

Applicant Questions and Answers

Related to NFWF Contract for Facilitation Support of Collaborative Fisheries Conservation Meeting Request for Quotations

September 8th, 2026

Application Logistics

Q: The RFQ requires "evidence of financial stability in the form of financial statements, credit ratings, a line of credit, or other financial arrangements." Is there a preferred format or specific period (e.g., most recent fiscal year) for the financial statements provided?

A: Apart from the guidance provided in the RFQ, there is no specific format that is preferred for evidence of financial stability. The financial statements should be the most recent available to the applicant; if these documents are not within the past two fiscal years, please contact NFWF staff referenced throughout the solicitation for guidance.

Q: The narrative is limited to 5 pages. Do cover pages, tables of contents, and supplemental appendices count against the 5-page limit?

A: No, the 5-page limit is for meaningful written content. Reasonable appendices such as example materials, CV's, etc. are not included in this 5-page maximum.

*Q: On page 3, under Contractor's Past Performance, the RFQ states that the proposal should include information on the **primary investigator(s)**'s past performance experience in meeting facilitation and associated work. Can NFWF please clarify how the primary investigator is defined? Should this section reflect the past performance experience of the project manager specifically or the overall primary contractor?*

A: For this role, that should reflect the primary staff member or members who will be contributing services to the effort, such as the lead facilitator and/or planner.

Q: Can contractors include ongoing work as examples of past performance?

A: Yes, if there is sufficient realization of that work to allow NFWF and NOAA insight into performance, either through deliverables or contact with the managing entity.

Q: Considering the Labor Day holiday and turnaround time for answers to questions, would NFWF consider a due date extension of one week?

Given the holiday weekend, we can consider an extension of application submission until the end of this week, Friday, September 11th, at 5 pm ET.

Budget

Q: Is there a budget range or ceiling for this facilitation contract that we should use to scale our proposed approach?

A: The budget should be cost-effective, reasonable, and appropriate for the deliverables. We estimate the budget for this contract to not exceed \$30,000.

Q: The RFQ allows offerors to "add columns to the template for additional tasks if needed" and to "include the proposed budget for equipment purchase in the proposal separate from the Contractor Budget Template." Will the facilitator be expected to purchase or rent any audio/visual or virtual meeting technology? If so, who is responsible for those costs?

A: We generally feel that these will be covered in the venue contract that NFWF secures, but, if there are specific items to facilitate hybrid engagement beyond regularly available rental equipment, they can be included in the budget.

Participant/Stakeholder Outreach

Q: Does NFWF/NOAA already have a core list of anticipated participants and stakeholders from the prior planning effort, or should offerors assume that identifying and developing the participant list will be a significant component of Task 1?

A: NFWF and NOAA have begun the task of identifying participants informed by our meeting goals and prior planning efforts. There will be some work to finalize this list and conduct outreach, but it is not expected to be a significant research task for the contractor.

Q: Does NFWF/NOAA have an anticipated range for the number of pre-meeting interviews, or should offerors propose the number and mix of interviews they believe are appropriate to support meeting design?

A: As a guide of effort, there are likely 6 – 8 constituencies who can provide helpful input, including representatives from different fisheries, federal science and management perspectives, and other experts.

Travel Reimbursement

Q: The RFQ notes that NFWF will reimburse participant travel “as allowable and necessary.” Is this support intended primarily for fishing industry representatives, or might it also be available to other non-federal participants, such as modelers, tool developers, university researchers, or other technical experts?

A: NFWF would support the travel of a variety of individuals, especially in situations where that person would not have direct commercial benefit from attendance. This includes fishing industry representatives, researchers, and a variety of experts.

Q: Will NFWF manage meeting participant travel reimbursements with no contractor support?

A: The contractor may be expected to include reimbursement forms and guidance that is already developed by NFWF in pre- or post-meeting communications, but, beyond that, administration of reimbursements and follow-ups will be handled by NFWF.

Prior Fisheries Communication Network Work

Q: Does NFWF/NOAA already have specific communication, mapping, or decision-support tools in mind that could serve as examples or building blocks for the networks discussed at the meeting, or is identifying and exploring relevant tools expected to be part of the contractor’s pre-meeting research and planning?

A: Through prior efforts, many fisheries representatives and other participants have been educated on existing tools and technologies. Part of the meeting would include a brief re-introduction to these tools by the project team and experts, so preparation for that portion would not need to be a part of the contractor’s role.

Q: The RFQ references a prior collaborative design and planning effort that resulted in three sets of recommendations for future network implementation. Will the selected contractor

have access to those recommendations, the process by which they came forward, and other relevant background materials at the outset of the project?

A: Yes, these materials will eventually be made public as an output of that prior work but will be provided to the selected contractor. Further, personnel involved in those processes will be available to provide further insight and background.

Meeting Specifics

Q: Has NFWF/NOAA developed criteria or preferences for determining whether the meeting will be held in person versus virtually/hybrid, or do you anticipate making that determination collaboratively with the selected facilitator during the early planning process?

A: Based on team experience, conversations are generally more beneficial when in-person, so there is a preference for that mode, but we recognize that a hybrid meeting is the best way to ensure widespread participation. The final decision on virtual/in-person balance would be made collaboratively with the facilitator.

Q: The Overview references a Fall 2026 meeting, while the Task 3 timeline notes a tentative goal of late 2026 or early 2027. Is there a firmer target window at this point, or a date by which NFWF and NOAA expect to lock in the meeting date?

A: Thank you for noting the scheduling inconsistency. The most likely date range would be in the late 2026 to early 2027 timeframe giving the level of planning effort needed, notification for attendees, and prior patterns of fishery representative availability. The inconsistency has been corrected in the webpage solicitation.

Q: Should the offeror plan for a single lead facilitator, or would NFWF and NOAA expect a small facilitation team (for example, a co-facilitator for breakout groups and/or a dedicated note-taker) for a meeting of this size?

A: The likely need is for a single facilitator; however, members of the project team can be designated to serve support roles such as breakout facilitators. Regarding a note-taker, if the offeror's professional opinion is that a note-taker is critical and beyond the role they would like to designate to a team member, they can be budgeted for.

Q: Beyond New Orleans, are there any other priority locations being considered for the in-person portion of the event?

A: New Orleans is a default, but other venues with accessible air and land travel from northern Florida to the Texas coast are considerable with justification.

Meeting Report

Q: The Task 3 deliverable is described as "a brief meeting report that outlines key decisions and outcomes." Can NFWF clarify what "brief" means in terms of expected turnaround time following the meeting? Additionally, what format would the report take?

A: The general document will be short to help participants recall the meeting, conclusions, and general meeting topics of discussion. We expect a turn-around of the report within approximately 3 weeks of the meeting.

Q: Who is the audience to receive the brief meeting report?

A: The primary audience would be NFWF and NOAA project staff along with other meeting attendees. It would be publicly posted during the wider project, but the primary audience would not be public.

Q: Does the scope end with the meeting report, or does NFWF also expect follow-up support, such as presenting outcomes to NFWF or NOAA leadership or revising the report after review?

A: The extent of this solicitation will be the development of the meeting report with, potentially, a round of minor revisions to ensure that the report accurately reflects meeting outcomes.

Other

Q: Are any translation needs anticipated?

A: No. For this level of meeting, it is expected that most of the business can be conducted in English.