



Request for Proposals

RFP #: 2024-05

Date of Issue: November 6, 2024

Scientific Consulting Related to Seaweed Tissue Analysis Project

The Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF) is soliciting proposals from individuals, companies, organizations, or research institutions to conduct an analysis and compile a report analyzing lab data produced through the Alaska Mariculture Cluster Seaweed Tissue Analysis project. In May-June of 2024 a sampling effort in Kodiak and Sitka collected samples of approximately 15 species of wild and farmed seaweed over three sequential sampling efforts. Samples underwent a range of analyses to develop nutritional profiles, and characterize and measure carbohydrates and other valuable compounds. Further analysis and synthesis of these results is needed to provide usable information for the Alaska mariculture industry as well as to inform another year of sampling and testing.

Background

The Seaweed Tissue Analysis project 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 guides the work and equity metrics of the Alaska Mariculture Cluster. AFDF is a part of the coalition and one of the subaward recipients. As part of its subaward, AFDF oversees a portion of the Research and Development component, and in particular, the Seaweed Tissue Analysis Project. 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 growth, and break out of the “chicken or egg” cycle of industry development. 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. AFDF

has previous experience with projects similar to the Scientific Consulting Related to Seaweed Tissue Analysis project. 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 former 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) of which AFDF is a member.

Eligible Entities

Applicants must have or acquire an UEI and be registered through SAM.gov prior to award finalization. Applicants, including any subcontractors, must not be debarred from receiving federal funds. Applicants also need an Alaska business license before commencing the work.

Scope of Work and Deliverables

There are approximately 100 total samples over a spread of approximately 15 species of seaweed, with approximately 40 analyses conducted on each sample. While the lab will provide some analysis summary, further research and summary is needed to best characterize and disseminate the laboratory results.

The contractor will be responsible for:

- Task 1: Create species profiles.
 - Compile testing data provided by Celignus into profiles for each species covering all analytes (confirm all analytes are relevant and reliable in collaboration with AFDF).
 - Work with AFDF to determine how to address variations in season and locations of samples and species. Our goal is to emphasize distinct differences while minimizing complexity, making the information accessible to non-specialized audiences.

Deliverable: Set of 15 profiles for each species with testing data.

Timeline: End of January 2025.

Note: All raw data will be publicly available.

- Task 2: Complete a comparative analysis.
 - Surface key findings through analysis and comparison across market needs and existing research on composition of comparable seaweeds.
 - Collect, review and compare outside literature and data sets to ensure our test results are consistent (or offer possible explanations for where they are not consistent with other analyses). This analysis should include consideration of the impact of differences in extraction/testing methodologies, such as for carbohydrate data.

NOTE: Farmers and processors in Alaska are particularly interested in knowing which species are most promising for commercialization. While a thorough examination of farming feasibility, processing challenges, and other Alaska-specific barriers is beyond the project's scope, some attention to these issues is essential.

See original scope of analysis included in the RFP [here](#) for reference.

Deliverables:

- Written report with executive summary and comparative review of each species highlighting notable findings from the test results.
- Outreach materials that include a simple overview of key findings intended to be valuable for non-experts and industry partners. These may be designed with input from Southeast Conference and AFDF teams to inform best communication methods for intended use.
- Virtual presentation of findings at a mutually agreed upon forum.

Timeline: End of March 2025

- Task 3: Provide recommendations to inform successive year of seaweed tissue analysis sampling and testing to be conducted in Spring and Summer 2025.
 - Work with AFDF to plan and conduct interviews, workshops, or other tools to gather feedback and comments from Alaska seaweed industry stakeholders related to seaweed tissue analysis priorities, including the most promising markets and their needs for seaweed tissue analysis data.
 - Develop a set of recommendations and considerations as AFDF and SEC prioritize the remaining funds to support seaweed tissue sampling and testing. Recommendations could include: a priority list of species for follow up research based on initial findings and market potential; recommendations on additional sampling efforts, analytes, or testing methodologies to pursue to resolve key questions arising from the 2024 data; sampling strategies to address regional or seasonal variation; and/or other similar recommendations.

Deliverable: Memo providing recommendations to inform AFDF's 2025 seaweed tissue analysis efforts.

Timeline: End of March 2025.

- Task 4: Ongoing Consultation
 - Provide follow up consultation to support AFDF's 2025 seaweed tissue analysis project activities.

Deliverable: 40 hours of consultation services, such as meeting with AFDF, providing written feedback via email, participation in additional outreach meetings, and other related services.

Timeline: Hours will be expended through Fall 2025.

NOTE: Proposers are encouraged to suggest additional or alternative tasks or deliverables that would benefit the project based on their professional expertise.

AFDF reserves the right to negotiate project details with the successful bidder to achieve a contract that fully meets AMC's desired outcomes. All products produced under this RFP will become publicly available on completion.

Funding Available

Projects are expected to be in the \$30,000 to \$45,000 range, though proposals will be considered at higher amounts. If the need for additional related services arises, additional scope and budget may be added to this contract on mutual agreement (such as potential for analysis of results of testing conducted in 2025).

Restrictions on Funds

Funding is not eligible to be used for infrastructure, including construction, real property or improvements to real property. Funding cannot be used to purchase equipment. "Equipment" means purchases of single units with a total purchase price, delivered, in excess of \$5,000.00. If a proposal is contingent upon purchasing equipment, please contact Alex Huller (ahuller@afdf.org) in advance of submission. Exceptions to the no equipment rule may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Insurance Requirements

Funding of projects will be contingent upon providing proof of required insurance policies for project activities, which may include: 1) commercial general liability insurance, with property damage; 2) protection and indemnity insurance, with limits of not less than one million dollars per event; 3) professional liability insurance; and/or 4) workers compensation insurance.

Alaska Business License Requirements

Per AS 43.70.020(a) a business license is required for the privilege of engaging in a business in the State of Alaska. Per AS 43.70.110(1) "Business" means a for-profit or non-profit entity engaging or offering to engage in a trade, a service, a profession, or an activity with the goal of receiving a financial benefit in exchange for the provision of services, or goods, or other property. If selected for funding under this RFP, an Alaska Business License will be required. See <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl/BusinessLicensing/BusinessLicensingFAQs.aspx>

Proposal Content Requirements

The proposal must consist of the following (maximum 5 pages):

1. **Introduction and Understanding of the Project:** Include the RFP title, discussion of project context and importance, and an overview of the project team and

approach.

2. **Methodology:** Discuss proposed approach to accomplishing the scope of work listed, including proposed deliverables and timeline. Consultants may include additional recommendations that would benefit the project based on their professional expertise.
3. **Experience and Qualifications:** Describe relevant experience of the entity and key team member(s), including relevant education or professional experience as it relates to chemical analysis of seaweeds, and understanding the development of products for market.
4. **Budget:** Provide a list of the key individuals/subcontractors expected to work on the project, the fully loaded rates charged per individual, any estimated expenses, and total estimated project cost. ****DOWNLOAD REQUIRED BUDGET TEMPLATE [HERE](#)****

Scoring Criteria

Scoring of each proposal against the criteria listed below will be with recommendations and final approval made in cooperation with the lead entity, Southeast Conference. Criteria and maximum potential scores for selecting proposals are as follows:

- Experience and knowledge of Alaska mariculture and existing & emerging seaweed markets. (40 points)
- Past experience with similar projects. (30 points)
- Demonstration of capacity to complete deliverables within a reasonable timeline. (15 points)
- The competitiveness of cost relative to other proposals. (15 points)

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

Due Date: Proposals must be submitted via email no later than December 1st to ahuller@afdf.org.

- Proposals received after the deadline may be considered but only if they can be accommodated by AFDF's review process. Additional information provided after the deadline may also be considered but only if such information can be accommodated by the review process.

For questions, please call or email Alex Huller at ahuller@afdf.org (513)317-7947.