



Request for Quotes

RFQ #: 2023-01

Date of Issue: September 12, 2023

Event Planning for the 2024 Mariculture Conference of Alaska

The Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF) is soliciting quotes from businesses with experience coordinating conferences or other events in Alaska to coordinate the 2024 Mariculture Conference of Alaska in Anchorage February 27-29, 2024. The annual conference supports information exchange between coalition members and offers a venue to share outcomes and findings from AMC funded activities. The event will also include training sessions, seminars, and networking opportunities. The conference will be open to the public or those individuals interested in getting involved or are currently involved in the industry. Through this competitive RFQ process, AFDF will select a single awardee to oversee conference planning and execution.

Background

The annual Mariculture Conference of Alaska is a part of the Research and Development component of the Alaska Mariculture Cluster (AMC), a coalition funded by a U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBBRC) grant (project number 07-79-07901). A Governance Body will guide the work and equity metrics of the Alaska Mariculture Cluster. AFDF is a part of the coalition, one of the subaward recipients, and the AFDF executive director serves on the Governance Body. As part of its subaward, AFDF will oversee a portion of the Research and Development component, and in particular, the annual Mariculture Conference of Alaska. The Research and Development component is one of seven components, which have been purposely designed to be complementary in order to break down barriers to industry growth. More information on the Alaska Mariculture Cluster is available at alaskamariculturecluster.org, including the [Overarching Narrative](#) which explains how the seven components work together to grow the mariculture industry in an equitable and environmentally responsible manner, and the [Research and Development Component](#).

About AFDF

Since 1978, the AFDF has broadly represented the Alaska seafood industry (harvesters, processors and support service businesses) in the areas of research and development. Since

2014, AFDF has spearheaded the Alaska Mariculture Initiative, an effort to expedite the development of growing shellfish and seaweed in Alaska. As a result of those efforts, Governor Walker created the Mariculture Task Force (MTF) by Administrative Order from 2016-2021, during which time the AFDF Executive Director served as either Chair or Vice-Chair. The MTF was designed to sunset and in its place has been created the Alaska Mariculture Alliance (AMA); the AFDF Executive Director serves on its Board of Directors.

Scope of Work

The event planner's work will be guided by a conference planning team with representatives from AFDF, the Alaska Mariculture Cluster (AMC), the Alaska Mariculture Alliance (AMA), the Alaska Shellfish Growers Association (ASGA), and the Alaska Mariculture Research and Training Center (AMRTC). The conference will be held in Anchorage on Feb. 27-29, 2024. Approximately 150 to 200 people are expected to attend. Sessions will include breakouts for the annual meetings of AMA and ASGA. A workshop regarding Aquaculture Opportunities Areas (AOAs) will also be held by NOAA on Feb. 26, 2024, and some level of coordination is expected between these two events. Additionally, the AMRTC / Alaska Sea Grant (ASG) is expected to set up and manage an event webpage, an online registration process, and design and print the conference agenda and related materials. The planning team will identify and provide contacts for potential speakers. Travel funds will be provided to some attendees through a mix of sources (NOAA, EDA/AMC, WWF). Travel funds will be provided to speakers through funds under this contract. Promotion will be provided by a mix of sources (NOAA, ASG, AMA, ASGA, AFDF, AMC regional liaisons, etc). More specifically, the scope of work will include:

- 1) Establishing a planning timeline in conjunction with the conference planning team
- 2) Brainstorming with and providing options to the conference planning team on conference logistics including venue, reception (either Monday or Tuesday night), poster session, one fun networking evening, mariculture products showcase, etc.
- 3) Securing a conference venue, hotel blocks within walking distance of the venue, and other vendors as necessary (such as caterers, IT providers, etc.);
- 4) Track metrics for participants and registrants
- 5) Working with the conference planning team to contact potential speakers for conference sessions, help with travel arrangements as needed, and pay for travel including for approximately five out-of-state speakers
- 6) Collaborating with the conference planning team on the event agenda
- 7) Collaborating with the NOAA Fisheries Regional Aquaculture Coordinator and conference planning team on a shared reception for the Conference and the Aquaculture Opportunity Area Stakeholder workshop occurring the day prior (Feb. 26th).
- 8) Working with the AMA membership to secure member mariculture products for display/consumption
- 9) Collaborating with the conference planning team on creating outreach materials to advertise and engage possible attendees
- 10) Trade show

- 11) Facilitation of AMA and ASGA Board & membership meeting space, including any IT needs
- 12) Management of the event
- 13) Potential virtual and hybrid options (to be discussed with planning committee)
- 14) Day-of Conference Management
- 15) AV & Program Management
- 16) Reception Management
- 17) Other tasks as needed by the conference planning team

Deliverables

- 1) Signed contract between AFDF and the awardee
- 2) A planning timeline presented to the conference planning team
- 3) Regular updates (written or verbal) to the conference planning team
- 4) Signed contracts with the event venue and vendors
- 5) Successfully executed event February 27-29, 2024
- 6) Metrics of event tracked and results delivered to AFDF

Timeline and Funding Available

The event will take place on February 27-29, 2024. As a part of a grant provided by EDA, AFDF can pay a total for all services up to \$90,000, which includes planning services, event venue, catering, travel costs for speakers, etc, depending upon services provided. Quotes submitted should be itemized by services listed above and should *not* include indirect costs or equipment purchases.

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation of the bid against the criteria listed below will be conducted by a committee with recommendations and final approval made by AFDF in cooperation with the lead entity, Southeast Conference.

- Cost is reasonable and falls within the range of available funds
- Company experience planning similar events
- Company based in Alaska or with extensive Alaska experience

Right to Refusal: AFDF reserves the right to reject any and all bids received.

Due Date: Quotes must be submitted via email no later than **5:00pm AST, Sept. 26, 2023** to Hannah Wilson at hwilson@afdf.org as either Adobe PDF or Microsoft Word documents. For questions, please call or email Hannah Wilson at 907-276-7315, hwilson@afdf.org.