



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Contract to Provide Technical Liaison Support for NFWF's Great Lakes Programs

OVERVIEW

NFWF seeks a qualified individual Contractor to provide support to applicants and grantees engaged in advancing the implementation of habitat restoration, green stormwater infrastructure, and regenerative agriculture and associated NFWF grant programs in the US Great Lakes region: the [Sustain Our Great Lakes Program](#), [Chi-Cal Rivers Fund](#), [Conservation Partners Program](#), and [Southeast Michigan Resilience Fund](#). This support will help to advance the goals of NFWF's [Great Lakes Business Plan](#) and support NFWF staff in identifying and coaching potential applicants to prepare them to submit an application for funding consideration. The Contractor will work with NFWF staff to identify specific priorities to focus their outreach and support for applicants annually – focusing on, for example, areas of geographic focus, projects that meet specific program goals (habitat, species, strategy), encouraging applications from community level or tribal organizations, etc. The contractor will provide support for one-year (with the option to renew for an additional year) and report to Traci Giefer, Senior Manager of NFWF's Great Lakes programs.

BACKGROUND

NFWF's Great Lakes program has grown significantly in terms of funding, regional focus for programs, and the number and diversity of strategies these programs are seeking to advance. The need for effective field support focused on identifying, coaching, and recruiting new applicants has also grown. NFWF seeks a field liaison to: (1) assist applicants in developing high quality proposals that are aligned with NFWF's priorities, including specific focal strategies to be determined by NFWF annually (2) help applicants identify and move towards larger-scale implementation projects, (3) help NFWF identify and applicants from organizations (particularly underserved communities, tribes and community/local organizations) that have not previously been engaged with NFWF and provide coaching to remove barriers to submitting applications and managing NFWF grants. This program is regional, and a contractor should be prepared to provide support to practitioners throughout the US Great Lakes watershed working on a variety of natural and nature-based features; however, offerors should highlight if they have a particular expertise in a certain region of the larger Great Lakes region footprint or particular NFWF program strategy (e.g. habitat restoration, green stormwater infrastructure, regenerative agriculture etc.).

QUALIFICATIONS SOUGHT

To assist the successful implementation of NFWF's Great Lakes Programs, this RFQ is seeking a qualified individual to serve as independent contractor to NFWF with the following qualifications:

- Three to five years' experience working directly with conservation, habitat restoration, green infrastructure, or community greening, or resilience related programs. Particular expertise in implementing habitat restoration and nature-based solutions is preferred.
- Experience translating program goals to a broad audience.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Experience working with and engaging diverse groups.
- Ability to work independently in a rapidly changing environment.
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Computer proficiency, including databases, spreadsheets, and word processing.
- Demonstrated familiarity with NFWF programs is preferred, e.g., working with NFWF as a grantee, contractor, or other partner.



SCOPE OF WORK

NFWF seeks a qualified Contractor to develop and implement a work plan designed to maximize the outcomes of NFWF's Great Lakes Programs, which aim to provide dual benefits to human communities and fish and wildlife habitats. The following tasks constitute the Scope of Work for this Request for Quotations. The selected Contractor will be expected to work on all four tasks described throughout the duration of the period of performance. The contractor should anticipate check-in calls every two weeks with NFWF throughout the duration of the project. Please provide time and cost quotes for each task using the [Contractor Budget Template](#) provided. NFWF anticipates level of effort not to exceed half-time, a not to exceed cost will be negotiated upon award with each selected Contractor.

Task 1: Identify and grow opportunities for new applicants - Conduct outreach and assist potential applicants to help them understand NFWF funding priorities, develop restoration project concepts, identify potential partnerships, and identify funding opportunities for matching funds. This outreach should include coaching for applicants to remove barriers to submitting applications and managing NFWF grants where possible. Outreach will be focused on pre-identified priority geographies, NFWF program strategies, and/or grantee organization contexts that will be selected by NFWF annually.

Task 2: Provide liaison support for the NFWF's Great Lakes programs - Liaise between NFWF grantees and NFWF staff, and between NFWF grantees and relevant collaborative conservation initiatives to enhance communication between grantees and key stakeholders. Identify opportunities for NFWF to reach new audiences and facilitate this communication.

Task 3: Troubleshoot grantee challenges and help advance projects - Occasionally conduct post-award site visits to trouble-shoot potential challenges with project implementation, provide technical support to grantees in conducting pre-project monitoring assessments, and collect photo documentation. Connect with grantees regarding 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 scope potential next phases of projects with grantees.

Task 4: Promote grantee collaboration - Assist prospective applicants and current NFWF grantees in establishing, strengthening, and sustaining partnerships (particularly at the community level) and collaborative approaches to advance NFWF's goals under its Great Lakes programs. Facilitate peer-to-peer learning among grantees through workshops, webinars, and other avenues. Facilitate collaborative initiatives around NFWF priorities in priority geographies.

Deliverables –

- Semiannual written and ongoing verbal progress reports
- Final report summarizing lessons learned at contract completion
- Written reviews of grant proposals

These deliverables may be expanded or refined during the contract negotiation.



CRITERIA FOR COMPETITIVE APPLICATIONS

Proposals will be evaluated and scored on the following criteria. Offerors should organize their Statement based on these sections:

1. **Understanding of the Scope of Work.** A statement of **no more than one page** demonstrating an understanding of the challenges faced by NFWF's Great Lakes programs, including a comprehension of the geography, communities, partners and their dynamics. This section should include a description of how the offeror will communicate with NFWF and program stakeholders and report on progress, results, and deliverables. Weight: 20%
2. **Technical Approach.** The proposed technical approach of **no more than three pages** should clearly describe a proposed technical approach for facilitating the success of grant investments and overall program strategy and improvement. Weight: 25%
3. **Qualifications of Proposed Personnel.** The section should clearly describe how the offeror's training and experience provide the requisite experience to successfully implement the tasks. Resume and/or Vitae of the principal investigator, describing relevant professional experience in the following areas: (a) experience working with federal, state, and local governmental agencies, national and local NGOs involved with resilience; (b) any experience with Foundations and grants management; (c) experience with the design and implementation of natural and nature-based features; (d) experience with community scale resilience planning; and (e) strong customer service. There is **no page limit** associated with this element of the Statement of Qualifications. Weight: 25%
4. **Contractor's Past Performance.** The Statement of Qualifications should identify at least three 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 one page**. The Statement should include names, email addresses, and telephone numbers of points of contact for the referenced engagements. Weight: 15%
5. **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 attached [Contractor Budget Template](#). Please include the proposed budget for equipment purchase in the proposal. NFWF anticipates awarding two contracts under this RFQ, not to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold. Weight: 15%

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. Small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are strongly encouraged to apply.

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 under the same cover at the same time, in three distinctly labeled and separate documents: 1) Technical Proposal, 2) Budget, and 3) Evidence of Financial Stability.

Interested parties should submit proposals electronically to NFWF (**Traci Giefer**, traci.giefer@nfwf.org) using the requirements below:

1. Technical Proposal

- Format: Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF with a font size no smaller than 11 pt.



NFWF

- Contact information: Primary contact person, company name, address, phone, email, website, UEI number, and EIN/Taxpayer ID#.
 - Scope of Work: Concise (4-page limit) description of the work plan, specific tasks and deliverables 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 are 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 ([Contractor Budget Template](#)).
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.

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. Only one award will be made for this project. If multiple institutions are involved, they should be handled through subcontracts.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

November 6, 2024	Deadline for questions about the solicitation to NFWF. Offerors should submit questions regarding this solicitation via email to Traci Giefer (traci.giefer@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 CT on November 6, 2024.
November 8, 2024	NFWF will post the questions submitted regarding the solicitation and responses on the NFWF website at www.nfwf.org/greatlakes .
November 19, 2024	Deadline for receipt by NFWF of proposals. Proposals must be sent electronically as an email attachment to Traci Giefer by 5:00 PM CT November 19, 2024. Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF.
December, 2024	Contract award to selected Offeror
December 31, 2025	Deliverables Due