Release date: February 18, 2020

**Lake Champlain Basin Program Announcement**

**Request for Proposals**

*Public Awareness and Engagement Survey*

The Lake Champlain Basin Program and NEIWPCC are pleased to announce a Request for Proposals (RFP) to conduct a survey to assess general knowledge, attitude, opinion, and motivation of the public regarding water quality in the Lake Champlain Basin. The successful applicant will propose a project that completes the outputs described in the attached RFP according to the required project timeline. Up to $120,000is available to support this project, and it is anticipated that one successful project will be chosen.

This work is applicable to the goals of the LCBP’s long-term management plan [*Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin*](http://plan.lcbp.org). This project is supported by funds awarded to NEIWPCC on behalf of the Lake Champlain Basin Program by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.

This RFP is available on the Lake Champlain Basin Program website ([lcbp.org/grants](http://lcbp.org/grants)). To receive a copy of the RFP via U.S. Postal Service, contact the Lake Champlain Basin Program office at (802) 372-3213 or toll free at (800) 468-LCBP in New York and Vermont.

Applicants must submit proposals in electronic format ONLY. Please see the RFP and the attached proposal format information for complete details.

**DEADLINE NOTICE:**

Electronic versions of proposals must be RECEIVED by [grants@lcbp.org](mailto:grants@lcbp.org) no later than:

**March 30, 2020**

**Late, incomplete, or non-electronic proposals will not be considered**.

Successful applicants will be notified in April 2020. Although LCBP reserves the right to make no awards, we anticipate granting one award from this RFP.

**Lake Champlain Basin Program Request for Proposals**

*Public Awareness and Engagement Survey*

**0. Overview**

Congress designated Lake Champlain as a resource of national significance with the Lake Champlain Special Designation Act of 1990. The Special Designation Act also established the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) and authorized it to receive direct support from US EPA under the Clean Water Act. The LCBP coordinates and funds efforts that benefit the Lake Champlain Basin’s water quality, fisheries, wetlands, wildlife, recreation, and cultural resources. The LCBP works in partnership with government agencies from New York, Vermont, and Québec, private organizations, local communities, businesses and citizen groups. These partners lead collaborative, non-partisan actions to address water quality and environmental challenges that cross political boundaries in a multi-national watershed. Management efforts are guided by the comprehensive management plan [*Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin*](http://plan.lcbp.org).

Since 1992, NEIWPCC has served as the primary program administrator of LCBP at the request of the Lake Champlain Steering Committee, and administers the program’s personnel and finances. NEIWPCC is a congressionally authorized not-for-profit interstate organization whose membership includes all six New England states and New York State and whose mission is to advance clean water in the Northeast through collaboration with, and service to, our member states.

**I. Project background**

In recent years, watershed management partners and organizations have increasingly identified the importance of assessing the effectiveness of education and outreach efforts that are intended to help improve water quality.

Assessing the outcomes of education and outreach efforts can be more challenging than evaluating direct environmental management interventions such as specific phosphorus reduction projects or actions to prevent the spread of invasive species. The ultimate desired outcome of outreach efforts is behavior change. The on-the-ground impacts of specific projects that inform and involve the public are sometimes difficult to determine, because once a program is delivered, the ability to follow up with participants or audiences is limited, particularly over the long term. Therefore, program-specific evaluations that measure effectiveness and capture participants’ perceptions and intentions for future behavior must be complemented by surveys that measure broad-scale, long-term changes in knowledge, attitudes, and action.

The LCBP’s management plan *Opportunities for Action* calls for periodic public surveys to assess changes in the public’s knowledge and behavior (OFA Strategy IV.C.4). Because the partnership approach that characterizes much of the LCBP’s education and outreach work is essential in carrying out these programs, these surveys must be conducted in concert with the partners who collaborate in delivering programs.

The survey should assess and benefit the efforts of the LCBP and our education and outreach partners. The survey should be broad in scope, in terms of geographic extent, range of issues, and demographics targeted. The survey will be designed to be repeatable so that the LCBP can administer it periodically to track changes in knowledge, perspective, and actions over time.

**II. Project tasks and outputs**

**Summary:**

The goal of this project is to assess the knowledge of the general public about lake issues and engagement in watershed stewardship. The information gathered from the survey will be used to help guide the education and outreach efforts of the LCBP and our management partners. Specifically, the survey will address 1) the public’s knowledge of lake and watershed issues; 2) the source(s) of this knowledge, including organizations and media outlets and types of outreach delivery media and mechanisms; and 3) level of engagement, including volunteerism, participation in local watershed organizations, and behavior change. The survey should be conducted using best practices in survey technique and methodology, and should include a statistically representative sample of residents from New York, Vermont, and Quebec. Basic demographic information and information about how and where the public recreates or otherwise accesses the lake should be included to help target future outreach efforts.

**Tasks**

1. Create and convene a project advisory committee in consultation with LCBP to inform the project methods and outputs.
2. Develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) to be approved by NEIWPCC and LCBP staff. The QAPP must be approved before data collection begins.
3. Develop a draft survey in English and French to assess public knowledge and engagement in watershed issues and education and outreach program effectiveness.
4. Conduct the survey upon approval of the draft survey by LCBP.
5. Compile survey results.
6. Conduct statistical analysis.
7. Produce report summarizing and interpreting the results of the survey, with recommendations for changes to future surveys.

**Outputs**

1. An approved project QAPP.
2. Survey to interpret public knowledge and engagement in Lake Champlain issues and watershed stewardship
3. Quarterly reports throughout the project to provide updates on progress and challenges encountered.
4. Raw survey results.
5. Summary report of survey results and interpretation.

**Outcomes**

1. Improved understanding by the LCBP and our management partners of public knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors as related to water quality and ecosystem health of the Lake Champlain Basin.
2. Improved understanding by the LCBP and our management partners of effectiveness of education and outreach efforts and programs.
3. Improved ability for the LCBP and our management partners to target specific sectors of the public for future outreach efforts.

**III. Summary of other project requirements**

1. Following initial notification of the award, a workplan must be approved by the LCBP before a contract agreement can be executed and the work initiated. The workplan will detail the logistical elements of the project, including deliverables and project timeline. Information about the LCBP grant process, workplan development guidelines, and reporting requirements can be found on the LCBP website at: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>. The successful applicant will enter into a contract with NEIWPCC in order to complete the work and will be compensated upon completion of workplan deliverables.
2. Once the grant agreement has been executed, the contractor must develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) to be approved by the LCBP, NEIWPCC, and EPA before initiating any data collection or secondary data analyses. More information about LCBP Quality Assurance Plans can be found at: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/qapp/>. The project timeline should be scheduled with an expected QAPP approval date no earlier than 6 weeks following contract execution. No primary or secondary data may be collected or analyzed with LCBP funding prior to QAPP approval.
3. Grant applicants are required to follow the small purchase method which is a relatively simple and informal method (procurement procedure) for purchasing supplies, equipment, and services that cost more than $10,000 and less than $250,000. This procurement procedure is applicable to proposals submitted in response to this RFP if the primary applicant is not a for-profit organization. The purpose is to ensure fair and open competition for purchases supported by LCBP/federal funding. If the applicant plans to use LCBP funding to obtain supplies, equipment or contractual services to complete its proposed workplan, then it must follow federal procurement regulations:
   * Procurement of supplies and services that do not exceed $10,000 may be made without soliciting competitive quotes if the price is considered reasonable.
   * Procurement of supplies, equipment and services that are greater than $10,000 and do not cost more than $250,000 require that the recipient obtain multiple price quotes through a documented competitive process. Good faith efforts to obtain services from disadvantaged business enterprises should also be made, including contacting the small business administration and minority business development agency to inform them about the opportunity for businesses to submit price quotes as part of the competitive process. At least three price quotes for the contract work must be secured. The selected item or service does not need to be the lowest cost if it does not meet your requirements or you can otherwise demonstrate that the higher price offers the “best value.” Justification must be provided for the outcome of the bid process. This process may take place prior to the submission of a proposal for LCBP funds. For further information, see the small purchase method described here: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>
4. The successful applicant will prepare brief quarterly reports documenting progress on each task in the project. A final report fully documenting the project’s results will be required at project completion.
5. When approved, the final report will be edited for content and style and may be published as part of the Lake Champlain Basin Program’s Technical Report Series, located here: <http://www.lcbp.org/media-center/publications-library/technical-reports/>. Some content of this report may also be used for future LCBP or NEIWPCC public outreach materials.
6. The successful applicant will complete the project according to the following schedule (subject to change):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Proposals due to LCBP | March 30, 2020 |
| Applicants notified of funding decisions | Late April 2020 |
| Detailed project workplan due | June 1, 2020 |
| Project start date | July 6, 2020 |
| Project deliverables and draft final report due | January 2022 |

1. All materials and work products, regardless of physical form or characteristics, produced as a result of this project shall be made available to LCBP and NEIWPCC in a suitable file format. LCBP and NEIWPCC shall have an unrestricted right to use any materials, software, maps, studies, reports, and other products or data generated using assistance funds or specified to be delivered. The contractor shall not obtain, attempt to obtain, or file for a patent, copyright, trademark or any other interest in any such materials, or work products without the expressed, written consent of LCBP and NEIWPCC, and subject to any other approvals required by state or federal law. Reports and other deliverables will credit LCBP, GLFC, and NEIWPCC as funding partners for any work completed under the project contract.
2. The successful applicant will be required to maintain workers compensation and liability insurance. More details will be provided to the successful applicant at the time of contracting.

**IV. Eligibility**

Eligible organizations include colleges, universities, nonprofit organizations, for-profit companies, and non-federal government agencies. The selected contractor will be responsible for the completion of all project tasks. Individuals and representatives from organizations that participated in the development or review of this RFP and its contents are ineligible to apply.

**V. Proposal evaluation and selection criteria**

Proposals received in response to this RFP will undergo an external peer review, and will be judged according to the following criteria:

* + - 1. Demonstrated knowledge ofpublic survey techniques and methodology (50 points).
      2. Demonstrated knowledge of lake watershed issues (5 points).
      3. Demonstrated knowledge of education and outreach tools and programs (5 points).
      4. Demonstrated ability to accomplish the tasks described above (20 points).
      5. Clarity, conciseness, and adherence to the proposal guidelines (10 points).
      6. Appropriateness of budget and budget justification, describing how the awarded funds will be used to produce the set of deliverables, outputs, and outcomes described above (10 points).

**VI. Available funds, match requirements, and indirect costs**

A total of $120,000 may be made available for a project to be supported under this RFP. No in-kind or cash match is required, though match will be considered favorably during budget review.

LCBP and NEIWPCC encourage groups to budget costs that are associated with the project as direct expenses, including personnel costs, travel, project supplies, mailings, phone costs, office supplies, etc. Use of some grant funds for indirect costs is also allowable, subject to both the provisions of OMB Circular A-87 and LCBP approval. If you need further guidance, contact the LCBP or refer to [OMB Circular A-87 (Revised)](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/circulars_a087_2004/#atta). ***Sections D, E,*** and ***F*** of **Attachment A** provide an overview of direct and indirect costs. **For projects in response to this RFP, the indirect budget should not exceed 10% of the direct project budget, and indirect offered as match should similarly not exceed 10% of direct match contributed, unless a higher federally negotiated indirect rate is in place, and proof of that negotiated rate is provided.** The LCBP Indirect Policy can be found here: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>

**VII. Appropriate Use of Funds**

LCBP grant funds cannot be used to produce for-profit products or to cover costs associated with regulatory compliance or direct fundraising efforts. LCBP grant funds also cannot be used for endowment funds, or lobbying or legislative advocacy of any kind.

**VIII. Notification of Award**

Award notification to applicants is expected by April 2020. The award recipient may be asked to submit a revised workplan, timeline, and task-based budget at this time. Project work cannot begin until a contract is signed by both parties. LCBP and NEIWPCC will not pay for expenses incurred prior to the contract start date. Payment for costs incurred will be on a reimbursement basis per the contract payment schedule and contingent upon completion of quarterly progress reports and project deliverables.

**IX. Period of Performance**

Work is expected to begin in **Summer 2020** and is to be completed no later than **June 30, 2022** (see specific deliverable deadlines in Section II above).

1. **Schedule and Requirements for Proposal Submission**

* Please follow the format outlined in the attached Technical Proposal Format Requirements.
* Submit an electronic version of your proposal to [grants@lcbp.org](mailto:grants@lcbp.org) no later than **March 30, 2020**. Please be sure you receive email notification that your application was received. Electronic submissions must be in MS Word compatible format.

1. **Contact Information**

Please direct all inquiries to:

Ryan Mitchell

Communications and Publications Coordinator.

802-372-0212

[rmitchell@lcbp.org](mailto:rmitchell@lcbp.org)

**Proposal format requirements**

Proposals should adhere to the following format and should not exceed a 10-page maximum length (font size 12), NOT including budget information, references cited, investigator resumes, and letters of participation or support.

**TITLE:** Concise and descriptive.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Name, position, organization, address, telephone, fax, and email of the person who will be the point of contact.

**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:** Name, position, organization address, telephone, fax and email of the person who is authorized to sign the contract.

**ABSTRACT:** Brief description of proposed work.

**INTRODUCTION:** Overview of the project and what it will accomplish in relation to the RFP.

**TASKS:** Describe in detail the tasks that will be performed, including methods and approaches.

**OUTPUTS:** Detailed description of the activities or products completed as a result of a task, e.g., hold four meetings, educational booklet, etc.

**DELIVERABLES:** Detailed description of the items that will be sent to LCBP as documentation of work completed through the award, including quarterly progress reports and a final report (including GIS data).

**OUTCOMES:** Provide a description of the anticipated impact or change in condition (i.e. behavior or environment) that you are trying to achieve through this award. Outcomes may be short-term or long-term.

**SCHEDULE:** Timeline showing anticipated dates for completion of the major tasks and deliverables and outputs. Quarterly progress reports are due on the last day of December, March, June, and September. Work is to be completed within the specified performance period in the RFP.

**DETAILED BUDGET JUSTIFICATION:** Cost breakdown by major tasks and budget categories (e.g., personnel, equipment), linking costs to specific tasks/deliverables wherever possible. Breakdown should show costs to be covered by the LCBP award and other sources (if applicable), as well as any match amounts and totals. (1 page, not included in the 10-page maximum total for the proposal).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **EXAMPLE** Budget Spreadsheet | | | | | | |  |  |
| ***Line Item*** | | **Task 1** | **Task 2** | **Task 3** | **Task 4** | **Task 5**  (add or remove columns as needed) | ***Line Item* *Totals* for All Tasks** | Proposed Match (if any) | *Line Item* *Totals* + Proposed Match |
| Personnel | | $500 | $1,200 | $800 | $495 | $1,000 | $3,995 | $3,000 | $6,995 |
| Fringe | | $150 | $360 | $240 | $149 | $300 | $1,199 | $1,000 | $2,199 |
| Travel | | $0 | $100 | $300 | $100 | $0 | $500 | $400 | $900 |
| Supplies | | $0 | $200 | $0 | $2,000 | $500 | $2,700 | $1,000 | $3,700 |
| Professional Services | | $0 | $0 | $0 | $2,500 | $0 | $2,500 | $1,000 | $3,500 |
| **Total Direct** | | **$650** | **$1,860** | **$1,340** | **$5,244** | **$1,800** | **$10,894** | **$6,400** | **$17,294** |
| Indirect | | $78 | $223 | $161 | $629 | $216 | $1,307 | $0 | $1,307 |
| **TOTAL BUDGET** | | **$728** | **$2,083** | **$1,501** | **$5,873** | **$2,016** | **$12,201** | **$6,400** | **$18,601** |