

Lions Nonprofit Consulting Firm



General

Description

Lions Nonprofit Consulting Firm (LNCF) is a pro bono, student-run organization at The College of New Jersey. It is affiliated with the TCNJ Bonner along with the TCNJ Center for Community Engagement. The mission of this organization is to provide community-based nonprofit organizations with advice and consultation on their respective online marketing and social media strategies. Nonprofit clients will work closely with the LNCF student consultants who will provide personalized counsel based on each organization's individual needs. Student consultants will gain hands-on experience in the field of public relations, communications and marketing. LNCF welcomes students from all majors and disciplines to use their skills and expertise to assist our nonprofit clientele achieve their goals to the maximum potential. LNCF, through its mission, strives to reflect the goals and principles of the TCNJ Bonner program in community engagement and leadership development. LNCF strives for the promotion of social justice issues and community-identified needs.

Skill/Knowledge Areas

Social Media and Marketing Strategy Development and Execution

Financial Support

Given that LNCF is a pro bono organization, it will not require any direct funding as of yet from any external institutions.

Institutional Hub

TCNJ Center for Community Engagement and TCNJ Bonner Program

Projects

Project Identification

LNCF projects can be identified in one of three ways:

- Direct relation with the TCNJ Bonner Program via community partnership (e.g. Academic Sports Academy, Urban Promise, Meals on Wheels, etc.)
- Direct contact by the nonprofit with the LNCF leadership via email or phone number
- Referral to LNCF by a third party individual, be it student, staff, or another organization

Once the organization has been identified, LNCF will send an application to the nonprofit to fill out and send back. Initially a meeting will be conducted between a representative from the community organization and the LNCF director, along with another member of the leadership team. During this initial meeting, the nonprofit representative will discuss the immediate needs and goals of their organization as it relates to social media and marketing to LNCF members. After the initial meeting, the firm director will then meet with the rest of the leadership team and the general board to discuss whether or not to approve the partnership with this particular nonprofit organization. Once approved by LNCF, the nonprofit application will then be sent to the faculty advisor to provide final approval. Projects will be received on a rolling basis throughout the semester and a compiled list of approved clients will be regularly updated.

Project Management

Once approved by both the LNCF general body and the faculty advisor, the project will then move onto the project management stage. Each project will consist of one partnership with one organization at any one time. For each project, a project team will be assembled of two to four consultants depending on the depth of the project content. One member of the team will serve as project manager who is tasked with keeping direct contact with the nonprofit and maintaining leadership among the project team.

During the project duration, the team will be responsible for not only identifying and brainstorming solutions to client problems, but also with keeping regular communication with the client to ensure their feedback is taken into account at every stage of the project development. Project team members will be required to have at least two direct meetings with the client, either in person or online (Zoom, etc.) to discuss the development of the project and any other appropriate matter concerning the project.

Once the project is completed, the project manager will then keep in contact with the client for a period of no less than 2 weeks to ensure that the nonprofit organization is taking into consideration the advice given by the consultants and are implementing any changes in a timely manner.

Student Involvement

Student Recruitment

LNCF is open to all students, regardless of major or career goals, who are interested in using their skills and in capacity building for nonprofit organizations. LNCF will send out applications to students interested in joining the firm at the beginning of the fall semester. LNCF can be advertised to students via academic departments, recognized student organizations, LNCF's own marketing ventures, or even by simple word of mouth.

Once all applications have been received, the first stage of vetting will include LNCF's executing board selecting applications that showcase two major characteristics: experience with social media marketing or at least a willingness to learn as a consultant and passion toward working with nonprofits/community engagement. After this initial round, remaining applicants will be invited to interview with the firm director and faculty mentor to discuss more about their intentions of applying to LNCF. Once all interviews have been conducted, the firm director and faculty mentor will compile the final list of applicants who have been admitted into LNCF. Admitted consultants will be notified of their acceptance within one week of their interview.

Student Commitment

Once admitted to LNCF, consultants will be asked to serve for a one year term during which they should strive to work on at least two projects, one for each semester. Students will not have to work during the summer or winter breaks, unless they are lagging behind in their project or they would like to continue working during these times. Consultants are encouraged to reapply for additional terms at which point their performance and commitment within LNCF will be the main determinant to their readmission to the firm. Student commitment will be communicated to all community partners prior to the start of any project.

Faculty Involvement

Faculty Mentor Role

The faculty mentors for LNCF will be the director of the TCNJ Bonner program as well as a faculty member from the School of Business who is well versed in social media and online marketing. While both mentors are tasked with overseeing the firm and all of its activities, each mentor will have a different role based on their position at TCNJ. The Bonner director will oversee the nonprofit partnerships created with LNCF while the School of Business faculty will oversee the work of project teams and even provide guidance wherever appropriate. The firm director will give the faculty mentors biweekly updates regarding the activities of LNCF.