



TO: Business Model Review & Planning Consultants

RE: Request for Proposals for Business Model Review Consultant

DATE: February 2025

Exponent Philanthropy is in a period of transformation as we move to become a more thriving and impactful organization building off our nearly 30-year history and launching into our innovative future. Our Chief Executive Officer is in search of a qualified and experienced consultant to assist the organization as it undertakes a business model review.

When using the phrase business model, the definition means ensuring Exponent Philanthropy has the revenue streams that sustains and grows a stronger organization in pursuit of our mission and vision.

The Purpose:

Exponent Philanthropy is looking to hire a strategist/consultant to work with our Chief Executive Officer, senior leadership team, and a joint task force of board and staff members to fully assess our organization's current business model (revenues and expenses), engage stakeholders, identify existing/new revenue streams, and propose options that will improve our financial stability and long-term sustainability. The term of this work will be for 5 to 6 months kicking off in the 2nd quarter of 2025 and concluding by October 2025.

The Goal:

To make Exponent Philanthropy a financially sustainable organization that can adapt, innovate, and lead in the philanthropy serving organization sector. This is to ensure we have long-term funding streams that allow for year after year program vitality, staff retention and growth, and thought leadership across the sector and our more than 1500-member network. The end product of this engagement is that the consultant/strategist will provide a list of recommendations to result in direct actions by Exponent Philanthropy to increase revenue, efficiency, staff capacity, effectiveness, and membership engagement to further our vision of "Transformed Communities through Informed Giving".

The work involved will include:

- Reporting to and working with the Chief Executive Officer in finetuning and launching the business model review process
- Collaborating with the CEO and senior leadership team to do an assessment of all current income, expenses, and programs/processes that the organization leads to determine efficiency, effectiveness, and relevancy going into the future
- Working alongside the Managing Director of Advancement and the membership team as they lead the dues restructure process providing research, strategy, and consulting support
- Engaging with the joint Business Model Review Taskforce through three to four meetings to identify the most effective, equitable, and sustainable revenue streams for the organization currently used, new opportunities, and proposing any practices/processes to reduce or retire
- Interview Exponent Philanthropy staff, board members, committee chairs/members, members, partners, donors, peers (philanthropic sector organizations), and other associations/social enterprise organizations to obtain real-time feedback, suggestions, and identify current practices to continue, new trends, and opportunities that Exponent Philanthropy should implement in future years
- Propose practices, revenue streams, opportunities, and new models to continue, ones to improve and how, practices to retire, and/or new innovative opportunities that will ensure the

organization has sustaining revenue (baseline of \$4 Million/year) to thrive and grow to advance our current strategic plan

About Exponent Philanthropy:

Exponent Philanthropy is the largest philanthropic network in the country. With more than 1500 members in every corner of the U.S., we are a nationwide network of community-connected philanthropy leaders. Our members include all types of foundations, families, companies, and individuals who practice “lean philanthropy”. Our members – no matter their asset size (ranging from less than \$1 million to over \$1 billion) – focus on investing maximum resources directly in the causes, people, and places they love. Exponent Philanthropy’s work focuses on amplifying and increasing the impact of lean funders and transforming communities through informed giving. We do this by fostering a strong philanthropic network, highlighting the work of high-impact funders, sharing innovative and promising practices from across the field, and providing a robust arena for idea sharing and collaboration.

Historical Review of the Business Model:

Exponent Philanthropy has operated under its current business model for over a decade. While this model worked in the past, the pandemic, economic environment, and changes in the field have impacted our organizational stability. The past and current planned revenue streams have included:

- *Program revenue (annual conference, virtual, and in-person programs)*
- *Membership Dues (Signature and Signature Plus levels)*
- *Development (fundraising through members’ annual appeal, corporate relations and sponsorships, conference/program support, and major funder support)*
- *Publications, research, and fees for service (FOMR, Grantee Perception surveys, presentations/trainings for members, etc.)*

The reality is that Exponent Philanthropy has a hardworking and smart team, but the time period of 2020-2022 negatively limited our revenue generation. While we are in a transformation process, this does not represent a lack of commitment by our current staff, but the need to adapt and innovate. It is our opportunity to identify:

- a) *Modifications of current revenue streams*
- b) *Implementing new revenue streams*
- c) *Areas to retire or change the methodology behind them*
- d) *Incorporating new fundraising strategies (naming opportunities, multi-year commitments, etc.)*

Moving to an updated business model will allow Exponent Philanthropy to work smarter, not harder allowing us to foster the financial resources needed to sustain and grow the organization.

Project Timeline:

Month	Tasks
Month A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with CEO, Senior Leaders, and general work • Attends initial convening of the joint Business Model Taskforce
Month B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate review of the past 5 to 7 years of revenue, expense, and program history • Survey/interview staff, board , members, partners, funders, peers, and other associations • Convene the Business Model Review Taskforce for a second convening to share initial findings from the review of the past 5 to 7 years of revenue, expenses, and program history • Join the May Board meeting for interviewing/facilitating discussion
Month C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete surveying of parties to summarize and present findings to the CEO and senior leadership team for feedback • Determine and complete recommendations for identified business model updating, changes, and transformation opportunities • Present findings to the Business Model Review Taskforce as to the next options for the group to respond to them, identify likely options, and set priorities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the business model findings in relationship to the extended strategic plan that runs until December 31, 2027, and identify opportunities to incorporate changes/suggestions with 30th-anniversary celebration opportunities.
Month D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based upon the feedback from the Business Model Review Taskforce edit and prepare the recommendations, timeline for implementation, and outline the Why, Who, What, When, and Where over the next 18 to 36 months placing them in order of priority and level of wins Recommend any updates/edits for the 30th anniversary kicking off in 2025 Present final report and recommendations to CEO, then CEO and Senior Leadership Team for review and confirmation
Month E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene the Business Model Review Taskforce for final review of the recommendations, plan of action, steps, and timelines. The task force is to approve the plan. Consultant along with Board Chair and CEO present the findings and recommendations to the board of directors at the August or November meeting for approval.
Month F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff leadership takes a plan and begins implementation strategy around phases 1, 2, & 3 Identified volunteer leaders are kept engaged to further the work from a governance level in partnership with management Ongoing reporting/updating is to be completed monthly with the Senior Leadership Team, monthly with the individual department teams, Quarterly with the board, and quarterly with all staff Launch steps for 30th-anniversary preparations in general and aligned with the business model review.
Ongoing	<p><i>(Post consultant engagement)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track and report monthly both business model review changes and strategic plan impact.

Project Budget:

Exponent Philanthropy anticipates this project overall will be 75 to 100 hours and has budgeted for this project in the \$15,000 to 25,000 range plus travel/convening expenses. Travel is expected to be minimal with potential in-person meetings with the CEO and Senior Leadership, and presentation to the Board of Directors in late summer or fall 2025.

Experience:

Exponent Philanthropy is looking for a strategist/consultant who has first-hand successful experience in working with, leading, and/or assisting philanthropic support organizations, professional associations, and/or entrepreneurial nonprofit organizations. Candidates should have 8-plus years of expertise in revenue generation, organizational expense analysis, program evaluation, and/or organizational transformation processes.

Application Process:

Exponent Philanthropy requests that all seriously interested parties submit a proposal no longer than a three-page memo outlining her/his/their individual or firm’s expertise, years of experience, past projects, and the approach they will take with this process to Exponent Philanthropy by March 15, 2025. Please list the parties involved, their bios, proposed course of action, experience, and three to five professional references for your experience in this work to Paul D. Daugherty, CEO at paul@exponentphilanthropy.org .