

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Central Oregon
[address]
[phone number & email contact]

A. SCOPE OF WORK:

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Central Oregon (UUFÇO), Bend, Oregon, seeks a consultant experienced in facilitating the development of 'governance by policy' in UU congregations.

Period of Performance: September 1, 2016 through August 31, 2017.

UUFÇO's movement to this governance model is being done in parallel with a search for a [new] settled minister. UUFÇO's goal is to have a new governance-by-policy model ready to implement no later than Fall 2017 when it hopes to call a new minister.

B. TASKS TO BE PERFORMED:

1. Work with the Board and its recently-appointed Governance Task Force [GTF] to ensure that all parties have a sufficient understanding and commitment to this approach to governance.
2. Advise Board and GTF in the development of a body of written policies sufficient to cover the scope and needs of the UUFÇO as a particular church congregation..
3. Advise the Board and GTF on the timing and content of communication with the Fellowship to facilitate understanding, buy-in and formal approval of this approach to governance at UUFÇO.
4. Ensure that UUFÇO has completed a reasonably complete set of governance policies and the Fellowship and the Board are overall prepared to begin governing by policy by the time a new settled minister begins her/his role at UUFÇO in the Fall of 2017.

C. BACKGROUND:

1. The UUFÇO Board has made an explicit commitment to this governance model.
2. The Board has appointed and charged a Governance Task Force of [X] members to assist it in the process of developing policies and implementing the model itself.
3. The Board and the GTF have read and discussed the book Governance and Ministry by Dan Hotchkiss (2d ed. 2016). This is generally viewed as a resource document, but not a statement of 'the only way' to do governance by policy. Both the Board and the GTF recognize that UUFÇO will have to develop its own specific approach, understanding, and specific policies applicable to this particular Fellowship.
4. The Fellowship has been informed that this work is underway, and will be offered chances to give input and feedback as specific work products are developed.
5. The UUFÇO has experienced major recent changes, in its physical home, its membership size, and its ministerial leadership. In general, the fellowship and the institution seem to be adjusting well, but certainly there are some stress and strains therefrom.

6. The UUFCO has earmarked \$3000 in the 2016-2017 budget for the consultation sought in this RFP.

D. HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

Please submit the following no later than July 30, 2016 to Mark Hickman, Board President, mark_hickman@hotmail.com and Wendy Howard, Board member and Chair of GTF, whoward610@gmail.com.

1. A brief description of how you will carry out the tasks outlined above.
2. A summary of your recent and relevant projects.
3. A firm estimate of the fees to be charged and an estimate of expenses that would be incurred.
4. Names, phone numbers, and email addresses of at least two individuals in UU churches with whom you have worked during the past 2 or 3 years with whom we can contact as references.

We would like to receive responses to this RFP by July 18, 2016. We anticipate making our decision about consultation services during the week of July 25th. If you have questions, please email them to Wendy Howard, whoward610@gmail.com

E. SOME HISTORY ON UUFCO

In 1958 a small group of families who wanted a religious education alternative for their children founded UUFCO. From 2000-2015 population growth in Central Oregon brought new resources. In 2004 UUFCO hired its first minister part-time. In 2006 UUFCO called its first settled minister, Rev. Heather Starr. She later became UUFCO's first full-time minister and provided the pastoral stability and leadership that established UUFCO as a significant liberal religious organization in Central Oregon.

In 2011 The Board had begun to implement some elements of a governance by policy model. In this same year UUFCO received an offer of a major donation to be used to build a church home. UUFCO formed a lay steering committee, conducted a capital campaign, engaged architects and contractors and, solely under the leadership of its lay leaders, built a beautiful spiritual home. This delegation of authority to lay leadership with accountability-was successful. Due to the focus on the building the work on future governance policies was suspended. The new building was occupied in February 2015 and dedicated in April 2015. (See Attachment 6, Spring 2016 UU World cover article about UUFCO.)

As the building process began, Rev. Starr married and accompanied her new spouse out of state. From 2012-14 the UUFCO governance model was guided by the bylaws which had been amended in a piecemeal fashion (Att. 7 current bylaws). The Board essentially delegated to a strong, self directed group of committees the day to day leadership of the congregation. Governance functioned through informal collaboration without clear boundaries of authority and accountability between the interim minister, lay leaders, committee chairs and part-time paid staff.

As UUFCO prepared to move into its new home, it envisioned governance as primarily flowing to a multiplicity of committees coordinated by cluster groups (facilities cluster and the Council of Committees or the Board of Trustees, but not necessarily to or through the Minister or Staff.

UUFCO hired a developmental minister in 2014, Rev. Antonia Won, for a three year term through the urging of the UUA. There were objections from some congregants who wanted to call a settled minister. Her term was subject to a possible extension under her employment agreement. Unfortunately, there were unforeseen issues that prevented Rev. Won, a Canadian citizen, from obtaining a US work visa for seven months of her first year of employment. During this period Rev. Won delivered her sermons from Canada via taped videos and managed her employment responsibilities via phone and Internet. She visited UUFCO several times during this period. Rev. Won was finally able to work onsite by March 2015.

As soon as UUFCO moved into its new home it experienced a flood of growth, increasing the size of its current membership to a little over 200. Between April 2015 and June 2016 the average weekly attendance grew to approximately 190. With a new building, new members and a developmental minister came many new ideas for ministry programs. Lines of authority and responsibility that were not reasonably clear to begin with became badly muddled. Confusion and misunderstanding arose between the Board, Rev. Won and some members. Rev. Won and some congregants believed that UUFCO should be governed by policy that delegated broad authority to the Minister but there were no clear policies of delegation or policies of accountability in place. A majority of the Board understood that most governance, at that time, was ultimately the Board's responsibility and acted accordingly.

Despite these challenges, congregational workshops held in late 2015 and early 2016 produced a new mission statement formally adopted by UUFCO via congregational vote at the annual meeting in May 2016. *UUFCO's mission is: "Seeking meaning, celebrating life, and serving the spirit of love and justice in our world."* (see Att. 3 Mission Brochure)

Governance and other misunderstandings became focused in April 2016, when Rev. Won's employment contract required UUFCO to determine whether it would extend her employment term. Rev. Won ultimately decided she preferred to finish her term and not seek extended employment with UUFCO. However, some members of the congregation formed themselves into factions related to their positions on this issue and a contentious all-congregational "forum" revealed wide differences of opinion. With facilitation from UUA, the Board and Rev. Won agreed on priorities for her remaining time in ministry at UUFCO. (See Attachment 8, UUFCO Trustees' Summary Statement on All-Congregational Forum, April 24, 2016.) **As part of this agreement, the Board wholeheartedly agreed it would "get a non-UUFCO governance consultant to assist [the Board] in transitioning into a new role and responsibilities." This agreement is the basis for this request for assistance from a governance consultant.** UUFCO, working with UUA Ministerial Transition Team Minister Rev. Amy Rowland, has also started a search process for a settled minister who will begin employment in August 2017.

The 2015-2016 UUFCO Board committed to transitioning to governance-by-policy as recommended by UUA and presented by Dan Hotchkiss in Governance and Ministry. The Board appointed a Governance Task Force (GTF), comprised of a Board member and three congregants. Rev. Won has been invited to participate to the extent she has the time. The Board issued a

charge to the GTF and the GTF began work in their first two meetings by looking at current policies and beginning to identify the work that needs to be accomplished. All new Board members who took office July 1 2016 and GTF members agreed to read the most recent Hotchkiss' book. Everyone also supports in principle a transition to governance-by-policy.

During the latter part of 2015-16, the Board appointed a Bylaws Task Force (BTF) to revise the bylaws. Recently the Board and BTF held two after worship meetings that attracted approximately 20 interested congregants. The congregants asked questions and gave suggestions for further revision of the bylaws. The BTF continues its work. The congregants' feedback of the proposed revisions previewed governance uncertainties and potential future differences. The Board prefers to submit revised bylaws for congregational vote in September 2017 unless it seems wiser to defer a vote until bylaws can be adopted as part of a new governance structure.

Currently, UUFCO employs Rev. Won as its full-time minister. UUFCO also employs paid part-time Staff: Administrator, Congregational Life Facilitator, Bookkeeper, Director of Religious Exploration and Music Director. Otherwise, volunteer lay members and friends lead and staff UUFCO activities.