

REJ Cooperative Agreement
Request for Proposals
Farmer Outreach Specialist

Summary of Need:

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is seeking services from a candidate experienced in public speaking, farmer education, and community engagement associated with our (CBF) USDA NRCS Conservation Outreach: Racial Equity and Justice Conservation Cooperative Agreement.

The Project:

Through the “Racial Equity and Justice Conservation Cooperative Agreement,” CBF Pennsylvania is collaborating with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and other contractors to encourage, assist, educate and provide outreach to historically underserved producers/ farmers with implementing farm conservation practices that promote climate-smart, soil health practices and improve “whole-farm” performance and economic viability. Such outreach and education will ideally result in the historically underserved producer utilizing USDA NRCS services such as beginner farmer, EQIP, CSP, and urban farm programs.

Participating farms will be encouraged to adopt a suite of practices to improve farm economic viability through reduced input costs and productivity gains associated with advanced management of soil as a living ecosystem. Farmers will employ management techniques such as: diverse crop rotations, integrating grazing with crops, and Integrated Pest Management to promote soil organisms and biodiversity. They will build soil organic matter and enhance soil health, to reduce soil erosion, nutrient and pesticide loss, storm water runoff, and erosion to local streams. This project supports climate smart practices for urban vegetable farmers by implementing systems to manage storm water and irrigation, extending growing seasons by using high tunnels and using mulch to hold soil moisture, control weeds, and control erosion. In addition to providing conservation outreach to the historically underserved population of producers, the project will also focus on programing that attracts new and beginning farmers located in both rural and urban environments.

CBF seeks opportunity to contract with a Farmer Outreach Specialist who will have success in attracting diverse farmers to multiple education and outreach programs. These programs may be offered in the form of an online webinar and/or and in-person farm/urban garden event. Climate smart agricultural practices such as those mentioned above and conservation practices that boost yield while also improving the farmers fiscal bottom line are excellent topics for the education and outreach programs. Matching farmer needs with USDA NRCS programs is another goal of the project.

This PA CBF Racial Equity and Justice Conservation Cooperative Agreement is scheduled to conclude in March of 2024.

Scope of Work:

Specific to the contracted position of Farmer Outreach Specialist.

The Farmer Outreach Specialist will implement the task of educating and providing outreach to historically underserved producers/farmers in both a rural and urban setting. The main objective is to host and participate in partner and outreach activities, including large group functions, on-farm

demonstrations, as well as individualized support for farmers to facilitate learning and practice adoption of climate-smart farming practices, specifically focusing on practices with dual benefits to water quality (e.g. nutrient management, forested buffers, managed grazing, cover crops, and urban agriculture practices such as hoop houses and irrigation systems).

Key Deliverables:

The Farmer Outreach Specialist will support this grant and the objective stated above by:

- *Working closely with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Kelly O’Neill, by attending collaborative meetings to plan, schedule, inform, and/or facilitate outreach activities; online webinars, on-farm demonstrations, as well as individualized support to farmers.
 - **CBF has budgeted for certain supplies (high tunnel for education) and has access to other resources (rainfall simulator, or subject matter experts) to facilitate programing with the project.**
- Organize, facilitate, and execute 2 farm field days and 2 events (conference or other) directed to the specific needs of underserved producers in the urban and rural agricultural environments.
- Providing indirect and direct landowner outreach and education to at least 15 landowners with farm visits to at least 5.
- Evaluate results of outreach events above by distributing post training surveys at the completion of at least 2 events.

*Additionally, the Farmer Outreach Specialist will communicate with the PA CBF REJ grant manager, Kelly O’Neill on a regular basis through email and telephone conferences to coordinate events, communicate progress for grant reports, and report invoices for payment. PA CBF will establish a budget for each fiscal year and require the Farmer Outreach Specialist to submit quarterly invoices and a final invoice prior to March 30, 2024.

Regular collaboration with all education partners is essential to the success of the project. Close communication with PA CBF, and the educational organizations is necessary. The Farmer Outreach Specialist will work within the pre agreed upon project budget.

Schedule:

Application Due Date

We request that your proposal be delivered electronically to grant manager Kelly O’Neill, KONeill@CBF.org no later than 5:00pm on Thursday April 13th, 2023. It is the intent of CBF to make a selection as quickly as possible. We will notify you once a decision for award of bid is made.

Project Completion Date

The final project completion date will be assigned when an award is made.

Minimum Requirements:

The Farmer Outreach Specialist will have experience in working with diverse populations of students and educators, excellent communication skills to ascertain student and organizational needs, and an ability to plan successful career events in collaboration with PA CBF.

- Experience coordinating or facilitating collaborative networks
- Experience with agriculture, farmer educational programs, and underserved communities
- Strong strategic and work plan development and management skills
- Experience working effectively with diverse individuals and groups
- High quality communication skills
- Effective planning and organizing methods
- Flexibility, openness, and a personable disposition

Interviews:

Interviews with candidates may be scheduled to facilitate decision-making of the proposal review team.

Minority Participation:

CBF actively encourages proposals from Small, Women and Minority Owned (SWAM) Businesses. Please note if you are a Small, Women or Minority Owned Business and if you are certified by the State of Pennsylvania.

For Further Information or Questions:

Contact Kelly O’Neill, PA CBF Agricultural Policy Analyst at KONeill@cbf.org

Bid Response Form:

Please complete the following information for your response:

1. The name and full contact information of your company and, if applicable, any other entity comprising your team. Attach resumes of individuals involved.

2. List and describe three similar projects completed within the previous five years that are relevant to this project. If the relevance is not immediately obvious, please briefly describe the relationship as you see it. Feel free to include any reports, communications, or other collaterals that exemplify the quality or content of past projects.

3. List three client references and their contact information for whom you or your team members have completed work similar to that described in this document.

4. Include basic information and history about the business entity, financial information, technical capability, and any other information you feel is important for us to know.

5. Fee Proposal. Detail to the greatest extent possible the cost for service, hourly rates (if applicable), typical direct out of pocket costs such as travel reimbursement, copies, mailings etc., and any other anticipated expenses that you foresee.

*****Please indicate a total, not to exceed fee, for the entire project _____**

6. Additional information,

A successful applicant may need to provide proof of insurance based on the services or product provided.

The undersigned certifies that the information submitted above is true and accurate. The undersigned certifies that the person, firm, association, co-partnership or corporation herein named, has not, either directly or indirectly, entered into any agreement, participated in any collusion, or otherwise taken any action in restraint of free competitive bidding in the preparation and submission of a proposal to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for consideration in the award of a contract.

The undersigned further certifies that the firm, association, or corporation or any person in a controlling capacity associated therewith or any position involving the administration of federal funds; is not currently under suspension, debarment, voluntary exclusion, or determination of ineligibility by any federal agency; has not been suspended, debarred voluntarily excluded, or determined ineligible by any federal agency within the past three years; does not have a proposed debarment pending; and has not been indicted,

convicted, or had a civil judgment rendered against said person, firm, association, or corporation by a court of competent jurisdiction on any manner involving fraud or official misconduct within the last three years.

I further acknowledge that by signing this page of the proposal, I am deemed to have agreed to the provisions of the affidavit.

(Name of Firm)

(Authorized Signature) (Title)

(Please print Name)

(Date