

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Hawaiian Islands Environmental Finance Center (HIEFC)



Communications & Media

PROPOSAL DUE DATE: June 1, 2023 at 5:00 pm HST

SUMMARY

Two-year contract to assist Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) with Communications and Media activities for HCF's Hawaiian Islands Environmental Finance Center (HIEFC).

Primary focus will be executing communications and media efforts related to HCF's HIEFC program, including, but not limited to, visual identity, website development and maintenance, and public relations and marketing activities as outlined in Contract Objectives.

We request a proposal for the full five (5) years of this project period, with the understanding that this contract is for the first two (2) years only and is dependent on continued federal funding and satisfactory performance by the selected contractor. HCF will extend the contract for ongoing work as needed during the final three (3) years.

CONTRACT CONTINGENCY

[This contract is contingent on HCF receiving formal notification of a 5-year federal grant award from the Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\).](#) If award notification is not received from EPA by June 1, 2023, awarding of this contract may be delayed, deferred, or cancelled. HCF will notify RFP applicants if this occurs. HCF is not liable for any work, expenses, loss of profits, or any damages whatsoever incurred by RFP applicants prior to the awarding of this contract.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Hawaii Community Foundation (HCF), Fresh Water Initiative (FWI), sought to establish the Hawaiian Islands Environmental Finance Center (HIEFC) as a Category 2 Regional Water Infrastructure EFC with Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Funding to address water infrastructure needs across the Hawaiian Islands, EPA Region 9.

The 2019 Hawaii Infrastructure Report Card identified nearly \$6 billion in infrastructure needs over the next 20 years across the state's counties. However, the Natural Resources Defense Council reports barriers to obtaining federal funding, citing findings in an EPA report on Drinking Water State Revolving Funds in five states including Hawaii that between 2010 and 2013, these states' DWSRFs left \$2.6 billion on the table. This is largely due to a lack of federal grant management capacity among otherwise qualified entities, challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified environmental staff, and underexposure of these opportunities to communities who are most in need.

HIEFC will use its unique position as a community convener for systems change, and leader of a statewide Fresh Water Initiative for the last nine years, to support community groups and government agencies that are made up of or serve communities that are disadvantaged or vulnerable within the context of the Hawaiian Islands, including ALICE households, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and other underserved groups. Overall, HIEFC will aim to build core competencies for these entities focused on (1) Funding Resources – helping entities to apply for various streams of funding for water infrastructure needs, and (2) Water Workforce – workforce development in the water sector to ensure

labor needed to design, implement and maintain water infrastructure in the long-term, including labor force assessment and the establishment of a program to place fellows at water agencies.

A robust collaboration of community partners to assist HIEFC in carrying out these aims include the University of Hawaii Water Resources Research Center to assist with workforce activities, the Urban Sustainability Directors Network to help design and run the fellowship program, state and local water-related agencies to participate as fellowship host entities, experienced consultants to conduct funding-related technical assistance and technical project management, and community-based organizations to assist with other components of the HIEFC's activities or serve as recipients of assistance.

The HIEFC will operate in alignment with EPA strategic goals and emphasize innovative projects that also have elements of sustainability and resilience in water conservation, recharge, and reuse and that have actionable plans to work toward equity in disadvantaged communities. Success would be defined as funding transformational change projects that would make significant progress toward the stated HIEFC goals, as well as address climate change and equity needs, in ways that extend impact beyond the five-year EFC funding period.

This RFP seeks to find a contractor with the skills and capacity needed to execute communications and media activities related to the HIEFC. The bulk of this work should occur in the first year, prior to and in the first quarter of the HIEFC launch, with ongoing maintenance and communications support in following contract years. See Contract Objectives for more details.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) has been leading Hawaii's Fresh Water Initiative for nine years, funding various projects in support of the initiative's goals, which primarily focuses on restoring long-term water security through the creation of 100 million gallons per day (mgd) in additional reliable fresh water capacity for the Hawaiian Islands by 2030 through conservation, recharge, and reuse (see diagram below).

Through this project, HCF will establish the Hawaiian Islands Environmental Finance Center (HIEFC). HCF will be the contracting authority responsible for issuing this contract, verifying deliverables and products, and making payments. The selected contractor will report to Dana Okano, HCF Program Director and HIEFC Director.



Hawaiian Islands Environmental Finance Center (HIEFC), established by HCF, will function as an EPA Environmental Finance Center dedicated to addressing water infrastructure needs across the Hawaiian Islands. HIEFC will focus its efforts on federal resources capacity building with community groups and government agencies, as well as water workforce development in the water sector to ensure long-term labor forces in this field. See Project Background for more details.

Selected Contractor: The contractor selected for this project will be responsible for executing communications and media-related tasks, as directed by HCF, for the HIEFC. The bulk of this work will include all communications activities

required for the launch of the HIEFC program, as well as ongoing media, communications, and website support through the end of the contract. The contractor will play an important role in creating and establishing the visual identity of this program and its relationship to HCF. Must be available immediately to start this work.

All contract activities will be completed under the coordination and direction of Dana Okano, HCF Program Director and HIEFC Director.

CONTRACT OBJECTIVES

The objectives listed below reflect the types of activities and responsibilities directly related to this contract.

- 1. Develop visual identity for the HIEFC program.**
 - a. Create a HIEFC logo, provide brand guidelines, and final files for print and digital formats.
 - i. Ensure HIEFC logo establishes recognition of HCF ownership with the use of existing HCF logo.
 - b. Develop theme, color scheme, font treatment, graphics.
 - c. Procure stock and/or custom images.
- 2. Design, develop, and maintain HIEFC website.**
 - a. Build and establish website.
 - i. Create website template determined by HIEFC needs.
 - ii. Align design and layout with brand guidelines.
 - iii. Create copy in collaboration with HCF staff.
 - iv. Include hosting fees.
 - v. Provide website access to HCF staff for content updates and changes.
 - vi. Apply federal non-discrimination guidelines and implement necessary measures to meet those requirements (e.g., ADA compliance, limited English proficiency, etc.) as directed by HCF.
 - b. Provide ongoing maintenance.
 - i. Maintain domain/hosting fees and updates.
 - ii. Conduct website changes as needed and/or requested by HCF staff.
 - c. Provide website training and support to HCF staff.
 - d. Provide metrics on communications efforts.
- 3. PR & Marketing**
 - a. Create press releases and distribute to media (e.g., initial launch, special or new updates, etc.).
 - b. Create informational program and promotional collateral for both digital and print formats.
 - c. Create, distribute, and manage HIEFC newsletter using Mailchimp platform.
 - i. Estimated 2-4 times per year.
 - d. Coordinate media coverage and announcements.
 - e. Create social media announcements and posts.
 - i. Estimated 2-3 times per quarter.

CONTRACT DELIVERABLES

1. Established visual identity.
2. Created HIEFC logo and brand guidelines.
3. Created HIEFC theme, color scheme, font treatment, and graphics/images.
4. Completed HIEFC website.
5. Created HIEFC e-newsletter.
6. Created HIEFC informational collateral as requested.
7. Created HIEFC promotional collateral as requested.
8. Produced press releases as requested.
9. Provided ongoing communications support and website maintenance.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

The following will be taken into consideration in the final proposal selection process.

- Demonstrates skills and expertise needed to successfully complete all aspects of this project.

- Demonstrates adequate capacity to complete this project.
- Previous experience, including capability and proficiency, in providing communications and media services to other businesses and organizations.
- Proposal budget and timeline. Contractor must be available immediately.
- No company or individual with suspension and debarment by the government will be awarded this contract. Please provide a written statement indicating whether your company and/or the proposed research team on the project are or have been on suspension, proposals for debarment, and debarment by the federal, state, or local government.
- Note: These are the minimum qualifications required for consideration of this contract. Additional desired qualifications are included in the following section.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Based in or significant work experience in Hawai'i.
- Demonstrates ability to collaborate with others to achieve project objectives.
- Some knowledge of HCF and its programs.
- Prior experience with non-profit organizations.
- In accordance with EPA regulations at 40 CFR Part 33, "Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Programs," Minority Business Enterprises and Women's Business Enterprises are strongly encouraged to submit a proposal.

PROJECT TIMELINE

HCF anticipates project duration to be June 2023 to May 2028, this contract represents the first two (2) years of that time.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Complete proposals must be emailed to environment@hcf-hawaii.org no later than **5:00 pm HST on June 1, 2023**.

For proposal submittal questions, please contact Faisha Solomon at FSolomon@hcf-hawaii.org no later than May 23, 2023.

Proposals must be submitted as one PDF file limited to 12 pages (not including resumes and samples of previous work).

Proposals must include the following components:

1. *Organization Information:*
 - Name and Address
 - Phone Number and Email Address of Lead Contact
2. *Experience and Capabilities:* Including examples of prior work projects related to this RFP.
3. *Project Timeline:* Including tasks and deliverables, costs and anticipated timing. This proposed project schedule will be revisited and finalized together with HCF upon contract award. A simple sample project timeline is shown below. Work will need to start immediately.

Task/Deliverable	Cost	March 2023	April 2023	May 2023	...

4. *Scope of Work Narrative:* Discuss your strategy and timeline to formulate the deliverables discussed in this RFP. Include what you are going to do as outlined in the contract objectives and deliverables and how you will accomplish it. Detail software and hosting platforms used.
5. *Budget Narrative:* Discuss your budget.
6. *Project Team:* Introduce your project team, their responsibilities under this proposal, and their experience and qualifications. Include any subcontracts that you may require to complete this project.
7. *Client List:* Provide a client list including references we may contact.