

Request for Proposals

Agriculture Community Consultant



PennFuture’s mission is to lead the transition to a clean energy economy in Pennsylvania and beyond. We protect our air, water, and land, and empower residents to build sustainable communities for future generations. Working throughout the Commonwealth, PennFuture’s team of attorneys, policy experts, organizers, communications specialists, and advocates watchdog against polluters and environmental injustices, educate the public, and advance pro-environment policies.

INTRODUCTION:

Beginning in 2023, PennFuture and our strategic partner, Conservation Voters of PA (CVPA), will execute a campaign to influence the next iteration of the National Farm Bill—a sweeping investment and regulatory bill, passed through Congress every 5 years—that impacts everything from water quality and land conservation to crop insurance and supplemental nutrition subsidies. Pennsylvania’s Congressional delegation will play an outsized role in developing the next Farm Bill, not only because of its nation leading agriculture industry, but because Congressman G.T. Thompson (PA-15) is the Chair of the House Agriculture Committee.

In collaboration with partner organizations, PennFuture and CVPA seek a consultant to manage campaign efforts in central Pennsylvania, in particular to engage with advocates, volunteers, agriculture interests, and other stakeholders across the state, but primarily in the 15th Congressional District, which comprises much of the northern tier of central Pennsylvania. The Consultant will leverage a suite of community engagement and advocacy tactics to build strong public and stakeholder support for a pro-environment farm bill. These efforts will be a major part of PennFuture and CVPA’s efforts to educate stakeholders and policymakers on the Farm Bill as well as advocate for a suite of investments in regenerative agriculture, climate-ready farming practices, and other sustainable programs. The consultant will collaborate with multiple teams of staff across both organizations.

The position is non-political, non-partisan, and a 1-year contract with the potential for further work beyond that year, depending on funding. The Consultant will be contracted through PennFuture, a 501(c)3 environmental advocacy organization in Pennsylvania, with a secondary contract covering the 501(c)4 work at CVPA.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND JUSTICE:

PennFuture knows that to achieve our mission, we need to ensure that all Pennsylvanians have equitable access to clean air, clean water, a stable climate, and a clean and sustainable economy. We are committed to ensuring diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in our organizational culture, policies, practices, and programs. Like the environmental and conservation movement writ large, we have historically fallen short in our efforts to build a truly equitable Pennsylvania. Our vision is to center equity and justice in everything we do as well as to combat systems of oppression and injustices that have long harmed Pennsylvania’s environmental justice communities.

SCOPE OF REQUESTED WORK:

The desired outcomes are: (1) a well-managed campaign that engages internal staff and consultants across both organizations and external validators and stakeholders in key areas of the state; (2) an engaged list of grasstops leaders and organizations in the northern tier of central Pennsylvania, supporting advocacy and education opportunities around the 2023 Farm Bill; and (3) a strong connection is made between sustainability and conservation interests in Pennsylvania with Pennsylvania congressional leaders.

We anticipate this work will include the following:

Support the Farm Bill Campaign:

- Support the PennFuture Campaign Manager and CVPA staff in managing the Farm Bill campaign.
- Ensure that on-the-ground tactics and activities around the Farm Bill are coordinated with communication tactics and policy advocacy.
- Work collaboratively with PennFuture, CVPA staff, and potentially other consultants to successfully carry out campaign tactics and strategies.

Community Leader and Grasstop Engagement:

- Leverage community partner relationships and grasstop recruitment to facilitate engagement on Farm Bill issues as well as support district engagement with key PA policymakers.
- Develop working knowledge of the National Farm Bill and clean water policy priorities and issues.
- Leverage in-house policy expertise as well as cultivate experts in policy issues to supplement that knowledge.
- Develop an ongoing list of shared local policy priorities.

Communications:

- Build relationships with local reporters and influencers.
- Work with digital staff to use email lists and social media tools throughout the region.
- Monitor and update local social presence—engage with local groups, activists and candidates.
- Work with the Campaign Manager to develop action alerts and press releases as needed based on Farm Bill-related issues in the region.

BUDGET:

We have budgeted up to \$50,000 for this work. Please indicate in your proposal whether your approach to this work would fit with this budget or how it would need to be adjusted.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

The following schedule applies to this RFP, but may change in accordance with our needs or unforeseen circumstances:

Issuance of RFP	January 26th, 2023
Technical Questions/Inquiries Due	February 8th, 2023
Proposals and Work Samples Due	February 22nd, 2023
Phone Interviews with Finalists	February 27th - March 2nd, 2023
Estimated Date of Selection Notification	March 3, 2023

Technical questions related to this RFP should be emailed to mehrazar@pennfuture.org no later than 5:00PM EST on February 8th, 2023. All proposals must be received by 5:00PM EST on February 22nd, 2023. Those received after this deadline will not be given primary consideration. Proposal documents should be sent as a PDF. The subject line should be *Agriculture Community Contractor*.

The proposal itself should be no more than 6 pages in length and should address the complete scope of work and deliverables. Work samples may be submitted as links or as appendices, and are not counted in the page limit. Proposals should include the following sections:

1. Cover Letter

- a. The cover letter should include:
 - i. Point of contact address, telephone number, email address, and website (if applicable).
 - ii. Any exceptions to the outlined scope of work.

2. Consultant Background

- a. The proposal should describe the consultant's qualifications to conduct the scope of work as well as your expertise, knowledge, and experience.
- b. Experience should include conducting similar work or related work with the advocacy, agriculture, or policymaking community.
- c. As part of our commitment to diversity and equity, women and minority-owned small businesses are strongly encouraged to apply. Please include any relevant documentation as part of your proposal.

3. Statement of Proposed Work

- a. This statement of proposed work should outline your methodology and work plan and should include the following information:
 - i. Methods for engaging with relevant grasstops leaders.
 - ii. Methods for ensuring equity and inclusion are incorporated into the process and outcomes.
 - iii. List of initial key stakeholders to engage with.

4. Budget

- a. The budget proposal should include total costs for performing all tasks proposed in the work plan. Please break the budget out by major task and planned deliverables and if billed based on hours should include proposed labor categories, hourly rate, and number of hours.

5. Previous Work Product

- a. The proposal should include at least two examples of work similar to the scope of work requested within this RFP.
- b. We also encourage, but do not require, a list of similar work or clients in the last five years.

6. References

- a. The proposal should include at least 3 references of individuals who can speak to their experience with the consultant in conducting projects of similar scope. Information regarding each reference should include the individual's name, address, telephone number, and email address.
- b. Submitting the references and proposal indicate consent for PennFuture to contact the references.

SERVICE PERIOD:

The contract period will begin no later than March 6, 2023 and end by March 1, 2024.

QUALIFICATIONS:

The Consultant should be experienced in working with advocacy organizations and with executing policy-based campaigns. In addition, experience working with environmental and/or Pennsylvania statewide organizations is preferred.

The successful Consultant will work directly with the Campaign Manager and key leaders at PennFuture and Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania to ensure all activities in this project are completed.

We believe the Consultant should possess the following qualifications to be successful:

- At least 3 years working on advocacy or policy-based campaigns
- Experience engaging with community-based stakeholders, including relationship building
- Knowledge of Pennsylvania's political landscape and its key players, and/or experience working with policy-oriented environmental nonprofit organizations
- Strong facilitation and listening skills and experience soliciting input from individuals from various stakeholder groups
- Experience with change management and project management
- Knowledge of communications and content development

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The evaluation of each response will be based on demonstrated competence, compliance, format, and organization:

- Approach, thoroughness, and completeness of the proposal (30%)
- References and past performance with political, policy, or environmental organizations (30%)
- Expertise in community engagement, relationship building, and public education (30%)
- Price (10%)

INQUIRIES:

Questions that help clarify the work to be completed can be submitted to mehrazar@pennfuture.org. Inquiries by email are preferred; telephone calls can be arranged via email, as necessary.

PennFuture reserves the right to adjust these criteria at any time. We reserve the right to determine which respondents have met the base requirements of this RFP. PennFuture reserves the right to award the contract in accordance without best interest and will not be required to accept the lowest-priced proposal.