

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Contract to Provide Technical Assistance Field Support in the Northeast Watersheds

PROPOSALS DEADLINE: August 31, 2023

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) seeks qualified Contractor(s) to provide technical field support to applicants associated with the:

- [Long Island Sound Futures Fund](#) to develop a pipeline of nutrient, sediment, and stormwater pollution prevention projects outside the coastal zone in Connecticut and in the states of Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont in the [Long Island Sound watershed boundaries](#).
- [Northeast Forests and Rivers Fund](#) to develop a pipeline of aquatic connectivity, fish passage and riparian and instream habitat, forest health and grassland restoration projects in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont plus the Lake Champlain, Saint Lawrence and Upper Hudson watersheds in New York in the [NFRF boundaries](#).

The contractor will provide support for two years and report to the NFWF Teams associated with the grant programs.

GRANT PROGRAMS BACKGROUND

Long Island Sound Futures Fund. Since its creation in 2005, the grant program has been managed by NFWF in collaboration with the US Environmental Protection Agency, the [Long Island Sound Study](#), and other partners including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The road map guiding delivery of the grant program is the [Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Long Island Sound](#) its themes and associated Implementation Actions. Over time, the funding level, projects, scope, reach, applicants and grantees of the Futures Fund have grown significantly. The need for in-depth technical field support has grown as well, to assist potential applicants to develop proposals that are aligned with Futures Fund pollution prevention priorities specifically the reduction or prevention of nitrogen into waterways that feed the Sound. NFWF has awarded an average of five to seven individual grants annually in this geography. We seek to significantly expand the number, type and strategic impact of projects with a direct benefit to Long Island Sound. Learn more about the grant program at NFWF's website for the [Long Island Sound Futures Fund](#).

Northeast Forests and Rivers Fund. Since its creation in 2015, the grant program has been managed by NFWF with funding support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Zoetis Foundation and Avangrid Foundation. The roadmap guiding delivery of the grant program is NFWF's Northeast Watersheds Business Plan, as well as the funding partner priorities, which are adjusted annually in the annual Request for Proposals to reflect emerging needs and available funding. Learn more about the grant program at NFWF's website for the [Northeast Forests and Rivers Fund](#).

SCOPE OF WORK

The purpose of the contemplated contract is to:

- Conduct outreach and offer technical assistance to prospective applicants to develop proposals which reflect NFWF and grant program funding priorities and requirements.
- Identify potential partnerships (local, federal, state) in the region to advance engagement of potential applicants.
- As needed, for a limited subset of potential applicants (6), provide enhanced technical assistance to inform development of project proposals which reflect best practices in pollution prevention and habitat restoration based upon the priorities within each grant program. For example, applicants may require enhanced assistance to determine appropriate practices, permitting, timing and cost for an agricultural or urban/suburban/exurban nitrogen reduction project. This assistance may be provided by your existing program staff or by engaging subcontractors.
- Participate in team meetings with NFWF team and other potential field liaisons, generally on a bi-weekly schedule.
- Provide accurate and detailed information about site visits, contacts, outreach, etc. to inform NFWF funder reports.
- Support NFWF staff in implementing grantee oversight activities, including site visits, to assist grantees who need additional guidance with reporting requirements or potential compliance issues.
- Conduct occasional site visits upon grant completion to perform post-project monitoring assessments; obtain lessons learned or NFWF program feedback; collect photo documentation; provide guidance regarding projects' long-term maintenance and stewardship plans; and, to scope potential next phases of projects with grantees.
- Facilitate peer-to-peer learning among grantees through field tours, site visits, workshops or webinars, and other venues.

ANTICIPATED DELIVERABLES

The contract deliverables will include:

- Quarterly and final written and ongoing verbal progress reports. These deliverables may be expanded or refined during the contract negotiation.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted under the same cover at the same time, in six distinct and separate documents: 1) Understanding of the Scope of Work, 2) Technical Approach, 3) Qualifications of Proposed Personnel, 4) Record of Past Performance/References, 5) Corporate Capability, and 6) Budget. The budget proposal must be submitted using the following NFWF budget template. Interested parties should submit proposals electronically to Victoria Moreno, Victoria.Moreno@nfwf.org as Word documents or PDF attachments using the following email subject line *“Technical Assistance Field Support in the Northeast”* based upon the requirements below. Please submit the budget proposal as an Excel spreadsheet.

1. Technical Proposal

- Format: Proposals 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 (10-page limit) description of the work plan and a summary of the applicant’s expertise and experience, organized by the Criteria for Competitive Applications.
 - Biographies: Resumes and/or Vitae of key staff and their role in the proposed work area.
 - References: List two clients who have received services from the applicant that is similar in nature to the proposed work; include names, phone numbers, and email address.
2. **Budget:** The budget proposal must be submitted using the following NFWF [budget template](https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/contractor_budget_template_-_greater_than_150k_profit_breakout_-_10tasks_1.xlsx) [https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/contractor_budget_template - greater than 150k profit breakout - 10tasks 1.xlsx](https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/contractor_budget_template_-_greater_than_150k_profit_breakout_-_10tasks_1.xlsx) .
 3. **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.

CRITERIA FOR COMPETITIVE APPLICATIONS

Proposals will be evaluated and scored on the following criteria. As described, offerors should organize their proposal in this order using these sections:

- **Understanding of the Scope of Work.** A statement of **no more than two pages** demonstrating an understanding of the challenges faced by the grant programs with which the offeror purports to work, including a comprehension of the geography, communities, partners and their dynamics. This section should include a description of how you will communicate with NFWF and potential applicants and grantees and report on progress, results, and deliverables. Weight: 25%
- **Technical Approach.** The proposed technical approach of **no more than two pages** should clearly describe a proposed technical approach for facilitating the success of grant investments and overall program strategy and improvement. Weight: 25%
- **Qualifications of Proposed Personnel.** The section should clearly describe which tasks the offeror will conduct and how their training and experience provide the requisite background to do so successfully. Resumes and/or Vitae of the principal investigator(s), including any subcontractors, describing relevant professional experience in the following areas: (a) experience working with federal, state, and local governmental agencies, national and local NGOs involved with conservation; (b) any experience with Foundations and grants management; and (c) current technical knowledge about and use of tools, technologies, practices and strategies associated with delivery of pollution prevention practices and projects in a variety of settings including agricultural and rural, suburban and urban environments. **There is no page limit** associated with this element of the Statement of Qualifications. Weight: 20%
- **Contractor’s Past Performance.** The Statement of Qualifications 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. The statement should also include communication experience writing reports, conducting webinars and delivering presentations to different types of audiences. The cumulative statement of past performances **should not exceed 2 pages**. The Statement should include names, email addresses, and telephone numbers of points of contact

for the referenced engagements. If the offeror anticipates retaining subcontractors for this task, information should be provided that demonstrates their past performance as well. Weight: 15%

- **Budget.** 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 linked Contractor Budget Template. You may add columns to the template for additional tasks if needed but should not make any other changes. Please include the proposed budget for equipment purchase in the proposal separate from the Contractor Budget Template. Weight: 15%

ELIGIBLE OFFERORS AND 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 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.
- 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.
- 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/>

SELECTION PROCEDURE

A panel of NFWF staff will review the proposals. Offerors may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of the award. Up to three contracts may be made for this project. If multiple institutions are involved, they should be handled through subcontracts.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

July 27, 2023

Request for Proposals (RFP) released. Q&A period begins. All questions of general interest will be answered publicly and must be received by August 15, 2023.

August 15, 2023

Deadline for questions about the solicitation to NFWF. Offerors should submit questions regarding this solicitation via email to Victoria.Moreno@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 equitable responses, all questions must be sent to NFWF **no later than 5:00 PM EST August 15, 2023**.

August 17, 2023

NFWF will post the questions submitted regarding the solicitation and responses on the NFWF website under "Related Content" in the original Request for Proposals posting.

August 31, 2023

Deadline for receipt by NFWF of proposals. Proposals must be sent electronically as an email attachment to Victoria.Moreno@nfwf.org by **5:00 PM EST August 31, 2023**. Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF. Use the following email subject line in the email "*Technical Assistance Field Support in the Northeast Proposal*"

Oct 1, 2023

Contract award to selected Offeror

November 6, 2023

Anticipated start date

November 7, 2025

Deliverables Due