

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CONTRACT TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT A COLLABORATIVE PEER-LEARNING PROGRAM ON NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR COASTAL RESILIENCE

Proposal Deadline: February 17, 2026

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) seeks one or more qualified Contractors to design and implement a collaborative and peer learning program connecting [National Coastal Resilience Fund \(NCRF\)](#) grantees with NOAA's [Coastal Resilience Regional Challenge \(CRRF\)](#) grantees. The purpose of this effort is to support CRRF grantees seeking technical assistance in advancing nature-based solutions (NbS) for coastal resilience by leveraging the applied experience, lessons learned, and technical expertise of NCRF practitioners.

The program will employ a blended learning model integrating virtual learning, in-person convenings, field-based experiences, and a durable learning environment to support sustained peer exchange, mentorship, and access to curated knowledge resources.

BACKGROUND

The scope of work under this contract is to develop and deliver a structured peer learning exchange and learning environment that translates NCRF experience into practical, applied support for CRRF grantees.

[NCRF grantees](#) have implemented hundreds of NBS-focused projects nationwide, generating extensive knowledge across the full project lifecycle, including planning, design, permitting, community engagement, construction, and monitoring. CRRF grantees, many of whom are implementing complex, large scale or first-of-their-kind projects, require structured access to this expertise, along with sustained peer connections and mentorship.

Goals to be addressed through this request for proposals include:

- Increasing CRRF grantee capacity to design, implement, and manage NbS coastal resilience projects
- Facilitating structured peer learning and mentorship between NCRF and CRRF grantees
- Providing durable access to curated NCRF knowledge products and practitioner expertise
- Supporting equitable access to learning opportunities across geographies and organizational capacities
- Strengthening long-term networks and communities of practice beyond the life of the contract

SCOPE OF WORK

The Contractor(s) shall design and implement a cohesive peer learning environment using a blended learning approach. The selected Contractor(s) will be expected to participate in check-in calls with NFWF staff throughout the duration of the project period of performance. Contractors may submit applications for the entire scope of work or select tasks. Please provide time and cost quotes for each task using the [Contractor Budget Template](#) provided. For each task, deliverables and timelines must be clearly

stated. The project period of performance will end no later than 30 April 2028. A not to exceed cost will be negotiated upon award with each selected Contractor. The Scope of Work includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks.

Task 1. Project Management and Workplan

Develop a comprehensive project workplan detailing program design, learning modalities, schedules, roles, coordination protocols, and reporting. Coordinate regularly with NFWF staff and relevant NCRF and CRRC partners, including NOAA Office of Coastal Management (OCM).

Task 2. Information gathering on NbS needs and solutions

Collect information on NbS needs of CRRC projects and potential solution provisioning in the NCRF network through a variety of engagement mechanisms, including facilitated discussions.

Identify priority NbS topics for CRRC partners, capacity and knowledge gaps, and preferred learning formats. Gather input from NCRF grantees regarding lessons learned and mentorship interests. The outputs will inform the program of the national convening (task 3), the blended learning program (task 4), and the community of practice (task 6).

Task 3. National NbS Convening

Design and facilitate one national convening (3-day in-person in the Fall of 2026) in collaboration with NFWF, OCM, and project partners to validate and prioritize learning needs for CRRC projects, introduce a blended learning framework, showcase NCRF grantee and partner expertise, bring in external expertise as needed, and establish peer learning cohorts for subsequent 4 regional/thematic convenings.

Task 4. Blended Learning Program and Learning Environment

Design and manage a blended learning program that integrates:

- Curated NCRF grantee and partner recorded webinars, trainings, and case studies
- Structured online learning modules aligned to priority NbS for coastal resilience themes
- Live virtual sessions, office hours, and facilitated discussions
- In-person regional/thematic convenings (estimated 4)
- Field-based learning opportunities in conjunction with the convenings

Develop and maintain an accessible learning environment that houses learning materials, supports peer interaction, and provides basic usage analytics.

Task 5. Regional/Thematic Convenings on NbS

Design and deliver four regional/thematic convenings on NbS in 2027 that are informed by the data collection (task 2) and national convening (task 3). Regional/thematic convenings are in-person 2-day gatherings, with a field-based component. Recruit NCRF practitioners, NFWF and OCM staff and partners, and other experts to serve as facilitators or co-leads for sessions. Convenings may be organized regionally and/or thematically (e.g. planning and capacity development, design and cost-benefit analysis, specific NbS approaches, etc.).

Task 6. Community of Practice and Sustained Learning Support

Establish and facilitate a community of practice connecting NCRF and CRRC grantees. Establish and facilitate peer mentorship structures, host periodic office hours or learning clinics as needed, and hosts resources from the national and regional/thematic convenings. The community of practice enables post-convenings

engagement and sustains NCRF – CRRC peer-learning beyond the scope of task 4 and in support of task 2 and 3.

Task 7. Reporting and Evaluation

Provide monthly progress updates, convening summaries, and a final report documenting participation, engagement, learning outcomes, catalytic learning impacts and recommendations for sustaining learning beyond the contract period.

Deliverables

- Approved project workplan
- Information Collection summary report
- National convening agenda, materials, and summary report
- Learning environment with curated resources and interactive features, may include publication of training materials
- Four regional/thematic convening agendas, materials, and summary reports
- Community of practice engagement activities
- Monthly progress reports
- Final program report

Schedule

The anticipated period of performance is through 30 April 2028 and cannot be extended. Specific milestones and deliverable due dates will be finalized during contract negotiations.

REQUIRED EXPERTISE AND PROPOSED STAFF

The Contractor(s) must demonstrate expertise in:

- Coastal resilience and nature-based solutions
- Adult education, peer learning, and blended learning design
- Meeting planning and facilitation of multi-stakeholder convenings
- Development and management of online learning environments
- Program design and delivery
- Coordination across diverse geographies and organizations

CRITERIA FOR COMPETITIVE APPLICATIONS

Offerors may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of the award. Multiple contracts may be made for this project. If multiple institutions are involved in one application, they should be handled through sub-awards and sub-contractors. Proposals will be evaluated and scored on the following criteria:

- Understanding of the Scope of Work (10%)
Demonstrates understanding of NCRF and CRRC program goals, NbS coastal resilience challenges, and peer learning objectives.
- Technical Approach (30%)

Demonstrates a robust, feasible, and well-integrated approach to blended learning, convenings, learning environment development, and community of practice facilitation.

- **Qualifications of Proposed Personnel (20%)**
Demonstrates relevant expertise and appropriate staffing to deliver the program successfully.
- **Contractor's Past Performance (20%)**
Demonstrates successful delivery of comparable peer learning, training, or capacity-building programs.
- **Budget (20%)**
Demonstrates cost effectiveness and alignment of the proposed budget with the scope of work.

ELIGIBLE OFFERORS & CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, international organizations, and local, state and Indian tribal governments.

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/>

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted including the following distinctly labeled and separate documents:

1. Cover letter
2. Technical approach and methodology
3. Project team and qualifications
4. Work plan and timeline
5. Budget and budget narrative
 - The budget proposal must be submitted using the following NFWF budget template
6. Relevant past performance and references
7. Evidence of Financial Stability
 - The applicant shall provide 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 solicitation.
8. Contact Information.
 - Please provide a Primary Contact Person, Entity Name, Address, Phone, E-mail, Website, and EIN or SSN

Interested parties should submit proposals electronically to NCRF@NFWF.org.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

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

COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAWS

NFWF is committed to operating in full compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and Executive Orders. We continuously monitor legal and regulatory developments to ensure our policies, procedures, and operations align with current federal directives. We encourage all applicants to do the same.



The ability and extent to which NFWF is able to make awards is contingent upon receipt of funds from federal agencies and/or other funding partners. Final funding decisions will be made based on the applications received and the level and timing of funding received by NFWF.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

<i>January 26, 2026</i>	RFP Released
<i>February 4, 2026</i>	Offerors should submit questions regarding this solicitation via email to NCRF@nfwf.org . NFWF will post all the questions and responses to all questions so that all offerors have access to them at the same time. In order to provide timely responses, all questions must be sent to NFWF no later than 5:00 PM on February 4th, 2026.
<i>February 11, 2026</i>	NFWF will post the questions submitted regarding the solicitation and responses on the NFWF website .
<i>February 17, 2026</i>	Deadline for receipt by NFWF of proposals. Proposals must be sent electronically as an email attachment to NCRF@nfwf.org by 5:00 PM EST on February 17th, 2026. Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF.
<i>Early March, 2026</i>	Interviews with selected finalists.
<i>Early April, 2026</i>	Contract awarded to selected offeror(s).

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

NFWF reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP, request additional information, or invite selected offerors to interviews or negotiations prior to award.

REQUESTING ORGANIZATION

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), 1625 Eye Street NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20006

CONTACTS

Program Coordinator: NCRF@nfwf.org