



Request for Proposal (RFP)
Independent Contractor Opportunity
Greening America's Cities Government and Network Support
Los Angeles, CA

Program Overview:

In Summer 2023, the Bezos Earth Fund (the Earth Fund) launched Greening America's Cities (GAC), a new, multi-year \$400M initiative to invest primarily in community-led environmental justice organizations through 2030. In 2023, \$50M was granted to 24 community based organizations and 6 national partners who provide technical assistance and support in the following US cities and their surrounding counties: Albuquerque, Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, Wilmington. In every city, Regional Partner Networks of USDN collaborate with local governments, serve as a resource to community grantees, and make connections across the five municipalities and their partners. Learn more about the Earth Fund Greening America's Cities initiative and the community grantees in the City of Los Angeles [here](#) .

Statement of Need:

The Government and Network Support contract is a unique opportunity for a person or firm with passion for and commitment to sustainability and environmental justice, demonstrated excellence around the nexus of local government and community-building and engagement, strong research skills in the fields of green infrastructure practice and policy, and is excited to contribute creatively and strategically to the overarching mission and vision of the Greening America's Cities initiative. The Contractor will work closely in partnership with local government departments in service of the Greening America's Cities initiative. The Contractor will connect with the regional and national USDN networks and with Greening America's Cities government partners to share best practices and exchange resources. The Contractor will also research best practices and policies of greening projects in the Southwest to help inform and support future projects and programs.

Scope of Services

Program Management and Delivery

- Develop a shared vision and work plan for the government engagement work in support of the Greening America's Cities initiative in Los Angeles.

- Build systems to facilitate and ensure active information sharing among government, research and technical assistance partners in Los Angeles and across the other Greening America's Cities cities, identifying where possible common areas of interest for collaborative problem solving, peer learning, policy and systems change, etc.
- Facilitate technical assistance support to local partners through USDN and additional consultants as needed.
- Organize regular meetings and training for and with local partners.
- Participate in convenings and learnings held by the local partner networks, seek input from the partner network for best practices and problem solving, and share learnings from the Greening America's Cities initiative.
- The contractor supports USDN Regional Networks (Green Cities California, and Western Adaptation Alliance) and their participation in the Greening America's Cities initiative.
- The contractor will meet regularly with the USDN Special Projects Manager and submit monthly progress reports.

Funding Support:

- Contractor gathers information regarding local, state and federal funding opportunities and shares them with Greening America's Cities partners. Connects community-based organizations with Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers (TCTACs) and USDN resources as needed.
- Contractor assists with support and training to encourage collaboration among government and community partners in the search for grant opportunities, training on proposal writing, setting up efficient systems for grants management and other fundraising supports as identified by the partners.

Government Connections:

- Contractor brings resources and peer learning opportunities to community based organizations and local governments via USDN programming.
- The contractor shares information regarding the new state guidelines that will integrate urban greening in any city or county open space planning processes.
- Contractor collaborates with the Los Angeles Climate Emergency Mobilization Office and the Governor's Climate Innovation Office on community engagement strategies in support of local GAC projects in alignment with the Nature Based Solutions track of the Heat Action Plans for the City of Los Angeles.
- Contractor creates a series of Case Studies of Equitable Nature-Based projects in the Southwest region. Draft a one-page case study per initiative providing available information such as key outcomes and metrics, community engagement strategies, policy changes that arose out of the projects, assessment of construction and maintenance budgets, etc. This 'best practices resource guide' will help inform equitable greening projects, policy, legislation and funding opportunities at the local, state and federal levels informed by the local allies and liaisons. Focus areas may include:

- Sustainable Community Focused Urban Agriculture
- Urban Forestry Management and Maintenance
- Landscaping Innovations for reducing Urban Heat Islands and Public Health Risks
- Heat Mitigation via Nature Based Solutions
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- Assessing management & accounting practices to protect and preserve existing Urban Forests and Tree Canopy
- Contractor works closely with USDN Partner Networks in the Southwestern United States and the Government Liaison in Albuquerque researching and creating locally informed collective urban greening vision plans, policies and projects for Southwestern cities.

Knowledge, Skills, And Abilities

- Minimum 7 years working in the field of sustainability, specifically around nature-based solutions in urban communities in the Southwest
- Minimum 5 years of experience in researching and synthesizing urban sustainability plans, policies and/or projects
- College degree required, Masters level education preferred
- Experience working with the City of Los Angeles
- Demonstrated skills in facilitation, relationship building, partnership management and collaborative planning/delivery, especially with diverse community stakeholders
- Commitment to social justice and anti-racist principles
- Ability to manage multiple complex programs and projects and multiple deadlines simultaneously
- Ability to work independently and with partners in a collaborative and dynamic environment
- Ability to interface with members from varying food systems, urban agriculture, & food policy backgrounds
- Ability and willingness to travel in the Los Angeles region and nationally (estimated less than five times in the contract period)
- High level of communication skills - interpersonal, written and verbal - and strong relationship-development skills
- Proven project management skills – from conception to design to implementation - and demonstrated capacity for strategic thinking and problem solving
- Commitment to and experience with collaboration, teamwork and personal growth
- Strong orientation and commitment to racial equity, equitable results, and community voice

Proposal Requirements and Submission

1. Resume detailing experience as it applies to proposed Scope of Services.
2. Description of approach to tackling the Scope of Services including sharing experience working with local government and community partners.

3. Two links to previous work products relevant to the Scope of Services. Samples could include: research paper, a collaborative or municipal plan, presentation on relevant topics.
4. Cost estimate and proposed payment schedule for all services associated with delivering on proposed Scope of Services. Costs are not to exceed \$140,000 and are to include all supply, program, and travel needs.
5. Candidates must qualify to be classified as an independent contractor. By submitting a proposal you are verifying that they would reasonably meet the criteria to receive payment as an independent contractor. See [IRS guidelines](#) for more information.

Proposals must be submitted as one pdf document and emailed to jennifermahar@USDN.org by 5pm EST on Monday, March 24th.

Term: The contract will begin upon signing and will terminate June 30, 2026. Note that this position does not include benefits.

Reports to: This position will report to the Special Project Manager at USDN.

About USDN

The Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) supports local governments to implement bold change in pursuit of equitable and sustainable communities. It does this by building the capacity of local governments to act, scaling promising practices and solutions, and harnessing data and insights to advance and influence the field. The heart of USDN's work is a network of local government sustainability professionals from over 300 cities and counties across the United States and Canada dedicated to creating a healthy environment, advancing racial equity, and building thriving and resilient communities. USDN is powered by a distributed team of 25+ people that work across the United States, and a robust network of trusted partners and collaborators. USDN believes that a diverse, inclusive, and equity-centered climate movement is essential to achieving our ambitious goals for just, resilient, carbon neutral communities. Our work prioritizes those who experience the most vulnerability to climate change, disproportionate exposure to environmental injustice, and the biggest barriers to benefiting from climate solutions. Learn more about USDN [here](#).