

Request for Proposals

Legal Services

Transforming the Farmer to Consumer Supply Chain
with Climate-Smart Agriculture Partnerships Project

Request For Proposals Summary	
Release Date	September 25, 2024
Evaluation Timing	Submissions will be evaluated on a rolling basis* until Carbon A List discontinues this solicitation. *Carbon A List will evaluate proposals on a weekly basis for a period of forty-five (45) days, and on a bi-weekly basis thereafter.
Evaluation Deadlines	The following evaluation deadlines apply. Proposals received after 11:59 PM on the deadline will be evaluated in the following cycle. October 9, 2024 October 16, 2024 October 23, 2024 October 30, 2024
Revisions	1: Added CO to the list of eligible states (see Evaluation Criteria)
Submission Portal Link	Link to Submission Form

Carbon A List, LLC- PO Box 53, Hotchkiss, CO 81419

About Carbon A List

Carbon A List is a climate action instigator specialized in navigating the burgeoning opportunities for climate action, especially, but not limited to, the land sector. Our mission is to help clients and partners unlock climate action in a way that creates equity, transparency, and continuous improvement. Carbon A List offers strategic consulting, methodology development and design, and project development services to a wide range of climate-centric organizations.

About the Grant

We are leveraging our expertise and positioning to deliver on a [\\$70 million U.S. Department of Agriculture Partnership for Climate Smart Commodities grant](#) (“the Grant”). Serving as a collaboration between industry partners, the Grant is designed to develop end-to-end supply chain partnerships with the goal of both producing climate smart commodities and marketing them via brands and retailers to consumers. In coordination with its Project Partners and Service Providers, Carbon A List aims to enroll more than 350 participating farms in its climate-smart commodity incentive programs.

About the Request

Carbon A List requires legal services to augment legal administration of over 400 contracts and various partnerships while maintaining compliance with federal regulations and Grant requirements. With those dual needs, we seek proposals for support of contract review, legal research, and Federal regulation compliance.

Scope of Work

Carbon A List seeks contractor support for the following scope of work:

Legal strategy

- Advise on the governance approach for the Grant, including compliance requirements, risk management processes, and decision-making structures.
- Provide guidance on legal and regulatory considerations to support the overall program strategy.

Compliance

- Advising and assisting on compliance approaches to meet Grant and federal regulations (e.g. grant administration, procurement, reporting, etc.).
- Meeting program partner agreement requirements.
- Standard operating procedure development for team education and process to meet compliance requirements of the Grant and federal regulations.

Contract Policies, Development and Review:

- Draft contract templates tailored to the requirements of the Grant and federal regulations.
- Assistance in supporting contract negotiations
- Assist in development of internal policies and controls for contract management
- Provide timely feedback and reasoning behind comments and edits.

Legal Research

- Research topics focused on multijurisdictional contracts, agricultural and land management issues, business risk, greenhouse gas benefits, and additional topics as needed.
- Preparation of legal research memos as needed.

Communication and Collaboration

- Monthly calls with Carbon A List to discuss ongoing legal affairs.
- Regular updates on legal issues, risks, and compliance.
- Ad hoc legal support.

Advisory and risk mitigation

- Advise on risk to business operations.
- Advise on entering and managing contractual relationships with partnerships and collaboration within Grant.
- Advise on legal challenges and risks to program (e.g. Freedom of Information Act requests, data retention policies, data privacy and use agreements).

Evaluation Criteria & Method

Carbon A List will evaluate submissions on the following basis:

Qualifications and Experience (30%)

- Juris Doctorate and state licensure (mandatory).
- Licensed to practice law in one or more of the following states: CA, CO, ID, IL, IN, KS, ND, SD, MD, MI, MN, NE, NM, NY, OH, PA, TX, UT, WI
- Experience in managing contracts and federal grant compliance depending on the role sought.
- Specific knowledge in agriculture, environmental laws, or related fields.
- Demonstrated success in similar projects.

Understanding and Approach (25%)

- Understanding of the project's needs and challenges.
- Proposed strategy for managing contracts and maintaining compliance depending on the role sought.
- Plans for collaboration and communication with Carbon A List.

- Adaptability to changing legal landscapes and regulations.

Timeline and Capacity (15%)

- Clarity and feasibility of proposed deliverables.
- Alignment with project goals and requirements.
- A realistic and well-defined timeline.

Budget (20%)

- Comprehensive breakdown of costs.
- Value for money considering the complexity and volume of the work.
- Transparency in pricing (hourly rates, fixed fees, etc.).

References (10%)

- Provision of references from similar projects.
- Reputation for quality, reliability, and integrity.
- Evidence of successful past performance in comparable work.

Additional Criteria: Commitment to Sustainability, Equity and Climate Goals

- Alignment with Carbon A List's mission and climate objectives.
- Sustainable practices within the firm or proposed approach.

Submission Process

Format:

Proposals should be submitted in PDF format, Arial or Times New Roman, 12-point font. The proposal should not exceed 10 pages in length, including graphics, figures, and/or tables.

Content:

Proposals must cover the following information:

1. **Executive Summary:** Provide a concise overview of your firm's proposal, highlighting your understanding of our needs and your solution's value proposition.
2. **Approach to Scope of Work:**
 - a. Detail your firm's approach to managing the specified scope of work, including methodologies, technologies, and processes you will employ.
 - b. Describe your firm's experience in providing legal services to small businesses. How have you tailored your services to meet the unique needs of small businesses, particularly those operating with limited resources?
3. **Compliance and Risk Management Strategy:** Describe your strategy for ensuring compliance with USDA requirements and other applicable regulations, as well as your approach to identifying and mitigating risks related to this grant.

4. **Communication Plan:** Outline your plan for maintaining regular, effective communication with Carbon A List and other stakeholders, including frequency of updates, reports, and meetings.
5. **Key Personnel:** Identify key personnel who will support this contract, including their roles, qualifications, and relevant experience.
6. **Cost Breakdown:** Offer a detailed cost breakdown by scope area (Strategy, Compliance, Contracting, etc.) and anticipated staff support, including hourly rates or fixed costs associated with each segment of the work.
7. **Experience with Similar Projects:** Provide examples of previous projects similar in scale and complexity to this grant, focusing on your success in managing complex regulatory systems and ensuring compliance.
8. **References:** Include references from previous clients for whom you've performed similar services, particularly those involving federal grants or contracts.

Submission:

Proposals must be submitted through the [Submission Form](#) in order to be considered. Any issues with the submission platform and/or process can be posted to our [FAQ page](#) or directed to proposals@transformf2c.com.

Review & Selection

Carbon A List is committed to a transparent, equitable procurement process designed for integrity and compliance. Our aim is to select the most suitable service provider through a structured and impartial evaluation.

Scoring Round: We employ a standardized scoring rubric to ensure unbiased proposal assessments. Reviewers disclose any potential conflicts of interest to prevent bias. Proposals must meet a defined minimum score to advance, ensuring only the top candidates proceed to the interview stage.

Interview Round: Carbon A List will interview selected proposers using scenario-based questions directly linked to project needs. Responses will be evaluated per the RFP evaluation criteria.

Budget

The total anticipated budget for this work is expected to fall below \$50,000 per year.

We invite proposers to consider offering tiers of service within their proposed budget. Proposals should clearly outline the scope of services provided at each proposed tier, including a detailed breakdown of costs associated with each level of service.

Terms & Conditions

Contract duration

The contract will be negotiated by Carbon A List and the selected proposer. The term will not exceed 4 years.

Payment terms

Payments are made on a monthly basis. Payment is made depending on the contractor's compliance with payment standard operating procedures and processes.

Federal Procurement Standards Compliance

Generally, Contractor shall comply with

- all laws applicable to Contractor in its performance and delivery of services; and
- all policies and procedures related to this Grant published by Carbon A List from time to time and delivered to Contractor.

Conflict of Interest

Please disclose any current or potential conflicts of interest. Failure to disclose may result in disqualification from this opportunity or termination of any future agreement between Carbon A List and the Service Provider. Potential and current conflicts include but are not limited to immediate family members and professional engagements that hinder your objective performance of the work.

Regulatory Changes In the event of a change in regulations that have a direct impact on the Contractor's ability to provide the Services or Deliverables in a timely manner, the Parties agree to meet and confer on adjustments to processes and procedures or modifications to this agreement. During the meet and confer period, Parties agree to use reasonable efforts to comply with current and new regulations, policies, and procedures using interim guidance, in writing, from Carbon A List on how to proceed.

Non-Disparagement

Recipients may not engage in any advertising deemed by USDA as disparaging to another agricultural commodity or competing product, or in violation of the prohibition against false and misleading advertising. Disparagement is defined as anything that depicts other commodities in a negative or unpleasant light via overt or subjective video, photography, or statements. Comparative advertising is allowable, provided the presentation of facts is truthful, objective, not misleading, and supported by a reasonable basis.

Additional Information

Note this opportunity is open to U.S. businesses. Please state that your business is located in and licensed to operate within the United States. This opportunity is only open to businesses that do not have pending or current lawsuits that would impact ability to deliver services.