Strategic Planner Request for Proposal

Our mission:

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont promotes organic practices to build an economically viable, ecologically sound and socially just Vermont agricultural system that benefits all living things.

Overview of what we’re looking for in a facilitator:

NOFA-VT is seeking an experienced facilitator to guide our organization through a robust strategic planning process that will take place throughout the year of 2023, hoping to start during the fall/ winter of 2022.

We plan to have a core team of staff and board work closely with the facilitator. We hope to have a process that provides a rich mode of connecting and relationship building, that will ground us in our values. We hope to begin from a place of exploring our vision and then move to how to make it real: what does success look like at the end of the next plan? Can we start there, with a clear vision/ goal, and build a plan that moves us towards that vision?

We are an organization that likes to do a lot and move in many ways. We hope a very clear vision will help us know what to prioritize, or not. We wish to focus on shared goals that cut across teams that ask us to move out of our silos and see our work as part of a bigger whole.

We plan to center equity in this process and that this person should be able to work with and challenge us on that, as a mostly white-led organization that has “social justice” named as a mission focus.
We also hope the facilitator will help us to assess who to reach out to—who are our core community members, and who have we missed? Who do we need to connect with to really live into our mission.

This will look like:

- Facilitating five board meetings throughout 2023 (perhaps starting as early as November 2022) as well as 1-2 staff retreats.

- Embedding the team at Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF) in the planning process

- Developing additional community engagement opportunities throughout the year for farmers, farm workers, food system folks, school meals partners, organizational partners, eaters, members, and beyond.

- Conducting a vision development to begin the process.

- Conducting landscape analyses / SWOT analysis/ scenario planning to help assess what stands in the way of that vision.

- Outlining and leading the process with the core group of staff + board throughout the year- likely monthly meetings with some email/phone/zoom communication in between

- Ultimately helping to author and polish the plan.

- Co-developing a system for tracking our progress and measuring our success against the goals set forth in the plan.
More about us:

We are a complex organization. We have around 30 employees around the state and run many programs: policy/ advocacy, engagement/ education, farmer business planning services, local food access programs, marketing/ communications work— and then we also own Vermont Organic Farmers, a regulatory compliance agency accredited by the National Organic Program. VOF has its own executive committee in addition to the NOFA-VT BOD.

We need a strategic planner who can really champion this process for us and navigate our complexity. We need a planner who will balance looking at how we do things internally with what our mission work looks like in the world.

Finally, we need a planner aligned with the values of the organization of justice, ecology, and thriving for all.

We are seeking proposals starting immediately through the end of August. Please send to grace@nofavt.org.