



REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS

Contract to Provide Technical Field Liaison Support for the National Coastal Resilience Fund

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) seeks one or two qualified Contractors to provide technical assistance as “field liaisons” to support applicants and grantees engaged in advancing the use of nature-based solutions to improve coastal resilience for the National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF) and other associated NFWF grant programs. This support will help to advance the goals of the NCRF and increase the number and scale of qualified proposals to the program. The contractor will provide support for one-year (with the option to renew for an additional year) and report to Jessica Grannis, Program Director of NFWF’s National Coastal Resilience Fund.

BACKGROUND

The National Coastal Resilience Fund is a program that NFWF administers in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The purpose of the program is to invest in nature-based solutions with the dual goals of increasing the resilience of communities from current and future threats from coastal hazards and improving habitats for fish and wildlife. NFWF administers the NCRF as a national grants program focused on funding projects within the coastal areas of U.S. coastal states, including the Great Lakes states, and U.S. territories and tribal lands. Through the NCRF, NFWF invests in projects advancing nature-based solutions – such as restoring coastal marshes and forests, reconnecting floodplains, rebuilding dunes or other natural buffers, or installing living shorelines. NCRF projects must show clear benefits in terms of reducing current and project threats to communities from coastal hazards (including sea-level and lake-level changes, flooding, erosion, increased frequency and/or intensity of storms, and impacts from other chronic and episodic factors such as nuisance flooding during high tides, permafrost melt, etc.) and improvements to habitats for fish and wildlife species. NFWF is also interested in identifying projects that use innovative approaches to addressing coastal hazards and that are design to be sustainable by accounting for projected future environmental conditions. NFWF funds projects in four categories designed to advance projects through a “project pipeline,” including: Community Capacity Building and Planning; Site Assessment and Preliminary Design, Final Design and Permitting, and Restoration Implementation. For more information about the Program, please visit our website at:

<https://www.nfwf.org/programs/national-coastal-resilience-fund>

With additional funding, the NCRF is expected to grow significantly in terms of funding levels, the number and size of projects, the reach and audience of the program, and the number of applicants exploring innovative nature-based solutions. Therefore, the need for effective field support has also grown. NFWF seeks one or two contractors to serve as “field liaisons” for the NCRF to: (1) assist applicants in developing high quality proposals that are aligned with NFWF’s priorities, (2) help communities design and move towards large-scale implementation projects, (3) help troubleshoot grant implementation, and (4) facilitate communication and development of networks among grantees to encourage shared learning.

The NCRF is a national program, and a contractor should be prepared to provide support to practitioners throughout the [program footprint](#) working on a variety of natural and nature-based features; however, Offerors should highlight if they have a particular expertise in a certain regions of the larger NCRF footprint or on particular aspects of coastal resilience and using nature-based solutions to mitigate risks from coastal



hazards. NFWF priority regions, issue areas, and groups for field liaison coverage include the Pacific Northwest, Alaska, Great Lakes, New England, U.S. territories, tribes, and underserved communities; contractors with experience, relationships and expertise working in these regions and with these groups will be prioritized.

QUALIFICATIONS

To assist in the successful implementation of the National Coastal Resilience Fund, this RFQ is seeking one or two qualified organizations or entities to serve as independent contractor(s) to NFWF with the following qualifications:

- Three to five years' experience working directly to support coastal resilience related programs or initiatives, and particular expertise in designing, implementing, or evaluating nature-based solutions for mitigating coastal hazards and improving habitat for fish and wildlife is preferred.
- Experience working in a variety of coastal jurisdictions and advising federal, state, local, territorial, or tribal government agencies, and specific experience in priority regions and geographies is preferred.
- Specific experience working with or engaging diverse stakeholder groups, underserved communities, and/or tribal communities.
- Specific experience providing technical support to organizations to develop project ideas and troubleshoot implementation barriers
- Strong public speaking and meeting facilitation experience, including specific experience designing and implementing effective engagement and outreach approaches, convening practitioners, and translating complex information for a variety of audiences with different skill and competency levels.
- Understanding of federal grant requirements, including terms and conditions associated with federal funding sources.
- Strong project management skills, including the ability to flexibly manage and adapt to changing project needs.

SCOPE OF WORK

NFWF seeks one or two qualified Contractors to develop and implement a work plan designed to maximize the outcomes of the NCRF, which aims to provide dual benefits to human communities and fish and wildlife habitats. The following tasks constitute the Scope of Work for this Request for Quotations. The selected Contractor will be expected to work on all tasks described and participate in check-in calls every two weeks with NFWF staff throughout the duration of the project period of performance. Please provide time and cost quotes for each task using the [Contractor Budget Template](#) provided. NFWF anticipates level of effort not to exceed half-time, a not to exceed cost will be negotiated upon award with each selected Contractor.

- **Task 1: Identify and grow opportunities for new NCRF applicants** – Conduct outreach to key stakeholder groups and assist potential applicants in priority geographies to help them understand NFWF funding priorities, develop restoration project concepts, identify potential partnerships, and identify funding opportunities for matching funds. Present on the NCRF at selected events and conferences. Support outreach to existing grantees to help them advance next phases of pipeline projects for future grant cycles.
- **Task 2: Troubleshoot challenges with applicants and grantees** – Provide technical assistance to applicants and grantees to help them trouble-shoot potential challenges with project design and

implementation (e.g., provide technical assistance and guidance on the develop of project ideas, budgets, and application materials; support onboarding of new grantees to NFWF grant management systems and requirements, etc.).

- **Task 3: Support NCRF Proposal Review** – Assist in reviewing select grant proposals for annual funding opportunities. Written review is anticipated for approximately 100 pre-proposals (~2-3 page) and 50 full proposals (~10 pages, not including attachments, such as engineering and design documents) per year.
- **Task 4: Promote peer-learning and regional-scale collaboration** – Assist prospective applicants and current NFWF grantees in establishing, strengthening, and sustaining regional partnerships and collaborative approaches to advance NFWF’s goals under the National Coastal Resilience Fund. Facilitate peer-to-peer learning and collaborative initiatives among applicants, grantees and other partners through workshops, webinars and through other priority conferences and events. Support efforts to distill lessons learned and capture success stories from previous grants by reviewing project reports and assessments, engaging grantees, conducting site visits, and summarizing project case studies or other products, among other activities.

Deliverables –

- Semiannual written and ongoing verbal progress reports
- Monthly reports on outreach and engagement activities
- Final report summarizing lessons learned at contract completion
- Written reviews of grant proposals
- Other deliverables as called for by the proposed Scope or Work and contractor’s proposed technical approach

These deliverables may be expanded or refined during the contract negotiation.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals must be submitted under the same cover at the same time, in three distinctly labeled and separate documents: 1) Technical Proposal, 2) Budget, and 3) Evidence of Financial Stability. E-mail a Word version of your submission to NFWF (Anna Beatrice, Anna.Beatrice@nfwf.org). In the subject line, please indicate *Response to RFQ for Technical Liaisons for the NCRF – [name of respondent]*.

Submissions must meet the requirements below:

1. **Technical Proposal (twenty (20) pages total):**
 - a. Format: Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF with a font size no smaller than 11 pt.
 - b. Narrative: Address each item in the “Submission Outline” section, below. Limit your submission to a maximum of ten (10) pages (not including resumes). Please limit supplementary materials to only those requested below. (NFWF may contact respondents as necessary for any additional information.)
 - c. Resumes: Attach CVs or Resumes of key staff. Please limit attached resumes to no more than ten (10) one-page resumes, each a single-sided page. Licenses and other

certifications should be noted as part of your submission, but copies are not required at this time.

2. **Budget:** Please provide a proposed budget with cost quotes for each Task for your proposed services, include hourly rates for proposed job classifications and, if available, audited overhead rates. The proposed budget should itemize work in sufficient detail to enable reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the entire funding request. You must use the attached [Contractor Budget Template](#). Please include the proposed budget for equipment purchase in the proposal. Please highlight any non-profit discounts on the services you provide. NFWF will not allow any markups for sub-contracts or other direct costs, although project management costs for staff to perform sub-contract management are allowable. NFWF anticipates awarding up to two contracts under this RFQ, not to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold.
3. **Evidence of Financial Stability:** The applicant shall provide with the RFP response, proof of financial stability in the form of financial statements, credit ratings, a line of credit, or other financial arrangements sufficient to demonstrate the applicant's capability to meet the requirements of this RFP.

Submissions must be e-mailed no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on **June 1, 2022**.

SUBMISSION OUTLINE

Technical Proposal – Your description, in no more than twenty (20) pages (including resume attachments) of your and/or your organization's qualifications should include the following elements:

1. Contact information. Please provide a Primary Contact Person, Entity Name, Address, Phone, E-mail, Website, and EIN or SSN
2. General Organization Description. Please provide a general description of your organization including practice areas, geographic service areas, approximate number of clients, and length of time in business. If your application includes team members or sub-consultants, please provide the requested profile information for all key personnel and team members, and indicate the lead entity responsible for contract management and quality of deliverables.
3. Technical Approach. Provide a general description demonstrating your understanding of the goals and objectives of the National Coastal Resilience Fund and the coastal resilience and administrative challenge facing NCRF applicants and grantees, including any geographic differences in risks and approaches, key stakeholders and partners engaging in coastal resilience initiatives, and the policy landscape for promoting nature-based solutions. Describe the technical approach and overall strategy you would take for implementing the Tasks listed in the Scope of Work. Describe how you will communicate with NFWF and program stakeholders and report on progress, results, and deliverables.
4. Expertise and past experience. Please list the type(s) of services your organization provides relating to the specified Qualifications and your expertise in these areas. Please detail your experience in providing services similar to those called for in this RFQ. List recent (last five years) projects and previous services related to the expertise you are describing.

5. **Key staff.** Please provide names and brief biographies of key staff. Please describe key staff's training and experience to successfully implement the Tasks called for in the Scope of Work and relevant to those listed in the Qualifications section.
6. **Team management and quality assurance/ quality control.** Describe how the lead entity will manage the team (if applicable). Please describe quality assurance and control procedures that will be used to ensure your team's work meets professional standards and how invoicing will be performed to ensure contract compliance.
7. **References and past performance.** Please describe three past engagements conducting similar work for NFWF or other organizations, including the specific tasks and deliverables completed and how those engagements will prepare your team to ensure delivery of quality work, on time and on budget, if awarded this contract. Include contact information (names, emails addresses, and telephone numbers) for three client references relevant to the services described.
8. **Resumes.** You please attach resumes of key staff as appropriate. Please limit attached resumes to no more than 10 one-page resumes, each a single-sided page. Licenses and other certifications should be noted as part of your submission, but copies are not required at this time.

SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

A panel of NFWF staff will review the full proposals. Offerors may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of the award. Up to two contracts may be made for this project. If multiple institutions are involved in one application, they should be handled through sub-awards and sub-contracts.

Failure to include all materials outlined above may cause a submission to be deemed non-responsive. NFWF will give priority consideration to respondents that demonstrate the following in a fully responsive submission:

1. **Understanding of the Scope or Work.** The proposed Technical Approach must demonstrate considerable experience working in a variety of coastal settings and jurisdictions, with specific expertise supporting coastal resilience initiatives and/or nature-based solutions for mitigating coastal hazards and improving habitat for fish and wildlife. The proposed Technical Approach must demonstrate an understanding of the NCRF goals and objectives, the coastal resilience challenges facing NCRF grantees and applicants, the key players and stakeholders in the coastal resilience field, and the policy landscape affecting implementation of nature-based projects. Preference will be given to Offerors with specific experience engaging or advising representatives from underserved or tribal communities. Weight: 10%
2. **Technical Approach.** Offeror should clearly describe their proposed technical approach for successfully implementing the Scope of Work described in the RFQ and ensuring the success of NCRF grant investments and overall program strategy. Weight: 20%
3. **Budget and Cost Effectiveness.** Preference will be given to Offerors who can provide high quality services at an affordable cost. Weight: 30%

4. **Qualification of Proposed Personnel and Capacity to Deliver Services.** Preference will be given to Offerors that bring a team with the training and experience detailed in the Qualifications section and the requisite experience necessary to successfully implement the Tasks detailed in the Scope of Work. Offerors must demonstrate they have sufficient staff and other resources, a degree of flexibility in how and where services are delivered, and an ability to tailor content and delivery methods to meet the specific needs of the NCRF and key stakeholder groups. Weight: 20%
5. **Contractor's Past Performance.** Offerors must demonstrate significant expertise and experience as exhibited by delivery of multiple directly relevant projects in areas described in this RFQ, in consideration of the quality of deliverables, timeliness, cost controls, and client references. Weight: 20%

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

April 13, 2022	RFQ Released
April 26, 2022	Deadline for questions about the solicitation to NFWF. Offerors should submit questions regarding this solicitation via email to Anna Beatrice (Anna.Beatrice@nfwf.org). NFWF will post all the questions and responses to all questions online so that all offerors have access to them at the same time. In order to provide equitable responses, all questions must be received by NFWF no later than 5:00 PM on April 26, 2022.
May 3, 2022	NFWF response to questions about the solicitation. NFWF will post the questions submitted regarding the solicitation and responses on the NFWF website .
June 1, 2022	Deadline for receipt by NFWF of proposals. Proposals must be received electronically as an email attachment to Anna Beatrice (Anna.Beatrice@nfwf.org) by 11:59 PM EDT on June 1, 2022. Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF.
June 2022	Interviews with selected finalists
July 2022	Contract awarded to selected offeror

ELIGIBLE CONTRACTORS & CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Eligible offerors include institutions of higher education, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, international organizations, and local, state and Indian tribal governments. Small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are strongly encouraged to apply.

By submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation, the offeror warrants and represents that it does not currently have any apparent or actual conflict of interest, as described herein. In the event an offeror currently has, will have during the life of the contemplated contract, or becomes aware of an apparent or actual conflict of interest, in the event an award is made, the offeror must notify NFWF in writing in the proposal, or in subsequent correspondence (if the issue becomes known after the submission of the



proposal) of such apparent or actual conflicts of interest, including organizational conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the contractor, the contractor's employees, or the contractor's subcontractors in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests, or otherwise. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the offeror, the offeror's employees, or the offeror's future subcontractors in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the NFWF Contracting Officer will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the offeror to reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies NFWF may result in the proposal not being selected for award.

By submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation, the Offeror warrants and represents that it is eligible for award of a Contract resulting from this solicitation and that it is not subject to any of the below circumstances:

Has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an Contract with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; or

Was convicted (or had an officer or agent of such corporation acting on behalf of the corporation convicted) of a felony criminal violation under any Federal or State law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; or

Is listed on the General Services Administration's, government-wide System for Award Management Exclusions (SAM Exclusions), in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 C.F.R Part 180 that implement E.O.s 12549 (3 C.F.R., 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 C.F.R., 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension," or intends to enter into any subaward, contract or other Contract using funds provided by NFWF with any party listed on the SAM Exclusions in accordance with Executive Orders 12549 and 12689. The SAM Exclusions instructions can be found here: <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>