

Position: AI Policy, Training & Coaching Consultant

Northland Foundation

Primary Location: Duluth, MN (Hybrid — remote and in-person as needed for training delivery and Board of Trustees/committee briefings)

Hours: Part-Time Contractor

Contract Term: October 1, 2026 – December 31, 2027 (approximately 15 months)

The Northland Foundation is seeking to contract with a consultant to lead a comprehensive AI integration initiative for the organization, covering AI policy development, staff training and coaching, and Board of Trustees and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) education. The consultant will work directly with Foundation leadership and staff to build organizational AI policy, competency, and confidence across a wide range of roles and comfort levels.

Organizational Goals for This Initiative

- Develop an AI policy that meets the needs of staff, the Board of Trustees, and volunteers, and that balances protecting the organization with the efficiency and opportunity AI can offer.
- Build AI competency and confidence across Foundation staff at multiple skill levels, ensuring that every staff member who wants to engage can learn meaningfully at a level appropriate to their role and comfort.
- Equip Board of Trustees members and Technical Advisory Committee volunteers with practical guidance for handling sensitive materials appropriately when using AI tools.
- Establish sustainable internal capacity and support structures so that responsible AI adoption continues beyond the length of this contract.

Anticipated Scope of Work

- Comprehensive AI policy development, including companion guidance on approved tools and appropriate data handling, developed with a small internal team and prepared for Board of Trustees approval.
- Development and delivery of longer-format staff training sessions (2 to 4 hours), including an initial kickoff session.
- Development and delivery of shorter training sessions (30 minutes to 1 hour) for staff, and separately for the Board of Trustees and Technical Advisory Committee volunteers, focused on appropriate handling of board and loan materials in AI tools.
- One-on-one coaching support for staff working through real, current tasks.
- Assistance documenting AI-enhanced workflows and use cases developed by staff over the course of the engagement.
- Evaluation and reporting, including staff feedback surveys and periodic reporting on program effectiveness.

- Regular check-in meetings with Northland Foundation's AI Initiative Committee to review progress and organizational goals.

This scope is subject to change based on organizational needs and staff feedback throughout the contract period, in consultation with Foundation leadership.

Anticipated Project Milestones

- Draft AI policy developed: November 12, 2026
- Project kickoff and initial staff training session (3 to 4 hours): November 16, 2026
- Final AI policy developed: November 24, 2026

This engagement is front-loaded, with the initial training completed by mid-November and policy completed by late November 2026. Ongoing coaching, recurring training sessions, and other deliverables continue on a rolling basis through the remainder of the contract term.

Preferred Qualifications

- Demonstrated experience developing organizational policy related to AI or emerging technology.
- Experience designing and delivering training or curriculum for adult learners across a range of technical comfort levels.
- Direct, hands-on experience using AI tools in a professional or consulting capacity.
- Experience providing one-on-one coaching or consulting support to individuals or teams.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to translate technical concepts for non-technical audiences.
- Experience working with nonprofit organizations, foundations, or other mission-driven organizations preferred.
- Comfort presenting to organizational leadership, Board of Trustees members, or governance bodies.

Contract and Compensation

- Estimated contract amount: \$20,000 to \$35,000.
- Proposals must include the consultant's proposed hourly rate.
- Northland Foundation reserves the right to award all, part, or none of this engagement based on proposals received.

Invoicing

The selected contractor will be required to submit monthly invoices to Northland Foundation, itemizing hours by the following categories:

- Administrative meetings
- Policy preparation

- Group training preparation
- Group training delivery
- One-on-one coaching sessions

Companion Opportunity

Northland Foundation is simultaneously seeking a consultant for a related, separately funded opportunity through Northland SBDC, focused on AI-related technical assistance for small businesses across the region (see companion RFP). Consultants are welcome to apply for one or both opportunities. Preference will be given to candidates able to serve both roles, though the Foundation reserves the right to award the two opportunities separately.

How to Apply

If interested, please send the following in the body of an email to Jenny Eaton at jenny@northlandsbdc.org:

- Two to four paragraphs describing your interest in and qualifications for this work, including your experience with small business or nonprofit consulting, policy or curriculum development, training delivery, and direct AI tool usage.
- Your proposed hourly rate for this engagement.
- Your resume, or a link to your LinkedIn profile.

Deadline to apply: September 14, 2026, at 5:00 PM.

Proposal Evaluation and Selection

Applications will be collected by Jenny Eaton and reviewed by Northland Foundation's AI Initiative Committee. Candidates selected to interview will be notified no later than September 16, 2026. Interviews are anticipated to take place on September 16, 18, 21, and 22, 2026.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following:

- Interview performance, including organizational fit and approach
- AI knowledge and demonstrated practical application experience
- Small business or nonprofit consulting experience
- Policy development experience
- Group training and curriculum development experience
- One-on-one coaching experience
- Regional presence and availability for in-person delivery. Candidates from outside the region are welcome to apply; candidates based locally who can deliver training in person will receive a scoring preference.

- Candidates proposing to serve both the Northland Foundation and Northland SBDC opportunities will receive a scoring preference.

Anticipated Timeline

- Application deadline: September 14, 2026, 5:00 PM
- Interview invitations sent: no later than September 16, 2026
- Interviews: September 16, 18, 21, 22, and 28 (as needed)
- Anticipated start date: October 1, 2026
- Draft AI policy developed: November 12, 2026
- Project kickoff and initial staff training session: November 16, 2026
- Final AI policy developed: November 24, 2026
- Contract term: through December 31, 2027

The Northland Foundation is a regional foundation serving the seven-county region of northeastern Minnesota and is host of the Northland Minnesota Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Programs are open to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Northland Foundation is an equal opportunity employer, lender, and provider.