



# King Conservation District

Local Food | Healthy Forests | Clean Water | Better Ground

800 SW 39th St, Suite 150 | Renton, WA, 98057

[www.kingcd.org](http://www.kingcd.org)

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### Regional Food System Program: Farmland Access Strategic Initiative Project

Released: September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Written questions deadline: September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

Response Deadline: October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Submit Electronically to: [Joshua.monaghan@kingcd.org](mailto:Joshua.monaghan@kingcd.org)

#### Director

Joshua Monaghan

(425) 773-5648

[Joshua.monaghan@kingcd.org](mailto:Joshua.monaghan@kingcd.org)

#### Program Manager

Mary Embleton

(425) 282-1958

[mary.embleton@kingcd.org](mailto:mary.embleton@kingcd.org)

#### Purpose of RFP

King Conservation District (KCD) seeks to identify a qualified consultant or team of consultants to lead and manage a comprehensive farmland access program in King County. This program will coordinate current service providers to assist farmers in accessing land opportunities and connecting to technical assistance to get farmland into production.

**Proposals are requested from a consultant qualified to lead and manage a farmland access technical assistance partnership** that assists farmers and landowners to connect to increase the number of farms and acres in food production in King County (Goals identified in the King County Local Food Initiative). Consultant(s) should also be prepared to provide these services in line with KCD's partnership with [Seattle's Equity and the Environment Agenda](#) goals.

<https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Environment/EnvironmentalEquity/SeattleEquityAgenda.pdf>

## **SECTION 1: INSTRUCTION TO BIDDERS**

### **1.1 Proposal Submission**

To be considered for this RFP, Proposers must follow the directions presented in this RFP, must submit a proposal packet no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

### **1.2 Questions and Interpretation of the RFP**

No oral interpretations of the RFP will be made to any Proposer. All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing, and are due via email to [Joshua.monaghan@kingcd.org](mailto:Joshua.monaghan@kingcd.org) no later than September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

### **1.3 Proposal Content Requirements**

The proposal shall be submitted electronically and contain the following items:

- A. A complete RFP package in pdf format.
- B. A Word file for the narrative and scope portions of the RFP.
- C. An Excel file including the budget pages in the RFP packet.

## **SECTION 2: PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD**

### **2.1 General Approach**

KCD will select a consultant based on the terms, conditions, and attachments set forth in this RFP. Proposers may be individual firms or teams as appropriate to meet the specific needs of the project. Proposers are solely responsible for all costs incurred in the development and submission of the response statement to this RFP or for any subsequent requirements of the consultant selection or contract negotiation process. All materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of KCD.

### **2.2 Selection Panel**

The selection panel will consist of KCD staff members. Other evaluators may be included at the discretion of the district (e.g., Board of Supervisors, representatives from partner agencies and organizations, and other regional food system stakeholders). The panel will rate the applicants and recommend selection for KCD's board approval based on ratings from written proposals and interviews, if conducted.

### **2.3 Selection Process**

Proposals due no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

#### Step 1

Evaluation of written statements of qualifications (SOQ) submitted by each Proposer resulting in a short-list of Proposals which will be ranked and may be invited to an interview if deemed necessary/appropriate?.

#### Step 2

If interviews are conducted, Proposers will be evaluated and ranked on the interview.

Step 3

KCD’s evaluation team will recommend the top ranked candidate to the Board of Supervisors to obtain approval to begin negotiations and, if successful, enter into an agreement with the selected Proposer. If the selected Proposer and KCD are unable to agree on the final scope and fee for deliverables for the contract, KCD reserves the right to terminate negotiations and initiate contract negotiations with the next highest rated Proposer.

**2.4 Evaluation Criteria**

A. Written Evaluation of Proposals

Each proposal will be evaluated and given a score based on the quality of response to each of the following topic areas.

<b>Organization and Management Approach</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Composition of the team, responsibilities and skills of each team member, and appropriateness of the team’s experience related to the Scope of Work.</li><li>2. Team’s experience working together and ability to coordinate efficient and effective delivery of work products.</li><li>3. Demonstrated understanding of an effective relationship with a client such as KCD.</li></ol>	<b>15 Points</b>
<b>Qualifications and Related Experience</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Demonstrated experience leading and managing a collaborative team with technical assistance providers from multiple partners (agencies, non-profits) focused on new farmer technical assistance and land access.</li><li>2. Demonstrated experience facilitating communication between farmers and landowners (with a wide variety of backgrounds and range of interests, skills, and abilities) towards the goal of increasing acres of farmland in food production.</li><li>3. Demonstrated familiarity with and understanding of land access and land tenure laws and legal instruments.</li><li>4. Experience within the team that reflects community relationships to enable the implementation of Equity and Environment Agenda goals.</li><li>5. Demonstrated experience engaging with multilingual and multicultural farming communities.</li><li>6. Demonstrated experience and ability to conduct outcomes-based program evaluation and adapt services to improve results. Feasible and practical evaluation methodology that matches audience type and program goals should be used to measure program results.</li><li>7. Demonstrated experience coordinating programs of size and budget similar to those described in this RFP.</li></ol>	<b>40 points</b>
<b>Approach to Scope of Work</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Demonstrated expertise, creativity, and effectiveness in proposed approach to Scope of Work and in approach to</li></ol>	<b>35 points</b>

<p>ensuring participation by farmers, farmer cooperatives, farmland seekers, and farmland owners.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Demonstrated understanding of Equity and Environment Agenda goals.</li> <li>3. Demonstrated understanding of program goals and how to work effectively with all members of the farmland services partnership in King County, including agencies, non-profits, farmers, and landowners.</li> <li>4. Demonstrated understanding of barriers, needs, and opportunities associated with both farmers seeking new farmland and with farmland owners and managers.</li> <li>5. Demonstrated understanding of how to provide assistance to farmers on land access, tenure, and food production that will result in both increased farms in King County and increased farmland in production.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Cost Estimates</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appropriate allocation of hours and expenses for each task.</li> <li>2. Clarity and completeness of pricing structure, fees, overhead, profit, and hourly rates.</li> <li>3. Value provided to KCD related to other proposals and similar work done in the region.</li> </ol>	<b>20 points</b>
<p><b>Overall Proposal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concise, clearly written and complete or thorough proposal, prepared as instructed.</li> </ul>	<b>10 points</b>

**Maximum Written Proposal Score: 120 points**

**B. Oral Interviews (Optional)**

If an award is not made based on written evaluations alone, oral interviews may be conducted with the top-ranked proposers. Final award would then be made based on the total of the written evaluation and oral interview scores.

<p><b>Expertise and Technical Capabilities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrated knowledge and understanding regarding providing farmland access coordination and assistance services described in this RFP.</li> <li>2. Demonstrated understanding of an appropriate client relationship.</li> <li>3. Demonstrated capacity and experience to handle all aspects of the Scope of Work described in this RFP.</li> </ol>	<b>20 points</b>
<p><b>General Presentation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrated clarity in approach to scope.</li> <li>2. Demonstrated ability to present information and suitable technical capabilities.</li> <li>3. Demonstrated ability to respond to questions, level of knowledge, and appropriateness of response.</li> </ol>	<b>20 points</b>

**Maximum Oral Presentation Score: 40 points**

**MAXIMUM POSSIBLE SCORE (if interviews conducted): 160 points**

## **SECTION 3: PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS AND SCOPE OF WORK**

### **3.1 General Information**

#### **A. Project Background**

KCD is a non-regulatory special purpose district that provides education, technical services, and financial assistance to landowners and homeowners in King County. Our mission is to promote the sustainable use of natural resources through responsible stewardship. Our purpose is to protect water quality, conserve soil, protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and promote retention of and economic viability of working agricultural and forest lands.

In 2015, KCD established the Regional Food System Program based on the King County Kitchen Cabinet and the Puget Sound Regional Council action plans, and engagement with a wide range of local food system advisors/stakeholders. The program offers annual competitive grants, and longer term sustained strategic investments, to support the Executive's Local Food Initiative.

#### Regional Food System Program Overview

Major gaps in our region's food system were identified by the King County Kitchen Cabinet in 2014 in their Local Food Initiative. More support is needed in the production, distribution, processing, and storage of locally raised farm products. Significant barriers to land, capital, equipment, and markets prevent new farmers from starting farms and existing farmers from scaling up to a sustainable level.

KCD's Regional Food System program supports efforts across King County to develop a food system that is sustainable, resilient, and equitable. Through a combination of grants and strategic initiatives, KCD focuses on improving production, consumer demand, and equitable access to healthy, local food.

#### Looking Forward

Since 2015, KCD has funded successful start-up farm cooperatives, community-based site redevelopments, expanded organizational capacity, and other grass-roots tools for improving the regional food system. Through that process, KCD and its food system working group of external partners, have identified four primary areas for Strategic Initiative investments over the next 5 years:

- Working Farmland Access - connecting future farmers to land and current farmers to expanded land opportunities (?).
- Farmer Technical Assistance Coordination - such as agronomic, business planning, conservation, education coordination, food safety.
- Consumer Demand - such as institutional purchasing, direct market support, buy local campaign.
- Infrastructure Support - including shared processing, packing, storage, refrigeration, distribution, as well as access to loans for farm structures and equipment, and associated assessments for regional infrastructure needs.

#### **B. Project Focus**

This RFP is focused on the Working Farmland Access Strategic Initiative area.

Since 2018, KCD has been investing in coordinated efforts to help farmers better access farmland. Work includes maintaining formal coordination between agencies and non-profits, helping landowners ready underutilized farmland for production, supporting new and beginning farmers in their unique journeys to establish/expand successful farm businesses, and facilitating lasting land matches. This work requires partners to work closely with participants to understand unique barriers to advancing goals and making matches, and assembling project teams offering tailored technical assistance, training, and access to cost-sharing resources to support participants and move matches forward.

The ultimate goal of this work is to facilitate matches to bring more land into production and to increase the number of farmers farming in King County. The current work includes focus on developing a replicable, alternative land tenure model, and a new framework for succession planning.

### 3.2 Scope of Services

#### A. Overview of Services Requested

The KCD is soliciting consultant(s) to manage a comprehensive farmland access program in King County to coordinate current service providers to assist farmers in accessing land opportunities and connecting to technical assistance to get farmland into production.

A comprehensive land access program that fits the unique needs of King County would consist of the following tasks:

Task	Description	Outcomes and Measures
<b>Task 1: Partnership Administration and Coordination</b>		
Convene the partnership at large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Ensure that organizational and agency membership reflects the racial, scale, and geographic diversity of the farming community in King County (throughout the partnership, but particularly at decision-making levels)</li> <li>*Cultivate relationship building between member organizations</li> <li>*Manage internal and external communications</li> <li>*Coordinate logistics for meetings, trainings, and events</li> </ul>	Outcome: Farmer and landowner-focused agencies are working in tandem to provide services in King County via a comprehensive land access program
Lead Partnership planning efforts and conduct regular evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Lead strategic and annual planning for the collaborative effort to ensure alignment</li> <li>*Design and implement data collection methods</li> <li>*Evaluate progress and impact</li> </ul>	Outcomes: *Coordinated Theory of Change and work plan for land access and farmer training organizations *Qualitative and quantitative data can be leveraged towards identifying gaps in resources and emerging needs and creating solutions
Foster opportunities for professional development, resource and information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Facilitate opportunities for organizational member staff to increase their knowledge about issues, policies, and new solutions that impact land access</li> </ul>	<p>Outcome: Increased knowledge about issues and solutions in land access</p> <p>Measure: Opportunities to learn from other regional partnerships doing work in this sphere</p>

<b>Task 2: Assist farmers in accessing land opportunities and maximizing property potential</b>		
Provide technical assistance for farmers/farmer cooperatives/land-seeking organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Coordinate collaboration of essential service providers</li> <li>* Broker and connect farmers with needed services and resources</li> <li>* Provide navigation of laws, rules, and regulations</li> <li>*Develop community advocate program to ensure culturally competent support for New American farmers and farmers of color.</li> <li>*Track progress and advocate for farmers navigating land access barriers</li> </ul>	<p>Outcomes: *Farmers have the resources they need to access and maximize farm properties for production. *All organizations supporting a farmer or farmer cooperative are aware of progress made</p> <p>Measures: *Number of farmers supported in attaining their land access goals</p> <p>*Number of farmers connected to needed services</p>
Leverage land matching programs to support farmers in attaining their land goals	<p>Work with farmers/farmer cooperatives/land-seeking organizations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*clarify land acquisition goals</li> <li>*identify priorities for suitable land</li> <li>*connect with landowners about opportunities</li> <li>*understand financing options and financial readiness</li> <li>*recognize equitable farmland leases</li> <li>*complete due diligence on specific farm properties</li> </ul>	<p>Outcomes: *Farmers begin their land searches equipped for success</p> <p>Measures: *Number of farmers supported in attaining their land access goals</p> <p>*Number of introductions made between parties</p>
Offer farmer training curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Leverage available land access curriculum to host coordinated schedule of farmer trainings</li> <li>*Offer trainer training opportunities to member organizations</li> </ul>	<p>Outcome: *Increased farmer knowledge and savvy of land access</p> <p>Measures: *Number of farmers trained in curriculum</p> <p>*Number of trainers trained in offering curriculum</p>
<b>Task 3: Assist landowners and land managers with getting land into production</b>		
Provide technical assistance for landowners/managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Develop individual transition strategies for key farmland properties</li> <li>*Work with landowners to develop plans to overcome barriers to ag production</li> <li>*Coordinate collaboration of essential service providers</li> <li>*Broker and connect landowners to needed services and resources</li> <li>*Help navigate laws, rules, and regulations</li> <li>*Track progress</li> <li>*Advocate for landowners navigating complex systems</li> </ul>	<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Farmland is available and farmable</li> <li>*Landowners have the resources they need to access and maximize farm properties for production</li> <li>*All organizations supporting a landowner/manager are aware of progress made</li> </ul> <p>Measures: * X landowners supported in exploring options for getting X acres into food production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Number of properties readied for food production</li> <li>*Number of connections to service providers</li> <li>*Increased number of acres available for lease or purchase</li> <li>*Identified number of farmable acres actively farmed</li> </ul>
Leverage land matching programs to support	<p>Work with landowners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*clarify land goals</li> <li>*identify barriers to food production</li> <li>*connect with service providers and resources</li> </ul>	<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Landowners enter tenant/buyer searches equipped for success</li> </ul>
landowners finding farm tenants/buyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*develop equitable lease agreements</li> <li>*connect with farmers interested in leasing or buying their properties</li> </ul>	<p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Number of properties/plots successfully transitioned</li> <li>*Number of introductions made between parties</li> </ul>
<b>Task 4: Research, develop, and pilot creative solutions to land access barriers</b>		

Develop and trial succession planning/generational transition programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Research succession program models in other regions</li> <li>*Identify potential partner organizations that could help meet the need locally</li> <li>*Develop programming for King County</li> <li>*Pilot the model</li> </ul>	<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Gaps in services are filled by member partners, or other service providers</li> <li>*Pathways to generational land transfer are established and accessible</li> </ul> <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Number of properties successfully transitioned</li> <li>*Number of retiring farmers supported</li> </ul>
Develop and trial cooperative farming and alternative land tenure models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Research successful cooperative and collaborative farming models in other regions</li> <li>*Provide information and technical assistance for implementation of collective tenure models for farmers</li> </ul>	<p>Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Tenure models are creative and responsive</li> </ul> <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Number of farming cooperatives created</li> <li>*Number of models researched</li> <li>*Number of models implemented</li> </ul>
Develop and trial creative and responsive financing models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Research alternative financing models</li> <li>*Select one or more strategies most applicable to local needs, opportunities and barriers to trial in King County</li> <li>*Provide information, technical assistance, and examples of creative financing models to farmers</li> </ul>	<p>Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Gaps in financial services are filled by partners or other service providers</li> </ul> <p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Numbers of models researched</li> <li>*Number of models trialed</li> <li>*Number of service providers and potential new partners consulted</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Other Consultant Responsibilities

The consultant shall manage the contract so that all tasks are met, and contract terms and conditions are satisfied within the given budget and schedule. The consultant shall ensure that the KCD Program Manager is informed in a timely manner about the status of contract deliverables.

The consultant shall submit invoices not more frequently than monthly. Invoices shall be itemized tasks with subtotals. Task hours shall be billed in quarter hour increments, and hours itemized by staff and billing rate.

### 3.4 Time of Performance

The anticipated contract term will be from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021. The contract period may be extended in increments of one (1) year for up to a total of four (4) additional years in accordance with the KCD's best interest, and at the sole option of the KCD.

### 3.5 Budget

The total budget for the one-year contract is expected to be \$150,000. The District anticipates a similar yearly funding level in the future, budget permitting.

### 3.6 Consultant Qualifications

The KCD desires a consultant or consultant team with experience and expertise in:

1. Leading and managing a collaborative team with technical assistance providers from multiple partners (agencies, non-profits) focused on new farmer technical assistance and land access.



2. Facilitating communication between farmers and landowners (with a wide variety of backgrounds and a range of interests, skills, and abilities) towards the goal of increasing acres of farmland in food production.
3. Land access and land tenure laws and legal instruments.
4. Integrating diversity, equity, and social justice goals in programming and goal setting.
5. Engaging with multilingual and multicultural farming communities.
6. Conducting outcomes-based program evaluation and adapt services to improve results. Feasible and practical evaluation methodology that matches audience type and program goals should be used to measure program results.
7. Coordinating programs of size and budget similar to those described in this RFP.
8. Strategic Planning.

### **3.7 Format for Responses**

Limit the proposal to 10 pages of text, with consecutively numbered pages, and using 11-pt. type or larger. The cover letter, table of contents, budget, and appendices are **not** included in the 10-page limit. All pages shall be numbered, including resumes and appendices, and listed in a table of contents. Proposals shall contain and be organized in the following format:

- A. Cover Letter with Proposers signature: Include the name, phone number, and email of a contact person. The cover letter shall be no longer than one single-sided page.
- B. Table of Contents: Include all appendices
- C. Written Proposal (limit to 10 pages)

#### **I. Organization and Management**

Description of your proposed project team, including the following:

1. Composition of the team, including principals, staff, and any sub-consultants, with responsibilities, skills, area of expertise and years of experience for each team member; appropriateness of the team's experience related to the Scope of Work; and an organization chart of the team.
2. Team's experience working together and ability to coordinate efficient and effective delivery of work products.
3. Management approach.
4. Demonstrated understanding of an effective relationship with a client such as KCD.

#### **II. Qualifications and Related Experience**

Describe at least three projects relevant to the Scope of Work which your organization or team members have implemented that demonstrate:

1. Experience leading and managing a collaborative team with technical assistance providers from multiple partners (agencies, non-profits) focused on new farmer technical assistance and land access.
2. Experience facilitating communication between farmers and landowners (with a wide variety of backgrounds and a range of interests, skills, and abilities) towards the goal of increasing acres of farmland in food production.

3. Familiarity with and understanding of land access and land tenure laws and legal instruments.
4. Experience within the team that reflects community relationships to enable the implementation of Equity and Environment Agenda goals.
5. Experience engaging with multilingual and multicultural farming communities.
6. Experience and ability to conduct outcomes-based program evaluation and adapt services to improve results, including use of practical evaluation methodologies that matches audience type and program goals to measure program results.
7. Experience coordinating programs of size and budget similar to those described in this RFP.

For each project, include the following information:

- Name of the client, whether the proposer was the prime or the sub-consultant, the total fee, contract completion date, proposer’s project manager, and client contact information.
- A brief description of the project, including goals, objectives, and strategy.
- How results were measured.
- Include work samples of relevant materials proposed to work on this contract. Work samples should be marked “Work Samples” and labeled with the project title, client name, name of consultant or team member who completed the work, and the type of work performed (e.g., “lease development”). Please limit Work Samples to TWO per example project. Attach all work samples in the appendices section. The page limit for related project experience does not apply to work samples.

**III. Approach to Scope of Work**

In this section, the proposer shall provide a vision and describe a methodology for carrying out the programs described in the Scope of Work of this RFQ and demonstrate the following:

1. Expertise, creativity, and effectiveness in proposed approach to Scope of Work and in approach to ensuring participation by farmers, farmer cooperatives, farmland seekers, and farmland owners.
2. Understanding of Equity and Environment Agenda goals, with specific attention on how this body of work can help fulfill some of these goal areas.
3. Understanding of program goals and how to work effectively with all members of the farmland services partnership in King County, including agencies, non-profits, farmers, and landowners.
4. Understanding of barriers, needs and opportunities associated with both farmers seeking new land and with farmland owners and managers.
5. Understanding of how to provide assistance to farmers on land access, tenure, and food production that will result in both increased farms in King County and increased farmland in production.

This section of the proposal shall include the following:

- Your vision of the project.

- How you will work with a collaborative partnership of agencies and non-profits to lead, manage, and deliver farmland access services with farmers and landowners that will increase the number of King County farmers and increase the acres of farmland in food production.
- Methods you would use, including partnerships with other agencies, to accomplish the work and meet project goals.
- Measurements of success or effectiveness for the project.

D. Proposed Budget (2-page maximum)

Proposals shall include the proposer's budget by task, the names of team members assigned to each task (where known or appropriate), each team member's labor rate (including overhead and profit) or direct payroll costs, and the number of hours to be spent on each task by each team member. Budgets should include:

1. Appropriate allocation of hours and expenses for each task.
2. Clarity and completeness of pricing structure, fees, overhead, hourly rates.
3. Value provided to KCD related to other proposals and similar work done in the region.

E. Appendices

1. Resumes: Submit one-page resume for each proposed team member in a key role, including the prime and sub-consultants. The resumes shall list relevant/related professional experience in chronological order with dates.
2. List of three (3) references who are familiar with your work, as relevant to the scope of work, and include a contact name, phone number, and email address for each.
3. Work Samples: Work samples should be marked "Work Samples" and labeled with the project title, client name, name of team member who completed the work, and the type of work they performed (e.g., "lease development"). Limit work samples to a maximum of two per project example from the "Qualifications and Related Experience" section.
4. Other, as determined needed or related.