

Request for Proposal

Development (Fundraising) Consultant

Purpose

Friends of the Verde River (Friends) is requesting proposals for a Development (Fundraising) Consultant to lead staff and our board members in building our development capacity and achieving fundraising goals.

Organizational Background

Friends of the Verde River, incorporated in 2011, works collaboratively for a healthy Verde River system through restoring habitat, sustaining river flows, and promoting community stewardship. Friends is strongly positioned as a local non-profit that implements on-the-ground projects, facilitates regional coordination, and informs policy from the local perspective in the Verde Valley of Arizona.

Our work is centered around the Verde River, one of the last remaining healthy, perennially flowing rivers in the arid desert state of Arizona. The Verde River system, including its connected streams, creeks and groundwater resources, supports the economies of Verde Valley communities and businesses both as a vital water supply and as a driver of tourism and recreation. Friends stages local annual events, including the Verde Runoff, Verde Valley Birding & Nature Festival, and Wild & Scenic Film Festival, and the biannual State of the Watershed Conference.

Over the past decade, Friends has grown from a small group of volunteers doing site-specific conservation to an organization with a professional staff implementing conservation at a landscape scale. Friends has a strong and visible presence in the communities of the Verde Valley, including Camp Verde, Clarkdale, Cottonwood, Jerome and Sedona.

While the center of our activities is in the Verde Valley, we see an opportunity to expand our influence and reach not only in the Verde but also throughout Arizona, especially in the metro Phoenix region, which secures 30-40% of its water supply from the Verde watershed. We have strong partnerships with The Nature Conservancy, Environmental Defense Fund, and area NGOs such as Prescott Creeks and the Citizen's Water Advocacy Group.

Within this context, Friends of the Verde River is seeking a dedicated, enthusiastic, and exceptionally well-organized consultant to improve our development program and our ability to achieve our fundraising goals. This position would report directly to the Executive

Director and work closely with our community stewardship program, other staff, and Board of Directors.

The Development Consultant is a one-year, contracted position, with the opportunity to extend to a second year pending a successful first year. Our two-year goals for fundraising:

- (1) Increase overall unrestricted donations and sponsorships from individuals, businesses, and foundations each year by 50% from FY2018;
- (2) Increase net proceeds from events by 25% over FY2018 on an average per event basis*; and
- (3) Achieve a two-year fundraising goal of the Board of Directors to raise \$100,000 (an increase from a \$20,000 goal achieved in 6 months).

*Note that this contracted position is not expected to be directly involved in achieving the second goal above regarding events as we have a full-time coordinator of community engagement who manages events.

Scope of Work

- (1) Communications: Attend a kick-off meeting with the staff to align on scope, priorities, workplan and deliverables; attend regular meetings with staff thereafter; and attend periodic meetings (in person or remotely) with the Board, as requested, including a planned board retreat the weekend of July 20-21 (in person);
- (2) Analysis: Conduct an audit of Friends' fundraising capacity and infrastructure to recommend areas for improvement, including areas of internal strengths & weaknesses and external opportunities & challenges that will inform the fundraising plan and ensure success;
- (3) Research: Identify untapped fundraising and grant opportunities and prepare a report including relevant information, including application procedures and deadlines for grant-making institutions (foundations and agencies);
- (4) Research: Develop a vetted list of potential major donors and assist staff in developing relationships and making connections;
- (5) Training: Train staff and members of the Board of Directors in necessary aspects of fundraising at key points of the program;
- (6) Organization: Update and assist staff in managing the annual fund development calendar of appeals, publications, and events;
- (7) Copywriting: Write or edit existing fundraising pieces (e.g., letters, emails) to refresh content;
- (8) Integration & Reporting: Develop a case statement and pitch deck for our use, based on the organization's adopted goals and theory of change.

Submission Requirements

All proposals should be submitted electronically to:

Nancy L.C. Steele
Executive Director
jobs@verderiver.org

Proposals should be succinct with a ten-page maximum.

All proposals must include:

- A cover letter that serves as the executive summary of the proposal;
- Description of the experience and qualifications of the consultant, including the resume of the principal;
- A narrative that addresses how the Goals and Scope of Work described herein will be accomplished, including a timeline with benchmarks, amount of time to be devoted to this work, and any additional staff who will be involved;
- A description of planned reporting and communications;
- Clear demonstration that the consultant has familiarity and knowledge of the sector in which Friends operates and enthusiasm for its mission and vision;
- Clear outline that differentiates the responsibilities of the consultant and Friends of the Verde River over the course of the work;
- Project budget, including all costs payable by Friends;
- Three references from clients for whom the consultant has provided similar services.

Schedule

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| RFP Release | March 15, 2019 |
| Proposals Due | April 10, 2019, 6:00 pm |
| Consultant Selected | April 24, 2019 |
| Project Begins | May 1, 2019 |
| Project Completion | April 30, 2020, unless extended for a 2 nd year |

Selection Process

Friends of the Verde River will review all complete proposals received by the due date and may conduct interviews of the top one or two proposers.

Invoicing

Billing will coincide with reaching set goals and benchmarks which should be identified in the proposed timeline.

Terms and Conditions

The successful contractor may be awarded a limited-term professional services contract for the services identified in this RFP as offered by Friends of the Verde River.

The issuance of this RFP does not commit Friends of the Verde River to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of any proposals related to this RFP.