



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS- Equity Audit

About LGBT YouthLine

For over 30 years, YouthLine has offered anonymous confidential peer support to 2SLGBTQ+ youth across Ontario through our HelpLine run by trained 2SLGBTQ+ youth volunteers (ages 16–29). Open Sunday to Friday, the HelpLine provides anonymous, confidential, non-judgmental support and referrals rooted in shared lived experience.

We also have a Northern, Rural, Remote and Indigenous Outreach Program to intentionally connect with 2SLGBTQ+ youth in northern, rural, remote and Indigenous communities. We maintain a province-wide referral database, and lead advocacy efforts to amplify 2SLGBTQ+ youth voices and issues.

Background

LGBT YouthLine is committed to creating a safer, more equitable, and inclusive environment for our staff, volunteers, and service users. Anti-Blackness and anti-Indigenous racism, colonialism, ableism and forms of transphobia are present throughout the non-profit sector. LGBT YouthLine wants to be proactive and develop frameworks for our work with Black, Indigenous, disabled and trans femme communities as service users, employees, volunteers and partners.

This audit will guide us in improving our practices and develop processes and policies to better support Black, Indigenous, disabled, and trans femme communities. Our goal for the audit is to ensure that we are actively working towards becoming a more equitable and accountable organization by:

- Identifying and addressing systemic barriers within our structures and practices;
- Creating sustainable mechanisms for feedback and accountability to the communities we serve and are composed of; and
- Embedding equity-focused approaches into our governance, operations, and decision-making processes.

Objectives of the Audit

1. Operations, Policy and Human Resource Practices Review

- Assess the alignment of YouthLine's current human resources policies and practices with AODA, equity and inclusion best practices, particularly for Black, Indigenous, disabled, and trans femme employees;
- This includes evaluating accessibility and accommodations, staff development, retention, organizational safety and support in a remote working environment.
- Evaluate how YouthLine operates as an organization, including how we work together and uphold our mission in daily practice;
- Identify barriers and opportunities related to collaboration, inclusion, accessibility, and sustainable ways of working in a remote/hybrid working environment (e.g., meetings, communication, decision-making).

2. Examine & Review Volunteer Experience and Youth Leadership

- Examine how current policies and structures support or hinder an equitable and inclusive experience for volunteers;
- Identify opportunities to increase feedback, leadership pathways, and deeper engagement for volunteers beyond program roles or Board participation;
- *If possible,*
 - Review the equity of our peer support line and other service offerings for 2SLGBTQ+ youth, with a focus on accessibility and responsiveness to Black, Indigenous, disabled, and trans femme communities;
 - Recommend strategies to address gaps and improve service equity.

3. Evaluate Culture, Trust, Transparency and Accountability

- Evaluate YouthLine's relationships with Black, Indigenous, disabled, and trans femme communities;
- Identify any systemic barriers to trust and inclusion and recommend practices for accountability and sustained relationship-building, including how to acknowledge and address past harms in a way that leads to meaningful change.



The audit will culminate in an **in-person session** in Toronto where the consultant will present key findings and facilitate discussion and activities with YouthLine's staff and board. This session will support shared understanding, reflection, and co-learning, and help lay the groundwork for action planning and implementation.

Scope of Work

The selected consultant will:

- Review relevant documents, policies, and procedures.
- Conduct interviews or focus groups with staff, volunteers, and service users (service users cannot be interviewed or participate in focus groups but can be surveyed) to gather qualitative data on their experiences.
- Draft an external equity statement on LGBT YouthLine's relations and intentions for supporting Black, Indigenous, disabled, and trans femme youth.
- Provide a detailed report that includes:
 - Findings from the audit;
 - Specific recommendations for policy changes, cultural shifts, and actionable strategies to address barriers;
 - A roadmap for accountability and structural change;
 - Recommendations for ongoing equity coaching and development for leadership;
 - Where possible, include estimated costs for recommendations to support resource planning and organizational accountability.
- **Project timeline: August-November 2025**

Qualifications

The successful applicant(s) will have:

- Proven experience conducting equity audits, particularly in non-profit and/or 2SLGBTQ+ focused organizations;
- Expertise in anti-racism, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility practices.
- Experience working with Black, Indigenous, disabled, and trans femme communities;



- Strong facilitation and coaching skills;
- Ability to provide actionable and strategic recommendations.

Proposal Requirements

Please include the following in your 5-10 page proposal:

1. A brief overview of your qualifications and experience related to equity audits;
2. A proposed methodology for conducting the audit (including any tools or frameworks you will use);
3. A detailed timeline outlining the steps involved in the audit and final report;
4. A budget breakdown, including any fees for consultations, coaching, or facilitation sessions.
 - a. **The total maximum budget for this project is between \$20,000-\$25,000**
5. 2-3 references from previous clients, particularly those in similar sectors or with similar needs.

Proposal Submission Deadline

Proposals must be submitted by July 13th at 11:59 pm.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Relevance and depth of experience;
- Demonstrated ability to use and center Indigenous and Black knowledge systems and frameworks;
- Approach to conducting the equity audit;
- Ability to align with LGBT YouthLine's values and strategic plan;
- Budget and timeline feasibility;
- References and prior success with similar projects.

Submission information

Please submit your proposals or direct any questions to:



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