, volunteering opportunities, event spaces, shop, artist-in-residence program, and digital programming. Admission to the RMG is FREE and we typically offer over 100 free public programs each year.

How We Do It

We are deeply committed to and integrate our values into everything we do – from how we build relationships with partners to how we work with each other as staff on a daily basis.

Care We foster a culture of care that places the health and wellbeing of our staff, artists, partners, and audiences above all else. Kindness and respect are central to all of our relationships.

Artist-centered and Creative We are dedicated to supporting artists in their work and creating an environment for them to flourish. We provide opportunities for the community to imagine and create.

Equity and Justice We are committed to creating just, inclusive, and accurate stories of our past and present, and to providing a platform for diverse voices to engage with contemporary issues we face today and into the future.

Relationship-based and Collaborative We prioritize long-term and sustainable relationships with artists and community members. We bring together multiple perspectives and people and invite unique opportunities for collaborations.

Accessible We provide welcoming and accessible experiences to art for a diversity of people, both inside and outside of the gallery.

Accountable and Open We are both an accountable and transparent organization. We take responsibility for our actions, including our mistakes, and promote a safe and open gallery for all.

Preamble

The RMG is seeking consultancy services to lead and facilitate our strategic planning process for 2025-2027. The RMG's current strategic plan [*Connected, Creative, Caring*](#) set a new vision and mission, re-examining and clarifying our values, priorities, and goals. With a focus on community connection and care, it set us on a path to build connected, caring, and creative communities through art. The team prioritized critically thinking about how to incorporate equity, inclusion, accessibility, and justice in the process and the final plan.

As we enter the final year of our current plan, the RMG is ready to embark on thinking meaningfully about how to build upon the lessons, successes, and challenges we have experienced to inform our direction for the future.

What we're looking for

We believe in building meaningful relationships. You are dedicated and like to have fun. You are flexible in your approach. You find ways to include everyone on our staff and Board teams, considering different styles of learning and participation so that all perspectives are included.

Our ideal consultancy would hold similar [values](#) to our organization, and to our team workplace values of care, accountability, and belonging. The consultancy should take an equity-centered approach to the process and planning. You should have experience in arts and culture, an understanding of public art galleries, and knowledge of the broader Ontario community and social services sector. Having a clear picture of the opportunities and challenges facing the non-profit sector is important to ensure a base of our operating environment. If possible, we hope the consultancy also have knowledge of, or ideally experience, in Durham Region or larger municipalities within Ontario.

The consultant will work with an ad-hoc group of Board and staff members throughout the process. The Board and staff will be actively involved in discussing, reviewing, and delivering on the resulting plan. The RMG will take the lead on operationalizing the plan through our existing tools and processes.

Timing

As an organization, we have a hybrid workforce. We completed our last strategic plan virtually, however, we believe there is value in coming together in-person for particular sessions and will work with the consultant to determine the appropriate forum depending on the topic. Primary contact will be with the CEO, who will report regularly to the staff and Executive Committee on progress. The process should include at least one opportunity for an in-person workshop at the RMG that includes all staff and Board of Directors (approximately 30 people).

Expressions of Interest distributed	February 15, 2024
Deadline for Questions related to EOI	February 29, 2024
Deadline for Submissions of EOI	March 14, 2024
Shortlisted consultants contacted	March 22, 2024
Interviews with shortlisted consultants	March 25-29, 2024
Contract awarded	April 5, 2024
Draft strategic plan completed	October 31, 2024
Final strategic plan submitted	November 21, 2024
Presentation at Board Meeting	November 28, 2024

Approval of the strategic plan will take place no later than the Board of Directors meeting at the end of November, anticipated date is November 28, 2024. The above schedule may be changed upon mutual agreement of the RMG and the consultant.

Budget

The budget for this work is \$25,000 and we are seeking proposals within this range. If your process means your proposal is higher, please provide information on the reasoning and/or additional benefits you would provide. We are open to taking on aspects of the process, whether it be surveys, focus groups, or research.

Selection Criteria

The RMG will use multiple criteria to select the most appropriate consultant. In consideration of all the key objectives described in this document, we will base the evaluation of proposals on the set of criteria outlined below:

- Perceived fit with the RMG and alignment of our values
- Related experience in Strategic Planning exercises
- Significant experience in similar work within the not-for-profit, arts and culture sector
- Facilitation skills working with Boards of Directors, staff and key stakeholders
- Demonstrated commitment to equity and social justice and ability to facilitate and/or provide group training in this area
- Overall quality of the proposal
- Fees and pricing
- Quality and relevance of references
- Consultants submitting a proposal must not have a conflict of interest with the RMG (current staff, Board member, related party)

Applications that do not meet the selection criteria in their submission will not be considered.

Submission Process

Please see the table in the 'Timing' section for details about any questions related to the plan. The submission deadline is Thursday, March 14, 2024.

If we sound like the kind of organization, you would like to work with, please submit an EOI. In order to make the evaluation process efficient and obtain maximum comparability, we request all submission are organized as follows and should be no more than 3,000 words:

- **Profile and Background:** A description of the consultant's history, how and why your firm would be the best fit with RMG. This should include an explanation of your philosophy, values, approach to equity, knowledge of the arts and culture sector, size, and structure. Please include the key individuals who will be leading the work and their bios.
- **Scope of Work:** A description of your understanding of the work to be performed, the challenges facing the non-profit sector, and galleries in particular, in Ontario, how your

proposal would align with selection criteria, overview of the your approach using a hybrid in-person and virtual approach, and any other pertinent information.

- **Service Approach and Timeline:** Describe how you will approach the proposed services including the type of assistance that will be required from the RMG team. Share how you communicate with clients and the expected timeline for your work.
- **Fees:** Fee structure for the full duration of the project. In addition, the applicable billing rates and procedures for any further additions to the project scope that may arise.
- **References:** A list of the relevant non-profit, arts and culture, or Durham Region and other large municipal clients you have worked with in the past five years. Please include contact information for three references whom the RMG may contact.
- **Previous Work:** The proposal should include at least two examples of written work similar to the scope of work requested within this EOI (e.g., strategic plan).

Consultancies that fit our organizational values and goals will have a phone call or virtual meeting. We will want to hear about your approach to strategic planning, your experience with some of the areas noted, why you would be excited to work with us, and how you might envision our working relationship evolving when the plan is complete. We will send additional information and questions in advance of this meeting.

Contact Information

Expressions of Interest and any questions should be sent via email only to Lauren Gould, CEO at lgould@rmg.on.ca.