



Fundraising Consultant to Support Development of a Collaborative Fundraising Model: Request for Proposals

Purpose

River Network, on behalf of the [Water Data Collaborative](#) (WDC) is requesting proposals for a Fundraising Consultant for an expected 3-month engagement to lead the Steering Committee in developing a collaborative fundraising model that defines parameters and strategies for how we fundraise as a collaborative to ensure long-term financial sustainability, and to pilot the collaborative fundraising model through the development and submission of fundraising proposals. We are seeking an individual or firm with a proven track record for excellence in working with multiple organizations developing collaborative fundraising models, and in assessing and developing programmatic brand and appeal to funders.

About the Water Data Collaborative

The WDC was formed in 2017 to develop and use technology and systems that empower communities to take action to protect water resources. WDC's work provides the vital contribution of community watershed science to the Internet of Water project to make water data more open and integrated, and thus more usable and useful. Thousands of community-based and non-profit organizations are working on the ground to protect their local water resources. WDC seeks to connect these scientists and empower them to share their data and knowledge with their communities.

WDC's mission is to grow and maintain an inclusive community of trained and qualified community water scientists who employ best available practices and technologies to provide data that enable the protection and restoration of our nation's waterways.

WDC is currently comprised of the following charter organizations: [Izaak Walton League of America](#), [River Network](#), [Waterkeeper Alliance](#), [Chesapeake Conservancy](#), [The Commons](#), [Consortium of Universities for the Advancement of Hydrologic Science, Inc.](#) (CUASHI) and the [Internet of Water](#).

Scope of Work

Specifically, the consultant shall:

1. Develop a collaborative fundraising model
 - a. Conduct a cursory audit of the WDC's collective fundraising capacity and potential conflicts of programmatic interest. Identify strengths and weaknesses of existing fundraising relationships, efforts and infrastructure to determine areas for improvement and development. Assess the opportunities and threats external to the program as well as readiness to implement aspects of the fundraising plan.
 - b. Engage member organizations in the development of a collaborative fundraising model, defining our parameters and practices for involvement in raising funds for the WDC.
 - c. Develop and facilitate adoption of a collaborative fundraising agreement to be signed by the respective leaders of the organizations comprising the WDC Steering Committee.
2. Pilot the collaborative fundraising model
 - a. Review and expand on existing list of funding prospects and upcoming funding opportunities.
 - b. Facilitate group evaluation of opportunities to identify the top three (3) based on suitability, and likelihood of successful award.
 - c. Lead on the development, and preparation of at least three (3) funding proposals.



Deliverables

1. Collaborative fundraising model document
2. Signed collaborative fundraising agreement
3. At least three (3) grant proposals submitted

Schedule

1. Proposals due: COB July 10th, 2020
2. Selection, award: July 17th 2020
3. Kick-off meeting with WDC members: July 30th, 2020
4. Deliverables and engagement completed by October 30th, 2020.

Submission Requirements

1. All Proposals should be submitted electronically in PDF or Word.
2. Proposals have a 10-page maximum.
3. A narrative that addresses how the Scope of Work, as outlined above, will be accomplished, including a timeline with benchmarks and the number of hours required to accomplish the plan.
4. A Statement of Qualifications that clearly demonstrate that the consultant has knowledge and experience in collaborative fundraising models. Strong preference for experience with knowledge of water programs and funders.
5. Resumés/CVs for each team member, including any subcontractors.
6. Clearly defined project budget. Note that billing will coincide with reaching set goals and/or milestones.
7. Three (3) references from clients for whom the consultant has performed similar services.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by the WDC Steering Committee and scored according to a number of criteria, including:

1. Quality and match of proposal: Understanding of scope, objectives and completeness and coherence of response (30 points)
2. Qualifications, previous work of consultant with particular emphasis developing collaborative fundraising model(s), and demonstrated ability of consultant to carry out fundraising plan of similar character and size (30 points)
3. Familiarity with the funder landscape supporting tech, society, and environmental spaces. Some understanding of technical scope of the WDC mission is preferred but not required. (20 points)
4. Cost effectiveness (20 points)

Contact and Questions

All proposals and questions should be submitted to Adam Griggs, Science Manager at River Network: agriggs@rivernetwork.org.

Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated by the members of the WDC Steering Committee based on the above criteria and the top applicant will be offered a contract. If we are unable to come to terms with our top applicant, subsequent applicants will be contacted in the order in which they were rated. Once contracted, all others will be notified that the selection process has ended.



Terms and Conditions

The successful contractor may be awarded a short-term professional services contract for the services identified in this RFP and in the proposal to the contractor. Issuance of this RFP does not commit River Network to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in preparation of proposals responding to the RFP. The contractor will be expected to work primarily remotely via web conference with the (7) seven members of the WDC Steering Committee, and additional staff of these organizations as needed. River Network is currently serving as the finance and program administrator for the grant providing these funds and will serve as the primary contact and administrator for this engagement.