

Request for Proposals
Sustainable Forestry & African-American Land Retention (SFLR) Network
Marketing & Communications
March 2024

This RFP opens immediately and closes on March 31, 2024 at 11:59 PM. Proposals received after this time may not be considered.

Objective

SFLR exists to create a sustainable system of support for African American forest owners that significantly increases the value of African American owned forests, land retention, community stabilization, and asset development for Black families in the U.S. South.

Our vision is to see African American landowners be empowered with the resources to protect, control, and enhance their land assets and create generational wealth.

In order to actualize this vision, we need a communications partner who is able to connect SFLR with our target audience through compelling, educational, and informative social media content, newsletters, and podcast storytelling.

About Us

The SFLR Network is composed of eight, distinct organizations rooted across the Southeastern United States. The eight sites are:

- Black Family Land Trust (Virginia)
- Centers' For Heirs Property Preservations (South Carolina)
- Limited Resource Landowner Education and Assistance Network (Alabama)
- McIntosh Sustainable Environment and Economic Development (Georgia)
- Prairie View A&M University (Texas)
- Roanoke Cooperative (North Carolina)
- University of Arkansas Pine Bluff (Arkansas)
- Winston County Self- Help Cooperative (Mississippi)

Our shared values are:

Landowners in the Center. We exist to support African American forest landowners in the rural Southeastern United States. As we build partnerships, raise money, design programs, and amplify stories, our landowners' needs, hopes, and dreams are at the core of what we do.

Windows, Not Doors. We are committed to transparency in our decision-making, shedding light on the *how* and *why* of the choices we make. We are honest, we ask clarifying questions, and we're committed to building a culture of trust.

Many Branches, One Tree. While we are comprised of eight distinct community-based organizations, we are committed to working together in service of our shared mission.

Stronger Together. We are an organization that works for the best of the collective *us*. When one of us succeeds, we all win. When one of us encounters challenges, we find solutions together.

Proposed Scope of Services

We are looking for a partner to make the following possible:

1. Relaunch our monthly email newsletter, growing the audience from a list of about 20 to a list of 250+ over 6 months. We'd also need an evergreen monthly newsletter template that can be used beyond the length of this contract.
2. Create a social media strategy for LinkedIn & Facebook, inclusive of a plan for breaking into Instagram in the future. We'd like the strategy to at least include key content pillars, a data-driven posting cadence, and insight on the metrics to watch.
3. Manage SFLR's social media accounts through weekly posting on LinkedIn & Facebook through creating new content, repurposing content from current SFLR blog (as is feasible) and by proactive outreach to SFLR sites for stories and photography.
4. Collaborate with SFLR Executive Director on the creation and amplification of a limited series podcast (~10 episodes).
5. Create and manage a launch plan to share the forthcoming SFLR rebrand, working with SFLR Executive Director & current brand design team.

We invite flexibility in the specific scope that is proposed. Upon selection of a proposal, SFLR will work with the consultant to refine and update the final scope of work to be included in the contract.

Outcome and Performance Standards and Deliverables

In terms of outcomes, we are looking for:

1. Five to six months of newsletters along with an evergreen, plug & play, newsletter template
2. Social media strategy that outlines our key audiences, content pillars, posting guidelines, and metrics to watch
3. Social media management (posting & community engagement) for the duration of the contract
4. Eight to ten episode podcast and launch plan
5. Launch plan for sharing the SFLR rebrand, along with management of this launch plan.

These are all highly collaborative deliverables. Your key collaborators will be the SFLR Executive Director, members of the SFLR network, and our current brand design partner.

Method of Work Arrangement

The services agreement will be by written contract between the SFLR Network, the US Endowment for Forestry & Communities (SFLR's fiscal agent), and the consultant/organization.

Budget and Timeline

The budget is dependent on proposed methodology and time commitment. The Endowment will consider all budget ranges for this application yet anticipate being able to commit to projects up to \$45,000. We anticipate this contract will end on September 30th, 2024.

Who May Apply

This application is open to applicants from government agencies, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, freelancers, and for-profit companies and consultants.

Decisions and practices of the Endowment and SFLR are not and will not be unlawfully influenced or affected by race, color, creed, age, religion, national origin, sex, disability, genetic information, veteran status, uniformed services, sexual orientation (including transgender status, gender identity or expression), gender, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions or on any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.

Application Instructions

Please include the following in your application:

- Overview of who you are and what you do
- Qualifications of your team and partners
- A portfolio that demonstrates your ability to execute on our objectives
- Three references who can attest to your communications & marketing expertise
- Work Plan activities (including expected timeline, strategy, and deliverables) i.e. what you would do, the milestones you'll tracking, and by when you think each task will be initiated and completed
- A "How We Work" overview which details your standard hours of operations, your typical turnaround times, and what you think you'd need from us (SFLR) in order to be successful
- Budget
- Contact information

Please submit your proposal as a PDF to bethaney@sflrnetwork.org with the following Subject Line: SFLR Communications Proposal: [Agency Name]

For proposal questions please contact Bethaney Wilkinson at bethaney@sflrnetwork.org.

We look forward to hearing from you!

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