



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### *America the Beautiful Challenge Grantee Technical Assistance for Federal Compliance*

**PROPOSAL DEADLINE: December 29, 2022**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) seeks a qualified contractor to provide technical guidance and federal compliance review support for the America the Beautiful Challenge program grantees.

#### **BACKGROUND**

NFWF manages a variety of grant programs across the United States, including the new America the Beautiful Challenge (ATBC), which combines resources from multiple federal agencies. As such, projects selected for funding through this program are subject to federal compliance requirements. NFWF is seeking a qualified contractor to provide technical assistance and support to grantees in meeting such compliance requirements, including the following:

- Documentation to support Federal assessments under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Documentation of compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (state and federal)
- Consultations required under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

ATBC pools funding from Federal partners and private philanthropy into a single competitive grant program to encourage larger and more impactful cross-boundary projects from states, Tribes, territories, local groups, and non-governmental organizations. ATBC released the first Request for Proposals in May of 2022 and 55 grants were announced in mid-November. Projects may be implemented on public, private, Tribal, and working lands. For further details about the program please review the [2022 Request for Proposals](#). ATBC is expected to be a five-year grant program with sustained or increased funding levels each year, contingent upon Federal appropriations and awards. We are seeking to learn how a professional consultant or company may be able to assist grantees with the required compliance process.

#### **SCOPE OF WORK**

The selected party will perform the following activities for ATBC program.

1. NEPA/ESA/NHPA related compliance
  - a. Review, and characterize for NFWF, individual projects by specific compliance type informed by a formal understanding of NEPA/ESA/NHPA and departmental requirements (DOI, USDA, etc.).



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- b. Provide a justification and rationale for project characterization to support compliance review by a federal agency.
- c. Provide guidance and support of individual grantees to develop information and materials required for NEPA/ESA/NHPA and related consultations.
  - i. Prepare for grantees lists of materials needed to support compliance review by the federal agency, including the types of required information (e.g. project details/description of the action, design drawings, plan-views, maps, photos, land-use history/environmental setting, existing surveys/database information, IPaC, etc.).
  - ii. Assist grantees in coordinating with SHPO/THPO and completing any necessary cultural impact assessments (e.g. identifying regional contacts, complete archeological tests, etc.).
- d. Review ATBC federal compliance processes and identify and address any inefficiencies through coordination with NFWF and their federal partners.

NFWF anticipates the following project NEPA/ESA/NHPA related compliance needs in the coming year:

- Ten consultations or more for projects that include project planning, assessment activities, and grantee/partnership coordination where no on-the-ground activity will take place.
- Ten consultations or more for projects that include minimal or standard activities, and universally accepted Standard Operating Procedures and conservation measures are already incorporated into the project.
- Five consultations or more for projects likely to have a significant effect (either positive or negative) on an aspect of the environment; and which will require a complete compliance review. Projects might include on-the-ground work, ground-disturbing activities with potential Tribal consultation or State Historic Preservation Act review needed, or other potential effects to the human environment.

In addition to the consultations and documentation, the contract deliverables will also include maintaining a tracking spreadsheet and providing information/updates upon request.

This list above outlines the general scope of work to be addressed under this RFP; however, it is subject to change in response to additional similar task orders as needed.

The period of performance will be one year from the date of the award to the selected party with an option to extend for an additional four years, to be exercised at NFWF's discretion.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

The evaluation criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals for the purpose of ranking them based on how fully they meet the requirements of this RFP. The contract award recommendation of the review panel will be determined based on the offeror with the highest scoring submitted materials. Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which they



meet the following criteria:

- 1) **Understanding of the Scope of Work.** The proposal must demonstrate a thorough understanding of federal compliance requirements (NEPA/ESA/NHPA, etc.) from a nationwide perspective, and the processes for developing and compiling the materials grantees need to meet such requirements. *Weight: 20%*
- 2) **Technical Approach.** The proposed technical approach for fulfilling the scope of work must demonstrate familiarity and proficiency in federal compliance consultations. *Weight: 20%*
- 3) **Qualification of Proposed Personnel and Capacity to Deliver Services.** The proposal should describe relevant professional experience in the following areas: (a) experience working with state, U.S. Territories, and Tribal governmental agencies, national and local NGOs involved with conservation; (b) any experience with Foundations and grants management; (c) proven track record of success in supporting conservation projects with specific federal environmental compliance requirements. 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 ATBC grantees. *Weight: 20%*
- 4) **Contractor's Past Performance.** The proposal should include information about past performance related to the technical expertise offered. Specifically, the proposal should identify at least two past engagements conducting similar work for NFWF or other organizations, identifying the offeror's quality of work, timeliness, and cost control. *Weight: 20%*
- 5) **Budget and Cost Effectiveness.** The budget should be cost effective and should maximize the value for monies requested in the offeror's budget. Please break various tasks into separate line items. Proposal costs should be the minimum necessary to adequately achieve the stated scope of work. Profit/profit margin must be separately itemized in the budget. Offerors must use the attached [budget template](#). *Weight: 15%*
- 6) **Corporate Capacity.** The offeror shall provide proof of financial stability in the form of financial statements or balance sheets. *Weight 5%*

### **ELIGIBLE CONTRACTORS**

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

### **SELECTION PROCESS**

A panel of NFWF staff will review proposals submitted in response to the RFP. The panel will



assess each proposal according to the project description and evaluation criteria provided in this RFP. Offerors may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of the award. One contractor will be selected to meet the scope of work. Specific funding amounts will be negotiated with the Foundation and additional funding will be considered annually based upon the expressed needs of the programs. If multiple institutions are involved, they should be handled through subcontracts.

## **SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS AND OUTLINE**

Proposals must be submitted under the same cover at the same time, in three distinct and separate documents: 1) Technical Proposal, 2) Cost Proposal, and 3) Evidence of Financial Stability. Interested parties should submit proposals electronically to NFWF (Blake Gardiner, [Blake.Gardiner@nfwf.org](mailto:Blake.Gardiner@nfwf.org) and Sydney Godbey, [Sydney.Godbey@nfwf.org](mailto:Sydney.Godbey@nfwf.org)) In the subject line, please indicate *Response to RFP for Technical Assistance for Federal Compliance – [name of respondent]*.

Submissions must meet the requirements below:

### **1) Technical Proposal:**

- *Format:* Statements must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF with a font size no smaller than 11 pt.
- *Contact Information:* Primary contact person, company name, address, phone, email, website, UEI number, and EIN/Taxpayer ID#.
- *Narrative:* Concise (5-page limit) description of the work plan and a summary of the offeror's expertise and experience. List recent (last 2-5 years) accomplishments, events and previous services related to the technical expertise offered.
- *Biographies:* Resumes and/or Vitae of key staff and their role in the proposed work area.
- *References:* List of two clients who have received services from the offeror that is similar in nature to the proposed work; include names, postal and email addresses, and telephone numbers.

**2) Cost Proposal:** The Cost Proposal includes the proposal budget and budget justification. The cost proposal must be submitted using the [budget template](#).

**3) Evidence of Financial Stability.** The offeror 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 offeror's capability to meet the requirements of this RFP.

Offerors should submit questions regarding this RFP via e-mail to Blake Gardiner, [Blake.Gardiner@nfwf.org](mailto:Blake.Gardiner@nfwf.org) and Sydney Godbey, [Sydney.Godbey@nfwf.org](mailto:Sydney.Godbey@nfwf.org). NFWF will respond to all offerors at the same time and with the same answer. In order to provide equitable responses, all questions must be received by NFWF no later than **December 1, 2022**.

## **RFP DEADLINES (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

**11/17/2022** Request for Proposals (RFP) released. Q&A period begins. All questions of general interest will be answered publicly and must be received by



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December 1, 2022.

- 12/1/2022** Deadline for Questions. FAQ will be posted to this site within 48 hours.
- 12/29/2022** Proposals must be received electronically as an email attachment to Blake Gardiner, [Blake.Gardiner@nfwf.org](mailto:Blake.Gardiner@nfwf.org) and Sydney Godbey, [Sydney.Godbey@nfwf.org](mailto:Sydney.Godbey@nfwf.org) by **11:00 PM EDT**.
- January 2023** Interviews with selected finalists.
- 2/1/2023** Contractor anticipated start date.

## **SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **1. Conflicts of Interest**

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, offerors must notify NFWF in writing of any apparent or actual conflicts of interest, including organizational conflicts of interest, that are known at the time of this proposal or that may arise during the life of this award, in the event an award is made. 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. Any such notice shall be included with the Evidence of Financial Stability submission.

### **2. Additional Responsibility Matters**

By submitting proposals 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 a 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



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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 sub-award, 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 can be found at <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>

**REQUESTING ORGANIZATION:** National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), 1133 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005

**CONTACTS:** Blake Gardiner; [Blake.Gardiner@nfwf.org](mailto:Blake.Gardiner@nfwf.org), Sydney Godbey; [Sydney.Godbey@NFWF.org](mailto:Sydney.Godbey@NFWF.org)