Applicant Questions and Answers

Related to the NFWF Economic Valuation Support Request for Proposals

August 10, 2022

Application Process and Contracting

Q. Is the current "geophysical modeling and socioeconomic assessment of NCRF projects" referred to on p2 being conducted in-house or by a contractor?

A. This work is being completed by a contractor.

Q. Is the current "calculators for determining the carbon sequestration and job creation benefits" referred to on p3 being conducted in-house or by a contractor?

A. Although both calculators were developed and are being updated by contractors, analyses of NFWF grants are primarily being conducted in-house.

Q. Would NFWF like to see proposals with academic or other university-affiliated components (e.g. masters theses, capstones, etc.)?

A. Proposals with an academic or university-affiliated components are not a priority for NFWF. We are looking for technical proposals that present a robust and cost-effective approach for successfully completing the scope of work. However, if the work funded under this RFP can be useful to advancing broader academic research, publications, etc. on the topic of evaluating and quantifying the ecosystem service benefits of nature-based coastal resilience projects, offerors should indicate that benefit in their technical proposal and should specify if any of their budget would go to these types of activities.

Q. In reference to the Economic Valuation Support RFP, are the five pages of resumes included in the 10-page limit for the Technical Proposal?

A. Yes, the technical proposal, including short bios, should be no longer than 10-pages total. You may attach an additional 10-pages of CVs or resumes.

Scope of Work

Q. Does NFWF only want to apply currently available data (the "benefit transfer" approach) or would the opportunity exist to conduct primary research if a specific project fits that bill? Primary research could include surveys, assessing existing travel data to determine project-specific econ values, etc.

A. NFWF anticipates that Offerors will use a benefit transfer approach in most instances where data are available. However, Offerors are encouraged to propose methods they deem appropriate for successfully completing the scope of work called for in the RFP in a cost-effective and defensible manner.

Q. Is there an expectation that primary research and data collection (such as surveys and interviews) be conducted to estimate benefits in each case study local area, or is the expectation that the selected contractor use existing studies from other locations to estimate benefits (i.e. benefits transfer method)?

A. See above, Offerors are encouraged to propose methods they deem appropriate for successfully completing the scope of work called for in the RFP in a cost-effective and defensible manner. If Offerors expect that primary research and data collection may be needed to successfully complete case studies on some or all of the selected projects, they should describe the methods that they would use in their technical proposal, why those methods are needed or recommended for successfully completing the work, and the budget needed to complete those activities.

Q. Will the project potentially require collection of additional field data (Task 1 Geospatial Data, or other)?

See above, Offerors are encouraged to propose methods they deem appropriate for successfully completing the scope of work called for in the RFP in a cost-effective and defensible manner. NFWF will provide the contractor all of the project documentation listed in Task 1 on page 2 of the RFP and with basic data on the project sites, including restoration activities and spatial data on the project footprint. The contractor will be responsible for obtaining additional spatial data as needed (e.g., land cover, sea level rise) and supplying all additional information required to analyze the ecosystem service benefits of the selected projects.

Q. Do tasks 1 and 2 need to be completed prior to developing the 5 case studies for February delivery, or can Tasks 1 & 2 be concurrent with the first 5 case studies, with the 5 case studies then updated later, if needed?

A. Yes, Tasks 1 and 2 may be completed concurrently and the contractor should assume some budget to update and refine the first round of five case studies, after they are due in February 2023.

Q. What are some details about the nature, scope, and methods used for the socioeconomic assessment of NFWF-funded projects that is currently underway? How many projects are being assessed? What are the "30 metrics" considered? What methods (e.g. ecosystem service valuation, NRDA, avoided costs, etc.) are being used?

A. The socioeconomic assessment is focused primarily on completing biophysical modeling and socioeconomic assessments to evaluate and quantify the risk-reduction benefits of NCRF projects, including flood and erosion risk reduction. This work is evaluating approximately 117 projects (~71 NCRF-funded project) across metrics for *economic resilience* (27 metrics, describing counts of people and property benefitting from associated avoided damages, benefits to travelers/commuters from avoided damages to transportation infrastructure, and benefits to agricultural productivity and recreational activity); *critical infrastructure* (10 metrics counting different types of critical infrastructure benefitting and the avoided damage values; and *equity* (6 metrics characterizing the size and demographics of residential populations benefitting). A list of the metrics can be found here: https://nfwf.sharefile.com/f/fod11a50-fb59-4502-a06a-e5a4c5fa7242

Q. Can NFWF share the list of socioeconomic metrics that will be made available to the contractor?

A. See above.

Q. Does NFWF's ongoing socioeconomic economic assessment assess the impact of spending on the projects (e.g. multiplier effects) and if not, would it like to see that in the full assessment called for under this RFP?

A. No, the socioeconomic assessment work does not assess the impact of spending on the project. However, NFWF is currently in the process of selecting a firm to update our jobs calculator. We anticipate that this parallel effort will help us assess induced jobs created by NFWF-funded projects and Offerors should assume in their technical proposals that they will include data from the jobs calculator work in their deliverables under this RFP. Contractors under this RFP will not, however, need to duplicate the work to evaluate induced jobs created.

Q. The RFP, on p2, indicates that socioeconomic assessments are already underway for some projects. Are these at the same level, meaning reporting the same detail, as requested in Task 2 and 3? How do they differ, if at all?

A: The socioeconomic assessment work differs from the services we are seeking through this RFP in that the socioeconomic assessment is focused primarily on assessing and valuing the risk reduction benefits from NCRF-funded projects, including flood and erosion risk reduction benefits to people, property, and critical infrastructure (see description in responses above). Through this RFP, NFWF is looking to supplement the socioeconomic assessment and other work (jobs/carbon calculator) by also assessing and quantifying the other ecosystem service benefits delivered by a subset of NCRF-funded projects. Examples of the ecosystem service benefits we are looking to assess are listed at p. 3 of the RFP. Where data are available from the socioeconomic assessment study, jobs calculator and carbon calculator, the offeror should assume that they will use and apply those data in their deliverables under this RFP. Selected contractors would ***not*** be expected to duplicate any of this ongoing NFWF-funded work or complete detailed geophysical modeling to assess the risk-reduction benefits from the projects. However, where data are not available from the socioeconomic assessment, offerors should assume that they will complete a ***coarse*** analysis to estimate and value the potential risk-reduction benefits from the project and should include budget to update case studies as more detailed modeling and socioeconomic data become available from other NFWF-funded contracts. We anticipate socioeconomic data will be available for 20 NCRF projects by the end of 2022, at the latest, and 16 additional projects by mid-to-late 2023.

Q. Over what time frame would NFWF like to see benefits assessed for projects (one year, 10 years, perpetuity, etc.)? Should benefits take into account ongoing or periodic O&M or other direct costs of projects, or is NFWF interested exclusively in the benefits side?

A. Offerors are encouraged to propose methods they deem appropriate for successfully completing the scope of work called for in the RFP in a cost-effective and defensible manner. We anticipate that a successful approach will include application of an estimated design life based upon the specific resilience activities that are being implemented by the project and that the approach will value the ecosystem service and other benefits over a reasonable and defensible estimate designed life.

Q. Does NFWF assume that some of the projects featured in case studies will still be in progress?

A. Yes, some of the projects selected for case studies may still be in progress.

Q. Does NFWF expect that case studies will span all four project areas (community capacity building and planning; cite assessment and preliminary design; final design and permitting; and restoration and monitoring)?

A. No, NFWF anticipates that the case studies will focus on restoration-implementation projects that are delivering specific ecological and resilience outcomes. However, in limited cases, we may look to evaluate the *potential* ecosystem service benefits of projects in the final design and permitting stage, where appropriate.

Q. What habitats / ecosystem types may the contractor expect to consider?

A. Page 3 of the RFP lists the types of habitats and ecosystems that the contractor should expect to consider in their proposed technical approach, including different resilience activities in different regions, including wetland restoration, culvert replacement, dam removal, living shoreline installation, etc., and involving restoration and creation of different habitat types, including saltmarsh, freshwater wetlands/floodplains, dunes/beach, oyster and coral reefs, etc. For more detail on the types of restoration-implementation projects NFWF funds through the NCRF, you can find project descriptions on our grants library and on the annual grant slate announcements on our NCRF program page.

Q. What is the minimum and maximum size of restoration projects to be evaluated?
A. NCRF-funded projects range significantly in size and scale, examples include:

- Large scale projects to restore 1,000+ acres of wetlands or more than 10,000 acres of coastal forest,
- Smaller-scale urban efforts to restore 10-14 acres of wetlands,
- Living shoreline projects ranging in size from 500 to 1500 linear feet,
- Beach and dune projects restore to restore between 1 to 30 miles of shoreline,
- Fish passage and aquatic connectivity projects opening and/or restoring 5 to 25 stream miles,
- Coral and oyster projects restoring between 5 and 125 acres of marine habitat, among others.

Q. If available, will NFWF make available the carbon sequestration and job benefit calculators?
A. NFWF will not make available the actual carbon and jobs calculators to the contractor, but will make available data from these calculators for the selected projects.

Q. Does NFWF/NCRF have a report format that they prefer for the concise economic valuation case studies (~2-3 pages)" (Task 3 deliverables)?
A. Offerors should propose the deliverable(s) they deem appropriate for successfully completing the scope of work called for in the RFP in a cost-effective and defensible manner. Offerors can look to case studies that were completed under a separate "Knowledge Transfer" contract designed to capture lessons learned from previously funded NCRF projects, called Coastal Resilience Success Stories, as an example of the level of detail we are looking for in case studies. However, we anticipate the case studies completed under this RFP will differ in subject matter, focus, and style from the Coastal Resilience Success Stories. We anticipate that the case studies produced under this RFP will focus on describing the nature-based elements and resilience activities implemented by the project, the results of the ecosystem service valuation, and any additional qualitative information about benefits delivered by the project.

Q: Referring to the Cleveland Harbor Eastern Embayment Resilience Study we found on NFWF's site, is this an example of the current socioeconomic assessments underway? Is this an example of what is needed for the other 25-30 desired case studies or is something more desired?
A. See above. No, the Cleveland Harbor Eastern Embayment Resilience Study (CHEERS) case study on the NFWF website was completed under a separate contract designed to capture and transfer lessons learned from previously funded NCRF grants. This case study is ***not*** an example of the socioeconomic assessment work that is underway.

Q. In the second bullet of Task 3 Deliverables, does the short summary report (~10 pages) include all projects funded by NCRF or only those 20-30 evaluated for this contract?
A. Offerors are encouraged to propose the deliverable(s) they deem appropriate for successfully completing the scope of work called for in the RFP in a cost-effective and defensible manner. We anticipate the short summary report will include a summary of the methodologies employed to evaluate

the 20-40 projects covered under the Scope of Work (not all NCRF projects) and any key findings and lessons learned from the work.

Q. Should presentation formats (E.g., PowerPoint) also be included in the cost estimate for Task 3 deliverables (in addition to standard paper formats)?
A. Yes, NFWF would be interested in receiving deliverables to facilitate presentation of the results of the ecosystem valuation work and case studies, including PowerPoint presentation(s). Offerors are welcomed and encouraged to include these deliverables in their proposed technical approach and to budget time to prepare and revise these types of deliverables, based upon feedback from NFWF and/or engagement with grantees.

Budget

Q. Is there a maximum budget? What budget has been allocated to this effort? Doe NFWF have any guidance on the size of the budget available?
A. We cannot share information about the budget for this project. The proposed cost should be adequate for the level of effort necessary for successfully completing the scope of work specified in the RFP. The final scope and budget for the contract will be negotiated between NFWF and the selected Offeror.

Q. Should the offeror build in travel costs to present findings in-person at the 5- year anniversary event in March of 2023, or any other event, as part of the proposed budget?
A. NFWF does not anticipate that any travel will be required to complete the scope of work; however, offerors are encouraged to propose activities they deem appropriate for successfully completing the scope of work called for the RFP in a cost effective and defensible manner. If some travel budget is required to successfully complete the offerors proposed technical approach, they should include those costs in their budget.

Q. Does the Contractor Budget file reflect a funding ceiling or is it used for exemplary purposes only?
A. The Sample Completed Budget on sheet 1 of the Contractor Budget Template is for exemplary purposes only.