Request for Proposals

Title: Scientific Communications Consultant
RFP No: FY24-003
Date of Issuance: July 18, 2023

1. Background
   Conservation International (CI) protects nature for the benefit of humanity. Through science, policy, fieldwork, and finance, we spotlight and secure the most important places in nature for the climate, biodiversity, and for people. With offices in 30 countries and projects in more than 100 countries, Conservation International partners with governments, companies, civil society, Indigenous peoples, and local communities to help people and nature thrive together.
   CI has established itself as a global leader in the conservation and restoration of blue carbon ecosystems. With a steadfast commitment to safeguarding the planet's natural heritage, CI has played a pivotal role in raising awareness about the critical importance of blue carbon and advocating for its protection on a global scale. Through strategic partnerships with governments, scientific institutions, local communities, and other stakeholders, CI has fostered collaborations that leverage collective expertise and resources to effectively address the challenges faced by blue carbon ecosystems. With a track record of successful initiatives, CI continues to advance the global agenda for the protection and conservation of blue carbon ecosystems through the Center for Oceans, International Blue Carbon Institute (IBCI), and the Center for Natural Climate Solutions.

2. Project Overview
   CI seeks to engage a Scientific Communications Consultant to support its efforts in communicating the importance of blue carbon and promoting the conservation and restoration of blue carbon ecosystems. The Consultant will be responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive communication strategy to reach diverse audiences, including policymakers, scientists, conservation practitioners, and the general public.

   The consultancy can be undertaken remotely, but a hybrid arrangement with some in-person meetings in CI’s country offices in Singapore or the DC area (USA) is preferred. Any anticipated travel expenses should be included in the financial proposal.
   Key stakeholders on the client’s side are located internationally (USA and APAC), and the consultant is expected to accommodate the potential time zone differences for online meetings.

3. Terms of Reference, Deliverables and Deliverables Schedule
   Objectives:
   a. Review of existing communications resources: Conduct a review of available and related blue carbon content to identify gaps in communications coverage for blue carbon across CI’s Centers, Institutes, country offices, and project teams.
   b. Strategic Communications for Blue Carbon: Ensure alignment in blue carbon related content and messaging throughout Conservation International.
c. Knowledge dissemination: Develop communications collaterals to facilitate the effective communication of CI’s blue carbon work, projects and concepts into accessible language and formats suitable for various audiences.

**Deliverables:**
- A communication strategy for blue carbon across CI, including a plan of action, key messages, target audiences, and communication channels.
- Engaging and scientifically accurate communication materials (3 to 5 items), such as articles, fact sheets, infographics, and presentations. The medium and number of materials developed will be discussed and agreed upon with the client prior to the start of the contract.
- A communications plan and strategy for the development of the IBCI website and social media communications.

**Tasks:**
- **Communication Strategy Development:**
  - Conduct an assessment of the target audience, existing communication channels, and potential outreach opportunities.
  - Develop a communication strategy, including key messages, target audiences, communication channels, and metrics for success.
  - Provide recommendations on the most effective mediums for communicating blue carbon science, such as reports, articles, infographics, videos, social media, and public events.
- **Content Creation and Dissemination:**
  - Review existing content, media and websites to ensure that information is current, and compile a resource list of existing communication materials, such as articles, press releases, blog posts, social media posts, fact sheets, and presentations.
  - Collaborate with CI’s Blue Carbon team to create new communications materials for blue carbon.
  - Ensure consistency and accuracy of messaging across different communication platforms and from CI’s blue carbon related centers and programs.
- **International Blue Carbon Institute Website:**
  - Collaborate with CI’s communications teams to develop a strategy for the IBCI website – this includes a plan of the format, structure, organization and planned content for the website.
  - Set up and develop an overarching strategy for IBCI social media presence and communications in line with CI’s communications style.

**Proposed Delivery Schedule**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Acceptance Criteria</th>
<th>Due (from contract award)</th>
<th>Estimated time required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A communication strategy for blue carbon across CI, including a plan of action, key messages, target audiences, and communication channels. | Assess the target audience, existing communication channels, and potential outreach opportunities.  
Develop a communication strategy, including key messages, target audiences, communication channels, and metrics for success.  
Provide recommendations on the most effective mediums for communicating blue carbon science, such as reports, articles, infographics, videos, social media, and public events. | 1) Draft CI Blue Carbon Communications Strategy Plan  
2) Final CI Blue Carbon Detailed Communications Strategy Plan | 3 weeks | ~ 2 weeks |
| Content Creation and Dissemination                                        | Collaborate with CI’s Blue Carbon team to create new communications materials for blue carbon  
Ensure consistency and accuracy of messaging across different communication platforms and from CI’s blue carbon related centers and programs. | 3) New communications materials for blue carbon (number to be decided on with client) | To be agreed with client | 4 weeks |
| International Blue Carbon Institute Website                              | Collaborate with CI’s Brand and Communications Division to develop a strategy for the IBCI website – this includes a plan of the format, structure, organization and planned content for the website. Set up and develop an overarching strategy for IBCI social media presence and communications in line with CI’s communications style. | 4) Communications strategy document for IBCI.  
5) Website content strategy | 4 weeks | ~ 2 weeks  
7 weeks | ~ 2 weeks |
4. Submission Details
   a. Deadline. Proposals must be received no later than 3 August 2023 (5 pm ET). Late submissions will not be accepted. Proposals must be submitted via email marine@conservation.org. All proposals are to be submitted following the guidelines listed in this RFP.

   b. Validity of bid. 120 days from the submission deadline

   c. Clarifications. Questions may be submitted to marine@conservation.org by the specified date and time in the timeline below. The subject of the email must contain the RFP number and title of the RFP. CI will respond in writing to submitted clarifications by the date specified in the timeline below. Responses to questions that may be of common interest to all bidders will be posted to the CI website and/or communicated via email.

   d. Amendments. At any time prior to the deadline for submission of proposals, CI may, for any reason, modify the RFP documents by amendment which will be posted to the CI website and/or communicated via email.

5. Minimum Requirements
   a. Bachelor’s degree in communications or marketing-related field.
   b. 8 or more years of experience in strategic content and communications
   c. Knowledge of or experience in conservation and/or environmental sciences.
   d. Good project management skills for leading multiple projects simultaneously.
   e. Experience working for a global organization that needs to communicate with and support different cultures.
   f. Ability to understand and digest complex scientific concepts and information to ensure resource/information sharing is accessible for a variety of stakeholders.

6. Proposal Documents to Include
   a. Signed cover page on bidder’s letterhead with the bidder’s contact information.
   b. Signed Representation of Transparency, Integrity, Environmental and Social Responsibility (Attachment 1)
   c. Technical Proposal,
      i. Capabilities, Experience, Past Performance, and 3 client references. Please include descriptions of similar projects or assignments and at least three client references.
      ii. Qualifications of Key Personnel. Please attach CVs that demonstrate how the team proposed meets the minimum requirements listed in section 5 (Minimum Requirements).
      iii. Technical Approach, Methodology and Detailed Work Plan. The Technical Proposal should describe in detail how the bidder intends to carry out the requirements described in the RFP.
   d. Financial Proposal. Offerors shall use the cost proposal template (Attachment 3).
7. **Evaluation Criteria** In evaluating proposals, CI will seek the best value for money considering the merits of the technical and costs proposals. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Score (out of 100)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the proposed approach and methodology appropriate to the assignment and practical in the prevailing project circumstances?</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the presentation clear and is the sequence of activities and the planning logical, realistic and promise efficient implementation of the project?</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the bidder's past performance demonstrate recent proven experience doing similar work?</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the bidder and the proposed personnel have the specific technical expertise for the assignment?</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost: Costs proposed are reasonable and realistic, reflect a solid understanding of the assignment.</td>
<td>20</td>
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</table>

8. **Proposal Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP Issued</td>
<td>July 18 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarifications submitted to CI</td>
<td>July 24 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifications provided to known bidders</td>
<td>July 27 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete proposals due to CI</td>
<td>August 3 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final selection</td>
<td>August 10 2023</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

9. **Resulting Award** CI anticipates entering into an agreement with the selected bidder **August 15 2023**. Any resulting agreement will be subject to the terms and conditions of CI's Services Agreement. A model form of agreement can be provided upon request.

This RFP does not obligate CI to execute a contract, nor does it commit CI to pay any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of the proposals. Furthermore, CI reserves the right to reject any and all offers, if such action is considered to be in the best interest of CI. CI will, in its sole discretion, select the winning proposal and is not obligated to share individual evaluation results.

10. **Confidentiality** All proprietary information provided by the bidder shall be treated as confidential and will not be shared with potential or actual applicants during the solicitation process. This includes but is not limited to price quotations, cost proposals and technical proposals. CI may, but is not obliged to, post procurement awards on its public website after the solicitation process has concluded, and the contract has been awarded. CI's evaluation results are confidential and applicant scoring will not be shared among bidders.
11. **Code of Ethics** All Offerors are expected to exercise the highest standards of conduct in preparing, submitting and if selected, eventually carrying out the specified work in accordance with CI’s Code of Ethics Conservation International’s reputation derives from our commitment to our values: Integrity, Respect, Courage, Optimism, Passion and Teamwork. CI’s Code of Ethics (the “Code”) provides guidance to CI employees, service providers, experts, interns, and volunteers in living CI’s core values, and outlines minimum standards for ethical conduct which all parties must adhere to. Any violation of the Code of Ethics, as well as concerns regarding the integrity of the procurement process and documents should be reported to CI via its Ethics Hotline at [www.ci.ethicspoint.com](http://www.ci.ethicspoint.com).

12. **Attachments**

Attachment 1: Representation of Transparency, Integrity, Environmental and Social Responsibility
Attachment 3: Cost Proposal Template
Attachment 1: Representation of Transparency, Integrity, Environmental and Social Responsibility

RFP No. FY24-003

UEI Number (if applicable): N/A

All Offerors are expected to exercise the highest standards of conduct in preparing, submitting and if selected, eventually carrying out the specified work in accordance with CI’s Code of Ethics. CI’s Code of Ethics provides guidance to CI employees, service providers, experts, interns, and volunteers in living CI’s core values, and outlines minimum standards for ethical conduct which all parties must adhere to. Any violations of the Code of Ethics should be reported to CI via its Ethics Hotline at www.ci.ethicspoint.com.

CI relies on the personal integrity, good judgment and common sense of all third parties acting on behalf, or providing services to the organization, to deal with issues not expressly addressed by the Code or as noted below.

I. With respect to CI’s Code of Ethics, we certify:
   a. We understand and accept that CI, its contractual partners, grantees and other parties with whom we work are expected to commit to the highest standards of Transparency, Fairness, and Integrity in procurement.

II. With respect to social and environmental standards, we certify:
   a. We are committed to high standards of ethics and integrity and compliance with all applicable laws across our operations, including prohibition of actions that facilitate trafficking in persons, child labor, forced labor, sexual abuse, exploitation or harassment. We respect internationally proclaimed human rights and take no action that contributes to the infringement of human rights. We protect those who are most vulnerable to infringements of their rights and the ecosystems that sustain them.
   
   b. We fully respect and enforce the environmental and social standards recognized by the international community, including the fundamental conventions of International Labour Organization (ILO) and international conventions for the protection of the environment, in line with the laws and regulations applicable to the country where the contract is to be performed.

III. With respect to our eligibility and professional conduct, we certify:
   a. We are not and none of our affiliates [members, employees, contractors, subcontractors, and consultants] are in a state of bankruptcy, liquidation, legal settlement, termination of activity, or guilty of grave professional misconduct as determined by a regulatory body responsible for licensing and/or regulating the offeror’s business.
   
   b. We have not and will not engage in criminal or fraudulent acts. By a final judgment, we were not convicted in the last five years for offenses such as fraud or corruption, money laundering or professional misconduct.
   
   c. We are/were not involved in writing or recommending the terms of reference for this solicitation document.
   
   d. We have not engaged in any collusion or price fixing with other offerors.
e. We have not made promises, offers, or grants, directly or indirectly to any CI employees involved in this procurement, or to any government official in relation to the contract to be performed, with the intention of unduly influencing a decision or receiving an improper advantage.

f. We have taken no action nor will we take any action to limit or restrict access of other companies, organizations or individuals to participate in the competitive bidding process launched by CI.

g. We have fulfilled our obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country where the contract is to be performed.

h. We have not provided, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we do not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitate, or participated in terrorist acts, and we are compliant with all applicable Counter-Terrorist Financing and Anti-Money Laundering laws (including USA Patriot Act and U.S. Executive Order 13224).

i. We certify that neither we nor our directors, officers, key employees or beneficial owners are included in any list of financial or economic sanctions, debarment or suspension adopted by the United States, United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank, or General Services Administration’s List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement or Non-procurement programs in accordance with E.O.s 12549 and 12689, “Debarment and Suspension”.

Name: ____________________________________________

Signature: __________________________________________

Title: ____________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________
Attachment 3: Cost Proposal Template

The cost proposal must be all-inclusive of profit, fees or taxes. Additional costs cannot be included after award, and revisions to proposed costs may not be made after submission unless expressly requested by CI should the offerors proposal be accepted. Nevertheless, for the purpose of the proposal, Offerors must provide a detailed budget showing major expense line items. Offers must show unit prices, quantities, and total price. All items, services, etc. must be clearly labeled and included in the total offered price. All cost information must be expressed in US Dollars.

If selected, Offeror shall use its best efforts to minimize the financing of any taxes on goods and services, or the importation, manufacture, procurement or supply thereof. If Offeror is eligible to apply for refunds on taxes paid, Offeror shall do so. Any tax savings should be reflected in the total cost.

Cost Breakdown by Deliverable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Price (Lump Sum, All Inclusive)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insert deliverable 1 from Section 3 or attached TOR</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Insert deliverable 2 from Section 3 or attached TOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insert deliverable 3 from Section 3 or attached TOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insert deliverable 4 from Section 3 or attached TOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insert deliverable 5 from Section 3 or attached TOR</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Cost Breakdown by Cost Component (example only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Unit of measure (day, month etc)</th>
<th>Total period of engagement</th>
<th>Unit cost/rate</th>
<th>Total Cost for the Period</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultant 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultant 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-total Personnel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel Costs (if applicable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other related Costs (please specify)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Cost of Financial Proposal</td>
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