



# HEARTLANDS CONSERVANCY

## Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Response Deadline: Tuesday, April 18, 2023 by 6:00 p.m. CST by email

Submit: Following the instructions in Section E, email one (1) electronic copy of your Statements of Qualifications to:

Laura L. Lyon, Vice President - Program Strategy & Impact  
[Laura.Lyon@HeartLandsConservancy.org](mailto:Laura.Lyon@HeartLandsConservancy.org) (watch your spelling carefully)

Format: One compiled document in PDF format. See requirements below.

Questions: Please read this document thoroughly first. Submit all questions in writing regarding this RFQ in writing to [Laura.Lyon@HeartLandsConservancy.org](mailto:Laura.Lyon@HeartLandsConservancy.org) with "RFQ QUESTION" in the subject. Submit questions by April 4, 2023. Q&A will not be distributed to submitters.

### INTRODUCTION

HeartLands Conservancy (HLC) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation serving southern Illinois and headquartered in Belleville, Illinois. HLC was established in 1989 and is organized for the following purposes:

- a) To promote the wise use of land, water, and natural resources in southern Illinois;
- b) To acquire, maintain, and protect open space, including but not limited to, natural areas, scenic areas, agricultural land and associated agricultural buildings, parks, gardens, floodplains, stormwater storage areas, and other environmentally or culturally significant areas by acquiring fee title to properties, obtaining conservation easements and securing development rights, and to hold interests in land in trust for the people of Illinois in perpetuity;
- c) To educate the public on natural resource and land conservation, maintenance, and protection, wildlife habitat, watershed health, community growth issues, and to provide opportunities for people to interact with the environment;
- d) To assist governments and communities in developing and implementing plans, including but not limited to, the wise use of land and community growth, enhanced quality of life, parks and park system development, natural resource management, cultural resources, community forestry, stormwater management, bicycle, pedestrian, and trail development, and other environmental resource issues and opportunities; and
- e) To develop watershed-based plans, water supply plans for weather-preparedness, and stormwater plans for regional water quality improvement and flood mitigation.

HeartLands Conservancy is a qualified conservation organization and a land trust that meets the purposes of IRC section 170(h)(4)(A). As a land trust, the organization holds fee-title to land, conducts real estate transactions, and holds conservation easements to preserve land and habitat in perpetuity.

The organization also operates programs and services through contracts and grants with local, state, and federal entities and private dollars.

To further HLC's organizational purposes, HeartLands Conservancy (HLC) intends to pre-qualify firms to provide the following services and/or technical assistance for potential future projects:

- Environmental/Natural Resource Planning & Engineering
- Forestry (including GIS mapping, policy, urban forestry planning, and management)
- Wetland Restoration
- Landscape Architecture
- Arborist
- Horticulture
- Botany & Ecological Services
- Wildlife Biologist (Midwest, Southern Illinois)
- Stream Restoration/Stabilization and Erosion Control
- Water Quality/Stormwater Best Management Practices Engineering and/or construction
- Stormwater Modeling
- Site Development/Construction Management
- Site Surveying
- Urban Design & Placemaking
- Bike & Pedestrian, Trail Transportation Engineering
- Community engagement/Facilitation
- Sign Fabrication (Interpretive, site wayfinding, regulatory, directional, etc.)
- Legal Services are requested under a separate RFP.

## SUBMITTAL PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

This pre-qualification process will determine the list of firms that will be eligible for the award of contracts/sub-contracts for the period beginning May 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2025. HLC reserves the right to receive Statement of Qualifications and to pre-qualify firms after April 4, 2023. The number of pre-qualified consultants selected through this process is within the discretion of HeartLands Conservancy. While pre-qualified status means that a firm is eligible for award of contracts, HLC does not guarantee that a firm will be awarded any work or make a representation of the amount of work a firm may receive within the three-year period or thereafter. Additional RFPs may be issued depending on the project and funding source.

### A. Selection and Contract Process

HeartLands Conservancy may or may not need professional service assistance for projects over the next two years in the categories identified in the Introduction of this document.

As a project is identified for services:

- HLC will notify pre-qualified entities of the project and provide a requested scope of services and schedule. Selected firms will provide services in accordance with a consultant agreement.
- If a contract/sub-contract award amount is over \$500,000, a minimum of three (3) entities from the pre-qualified list will be contacted. HLC shall interview those firms or request additional information from the firms specific for the selected project. HeartLands Conservancy reserves the right to request proposals from entities not on the pre-qualified list.
- HLC will initiate contract negotiations directed toward:
  - Ensuring that the firm and HLC have a mutual understanding of the essential requirements involved in providing the required services;

- Determining that the firm has or will make available the necessary personnel, equipment, and facilities to perform the services within the required time; and
- Agreeing upon fair and reasonable compensation, taking into account the estimated value, scope, complexity, and nature of the services.
- Upon failure to negotiate a contract with an identified pre-qualified entity, HLC will inform the entity, in writing, of the termination of negotiations and enter into negotiations with another entity on the pre-qualified list.

## B. Evaluation Criteria

- Relevance of projects as compared to HLC's mission, program, and services.
- Relevant and quality of past performance of prospective Firm/Consultant.
- Qualifications and experience of Firm's Staff/Consultant.
- Firm/Consultant resources and capacity to meet the needs of project(s).
- Demonstrated ability to meet project vision, scope, budget, and schedule on previous projects.

## C. Submittal Instructions

Submission will include:

- Cover letter indicating the category(ies) of service(s) under Section A that the firm/consultant is able to provide HLC.
- If different from the cover letter signator, include submission contact (name, title, phone number, and email) for future contact.
- Firm/Consultant profile/overview. Please describe all services offered, and any other information that may be deemed relevant to describe the qualifications.
- Resumes of key personnel who would be assigned to these services.
- Three (3) to five (5) relevant sample projects (per each category from Section A) that best illustrate the proposed firm/consultant qualifications (please include references/client contacts and any sub-consultants that worked on each project).
- Elaborate proposals are not required or expected.
- The submittal should also include:
  - Letter or certificate that professional insurance is in good standing.
  - Professional certifications, licenses, memberships, etc. of key individuals.
  - List of current local, state, or federal agencies that have prequalified the firm/consultant.
  - W/DBE status.

### Format to submit:

- One (1) compiled document in a PDF format.
- No native files, please.
- Page size may be Letter (8x11) to Tabloid (11x17).
- If the PDF is over 20MB, Please try and reduce the size or please use WeTransfer.com to transmit a link for larger files. DropBox, Google Drive, or other file-sharing services will not be accepted for this submission. If using Wetransfer.com, please send WeTransfer link via your email in addition.

Deadline: Tuesday, April 18, 2023 6:00 p.m. CST by email.

Submit: Firms/consultants are required to submit one (1) electronic copy of their Statement of Qualifications to:

Laura L. Lyon, Vice President - Program Strategy & Impact  
[Laura.Lyon@heartlandsconservancy.org](mailto:Laura.Lyon@heartlandsconservancy.org)

*Because things happen...* In case of emergency or technical failure, hard copies may be dropped off in a sealed envelope in % Laura Lyon, HeartLands Conservancy at 29 E. Main Street, Belleville, IL 62220. There is a mail slot next to our front door, in the bottom window. Please no calls. Make it to ATTN: Laura Lyon.

#### D. Next Steps - Decision Process

Following this submission, HLC staff will evaluate the proposals submitted and identify a list of firms for pre-qualification. Staff will present this list to the HLC Board of Directors and Programs & Services Committee for input. An announcement of inclusion will be made by June 2023.

#### E. Additional Information

- HeartLands Conservancy reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to:
  - Reject any or all submittals;
  - Waive minor informalities of a submittal;
  - Cancel, revise, or extend this solicitation; and
  - Request additional information.
- HeartLands holds the standard that all consultants must agree to comply with all relevant Office of Management and Budget Circulars (OMB) when the funding is an award of federal financial assistance.
- HeartLands Conservancy is an equal opportunity provider.

*In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.*

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*To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:*

*(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;*

*(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or*

*(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).*



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