Request for Proposals for Financial and Accounting Services for Neighborhood Legal Services Program of the District of Columbia

BACKGROUND

Neighborhood Legal Services Program of the District of Columbia (NLSP) is a 501(c)3 organization with a budget of $6,532,444 in FY 2024. NLSP programs are funded primarily through Legal Services Corporation (LSC) and the DC Bar Foundation (DCBF). NLSP has 50 employees working on a hybrid schedule at two offices in the District of Columbia.

NLSP's mission is: “In partnership with its clients and community stakeholders, NLSP helps DC residents, families and communities eliminate barriers to overcoming poverty and secure justice. Using all available legal and other advocacy tools, NLSP enables underserved DC residents to make their voices heard in the courts and other forums where their rights and protections are at stake, to secure fair and lasting solutions to their problems and to attain their individual, family and community goals.”

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES REQUESTED

NLSP is seeking financial management services from an organization with experience supporting legal services providers. The ideal candidate understands the importance of accountability, is highly communicative, and is familiar with supporting small non-profit organizations and/or legal services providers.

The selected vendor will report directly to NLSP’s Executive Director for the duration of their one-year contract, which can be renewed for an additional year if necessary. The successful candidate will be responsible for managing NLSP’s finances and for preparing NLSP to manage these functions in-house post-contract.

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected financial management company will provide financial management and accounting services including, but not limited to, the following:

Finance and Accounting

- Provide bookkeeping services to maintain accurate financial records in accordance with nonprofit accounting standards and Legal Services Corporation Financial and Accounting Guidelines.
- Perform monthly reconciliations of bank statements to ensure accuracy.
- Prepare detailed reports and budgets for grants, ensuring compliance with funding requirements.
- Manage accounts payable, including invoice processing and payment scheduling, and accounts receivable, ensuring timely invoicing and collection of funds.
• Provide monthly financial statements and execute monthly closing procedures to ensure accuracy and completeness of financial records.
• Ensure proper allocation of monthly expenses across programs and departments.
• Manage year-end closing processes in preparation for audits and financial reporting.

Audit Preparation

• Support our annual audit process by preparing the required schedules of General Ledger activity and Statement of Functional Expense.
• Review draft financials from auditors and provide feedback on variances and adjusting journal entries.
• Review any management letter comments with auditors and NLSP management.
• Review draft 990 for consistency with prior filings and trial balance.

Capacity Building

• Conduct a thorough review of NLSP’s existing financial processes and procedures and develop a new set of processes and procedures that will allow an in-house finance team to run our business effectively.
• Create and implement a plan for NLSP to fully staff an in-house Finance Department capable of managing finances for an organization at our budget level after the contract ends. This plan should include:
  o Identification of the necessary resources for NLSP to establish its own in-house finance team.
  o Assistance with creating job descriptions for, hiring, and training new finance staff members.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

The proposal should be prepared simply, providing a straightforward, concise delineation of your capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis in your proposal should be on completeness and clarity of content. Your proposal should contain information on your approach and financial management plan in addition to information about your experience working with small non-profit agencies or legal services providers.

Your proposal should include:

• Detailed information about your firm’s experience and qualifications in providing the requested services to organizations similar in size and character to NLSP.
• A description of your firm’s approach to providing financial management services, including information about the methodologies, tools, technologies, and best practices your firm would use to meet the requirements in the Scope of Work.
• A breakdown of the specific services you would offer, including details about service levels, response times, availability, and any additional services you may provide. Please include a breakdown of your pricing structure, outlining recurring fees, one-time costs, and additional charges clearly and transparently.
• A description of how you will build our internal capacity, preparing us for a successful transition at the end of the contract.
• A detailed implementation plan, outlining how you would onboard NLSP as a client. Include key milestones, timelines, and potential challenges you foresee.
• A staffing plan, providing information about the team members who would be assigned to our account, including their qualifications, experience, and roles/responsibilities.
• References for three clients similar to NLSP who are familiar with the work of the personnel to be assigned to this engagement and a list of other nonprofit clients.

BID PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals shall be emailed to Cecilia Barber, Project Manager, at cbarber@nlsp.org and will be accepted until August 30, 2024. NLSP will contact select bidders to conduct interviews after all submissions are received. Any questions prior to submission of the proposal should be emailed to cbarber@nlsp.org.